



Title Organization / Unit Name Compact Title

What's in a name?

Many organizations use different terms to define the same concept. Pick one that suits your purpose:

- A Team or Member or Staff Compact or Code of Conduct

What is it?

A team compact is a jointly developed document that

- establishes guidelines and boundaries for behavior within a team;
- clarifies what's expected of each member; and
- determines a framework for interactions.

A well-crafted team compact helps a team develop its identity. In essence, it sets the cultural tone of a team. Team members need to discuss roles, expectations and work protocols to draft the compact.

A team compact is similar to a team charter that is used to establish tasks and boundaries for a group. However, a team charter is presented by the sponsor to the team. A team compact is drafted and agreed to by the team members. The choices of a team compact generally build upon an organization's guiding principles or core values.

Why do you need one?

The aim is to construct honest and positive working relationships. Teams function best when they develop and commit to their own process rules. When team members adhere to their compact many problems rooted in behaviors and relationship issues can be prevented or addressed while they are still minor.

When working with people, clarity is almost always a good thing!

Common areas addressed by a team compact are

- Member Roles and Responsibilities
- Rules of Engagement
- Meeting Protocols
- Decision-making Protocols
- Conflict Resolution Protocols
- Motivation

Team compacts can be very short with separate meeting rules or they can be more inclusive depending upon the needs of the team.

Sample concepts to construct a Team Compact follow. The categories are largely irrelevant, but may help a team consider the kinds of pledges appropriate to the compact.

Member Roles and Responsibilities

1. We will conduct our position responsibilities in a professional, ethical manner that advances the organization's mission and goals.
2. We will be good teammates; bring concerns and perspectives as well as subject matter expertise to the table and take a goal-level view of resolution.
3. We will formulate strategic plans and ensure that strategies and actions are completed in a timely manner. We will do what we commit to do to achieve agency goals.
4. We will be dependable professionals, self-motivated to achieve work on behalf of the organization.
5. We will be positive ambassadors for our mission and our organization internally and externally.
6. Each of us takes responsibility for our collective success
7. We will lead by example.

Rules of Engagement

1. We will communicate the status of each other's work, no matter how bad the news.
2. We will speak our mind rather than hide things from each other.
3. We will support candid, frank, open and respectful discussion.
4. We know there will be points of disagreement, so, to move the agenda forward, we will name and address tension points as they emerge.
5. Our focus will be on the facts of the work and not on who did it.
6. We will strive for facts and understand opinions.
7. We will listen actively.
8. We will avoid cross talk, speak in turns.
9. We will offer proposals or solutions, not just critiques or complaints.
10. We encourage honest, thoughtful disagreement.
11. We will test assumptions, but assume good faith.
12. We will not say negative things about others behind their backs, and we will challenge others who do so to stop.
13. We will be accountable for our own actions, behaviors and choices.
14. We will admit mistakes and not blame things on others.
15. We will work to build trust in an ever-expanding circle of relationships.
16. What happens at team stays at team.
17. We will respect and honor the confidential nature of some discussion.
18. We will share our expertise.
19. We will challenge each other in the spirit of helping the team succeed.
20. All team members will contribute.
21. We will respond to teammate e-mail or messages within 24 hours. If we don't have an answer, we will acknowledge the issue and whether or not we can help.
22. We will be punctual.
23. When organization decisions are made, we will support them.
24. We will speak with one voice in support of final recommendations / decisions.
25. We will encourage robust dialogue internally and unified voices externally.

Motivation *(sometimes these are covered in guiding principles / core values)*

1. We will learn from each other.
2. We will share in risk and in success.
3. We will celebrate the successes and recognize the contributions of team members.
4. We will catch others doing the right thing.
5. We will be a positive influence.
6. We will accept responsibility for advancing shared goals.
7. We accept collective accountability for the organization's overall success.
8. We will explore new directions and innovative practices.
9. We will be respectful of our clients/customers/shareholders/taxpayers.

Conflict-Resolution Protocols

1. In cases of conflict about what we should do, we will refer to our core values to resolve our conflict.
2. If a resolution cannot be successfully negotiated, we will abide by the decision of our supervisor.

Meeting Protocols *(sometimes the following two sections are covered in separate "Team Rules" documents)*

1. We will respect meeting start and stop times.
2. We will show our respect for the team by our attendance.
3. We will come prepared to meetings with downloaded materials and, in cases where we are unable to attend, we will complete our work and forward it to the team leader.
4. Meetings will be product oriented.
5. We will stay focused on tasks and discourage distractions.
6. Meeting notes will be taken by _____. Or Responsibility for taking meeting notes will rotate amongst participants.
7. Draft work products will not be shared outside the team.

Decision-Making Protocols

1. We will use our ability and authority to move decision processes or make decisions in a timely manner.
2. When the team cannot reach consensus, the Executive Director will make the decision in a manner that best serves the organization.
3. We will be transparent regarding how decisions are reached without breaking confidentiality.

I pledge to adhere to the Team Compact to further the mission of my organization.

Signature

Signature

Signature