

# How Mature Are Your Virtual Team Work Processes?

## Overview

With the advance of technologies that enable business operations to be conducted by individuals whom are not co-located, the increased trend workers desiring to balance work/family life complexities, the decreased expenditure of travel dollars due to world economic conditions and security issues, and the competitive globalization trends to do more with less, doing work as a geographically distributed organization is rapidly becoming the norm in today's working world. Yet with all the promises that are held of increased productivity and work satisfaction, many geographically distributed teams do not meet their product deliverables on time and within budget. The impact of not implementing critical work processes and procedures can be devastating for these teams resulting in increased frustration, decreased morale and significant overruns, all which are have huge impacts on the organizations' bottom line revenue. By adopting several key practices, virtual team leads and project managers can increase their opportunities to realize increased productivity, high pressure deadlines and increased worker satisfaction.

The Virtual Team Operations Survey assesses the current practices of virtual teams. It determines the teams' maturity in its capabilities to operate virtually. While the practices assessed are essential for face to face teams, virtual teams magnify these requirements and intentional efforts should be made to insure their implementation.

Note: For the purposes of this survey, "team lead/manager" is considered part of "team members" except where indicated.

## Biography

Tricia Steege, CEO of Transformation Strategies, supports individuals and organizations by helping them co-create solutions that transform their cultures to meet aggressive business objectives. Holding to her passion that by providing environments which inspire the human spirit, individuals are unleashed to contribute and accomplish their best. Key expertise include virtual team performance, organization change planning and implementation and leadership developmental

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She holds a M. Ed. in Human Resources Education, Boston University and an Organization Development degree from National Training Labs.

Clients include Unisys, Lockheed Martin, CIGNA, John Hancock, Fleet Bank and Penn State Great Valley. Additional publications include McGraw Hill Team Development Sourcebook, "What are Your Teams Needs?" and Meeting Professional Magazine, "Cooking Up Opportunities", December 2002. She can be reached at [tsteege@transformstrat.com](mailto:tsteege@transformstrat.com); 610.296.0453, [www.transformstrat.com](http://www.transformstrat.com).

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**Directions:** Read the statement and indicate your answer by placing an "X" in the corresponding rating box.

Practice Focus	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4
<b>Trust</b>				
1. Team members clearly understand the strategic purpose, charter and guiding operational principles of the team				
2. Team members understand the roles and responsibilities of each member				
3. Team members follow through on commitments and obligations				
4. Team members are effectively transitioned on and off the team (i.e.: welcoming new members and thanks to off out going members)				
5. Team members of the team are customer oriented (internally and externally)				
<b>Sub Total:</b>				
			<b>PRACTICE FOCUS TOTAL:</b>	
<b>Leadership</b>				
6. The team leader/manager is highly visible to the team (i.e.: frequent contact and responsive to the teams needs)				
7. The team lead/manager demonstrates a personal caring about each individual on the team				
8. The team lead/manager clearly communicates and documents expectations with measurable deliverables				

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9. The team lead/manager provides resources as requested (i.e.: training, people, processes, technology)				
10. The team lead/manager quickly resolves performance issues of individuals on the team				
<b>Sub Total:</b>				
			<b>PRACTICE FOCUS TOTAL:</b>	
<b>Communication</b>				
11. Face to face meetings regularly to provide communication and social networking opportunities				
12. Team members are proactive in sharing information and keeping in communication among themselves				
13. Team members utilize standard technology configurations to prioritize communications (i.e.: email, voice mail, closed loop, etc)				
14. Frequent check in processes are utilized at key milestones to ensure proactive progress tracking				
15. Team members use clear and concise writing and verbal skills to communicate key messages				
<b>Sub Total:</b>				
			<b>PRACTICE FOCUS TOTAL:</b>	
<b>Technology</b>				
16. Team members have shared access to specialized equipment and technology platforms				
17. Team members are skilled at facilitating electronic meetings (i.e.: technology operations, engaging participants, group process)				

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18. Team members use the appropriate technology for the purpose of the task (i.e.: face to face for performance issues, emails for quick updates, bulletin boards for documenting brainstorming results, chat rooms for problem resolution)				
19. Team members follow the established guidelines, norms and configurations to effectively manage their collaborative workspaces				
20. Team members are skilled in the use of collaborative workspace software				
<b>Sub Total:</b>				
			<b>PRACTICE FOCUS TOTAL:</b>	
<b>Learning</b>				
21. Team members have access and contribute to a shared database for conducting research and reviewing lessons learned				
22. Team members coach others using their skill strengths and request help in those areas in which they have growth opportunities				
23. Team members bring problem resolution opportunities to the team and provide feedback to others when requested				
24. Team members effectively integrate the norms of all represented cultures into the operations of the team				
25. Team members proactively obtain training to continue building their skill sets (i.e.: technical, leadership, working across cultures, etc)				
<b>Sub Total:</b>				
			<b>PRACTICE FOCUS TOTAL:</b>	
				<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>

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## SCORING:

The possible total point value for the survey is 100 with each practice focus area having a possible total point value of 20. For each practice area, subtotal the amounts in each column in which you've check with an "X". Add the subtotals of each column to obtain the Practice Focus area total point value. Add the practice focus area totals to obtain the grand total.

## SCORING INTERPRETATION

This instrument is intended to help you diagnose the areas of strengths and weaknesses of the team as related to a range of practice areas that are known to help virtual teams operative effectively. By comparing the score for each practice area, you can determine which practice area is operating well and which practice area has the greatest need for attention and development.

The team's overall virtual operations effectiveness can be determined from the scores in the Grand Total Box as follows:

### Score Range

90-100

80-90

70-80

70 and below

### Overall Rating

Highly effective. The work capability of the virtual team is highly mature and highly functioning.

Generally effective. The work capability of the virtual team is generally mature and functioning quite well.

Moderately effective. The capability of the virtual team is somewhat mature with several dimensions of virtual work processes needing to be improved.

Below effective. The capability of the virtual team is immature with many areas of virtual work needing to be improved.

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