Team charter template

A team charter template is a short written agreement about how a team works together: purpose, decision rights, communication and review. This page gives you a filled example and a blank template, 24 original team norms examples grouped by meetings, channels, decisions, focus time, feedback and hybrid work, and a short working agreement template with a filled version. A 60-minute workshop helps your team turn the examples into three agreements of its own.

60 minutes | 4–12 participants | Online and adaptable in person

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The outcome

The team leaves with three observable working agreements, named stewards and a review date.

Before the session

- Invite the whole working team, including people affected by its handovers. Explain whether the group can make decisions or is proposing them to a sponsor.
- Prepare a shared worksheet and one recent, low-stakes coordination example. Avoid using the meeting to adjudicate an unresolved personal complaint.
- Ask each person to consider one habit that helps and one source of friction. People may submit examples privately for anonymised discussion.
- Send the team norms examples and the working agreement template as plain text a day before, so people using a screen reader or needing more reading time can prepare. Anyone may contribute in writing instead of speaking, and anyone may pass.

Included in this kit

A facilitator run of show, participant worksheets with real tables, reference tables, debrief questions, adaptation notes and a follow-up plan. Use the editable Word copy to tailor examples and prompts before delivery.

Original material by Superglue. Timings are suggestions; adjust them to your participants. This resource has not been independently evaluated.

What is inside

The participant sheets come first so you can print one page per person. Your own facilitator section follows them.

- Team charter template — Copy this page for each team, or edit the Word file and keep it in the team space.
- Filled example — An invented example showing the level of detail that works in practice.
- Team norms examples — Tick keep, adapt or skip for each norm.
- Working agreement template — Write each agreement as one sentence across the row: when this happens, we will do this, here, by then.
- Working agreement example — A fictional six-person learning team in two offices.
- Team charter examples — Two more invented charters in brief.
- Facilitator run of show, debrief questions and adaptation notes — for you, after the participant sheets.

Team charter template

Copy this page for each team, or edit the Word file and keep it in the team space. Delete rows you do not need.

Section	Your team's agreement
Purpose in one sentence	
Who this covers and when	
Agreement 1: trigger, action, channel, timing	
Agreement 2: trigger, action, channel, timing	
Agreement 3: trigger, action, channel, timing	
Decision types and who decides	
What counts as urgent, and the escalation route	
How to ask for support or raise a concern	
Unresolved questions	
Steward and review date	

Filled example

An invented example showing the level of detail that works in practice.

Section	What this team wrote
Purpose in one sentence	We keep the customer support queue accurate so that delivery promises stay realistic.
Who this covers	Six people across two time zones, 09:00 to 17:00 local time, plus the on-call rotation.
Agreement 1: handovers	When a case moves between regions, the outgoing owner writes the current state and the next action before the shift ends.
Agreement 2: decisions	Reversible decisions are made by the person closest to the work and posted in the channel.
Agreement 3: urgent requests	Urgent means a customer-facing deadline today. The request goes to the on-call channel with the deadline and the consequence.
Unresolved question	Who owns the shared inbox when both regional leads are away?
Review	The support lead reads this charter aloud at the monthly review and asks what the team stopped doing.

Team norms examples

Tick keep, adapt or skip for each norm. Adapt means the idea helps but the wording or the numbers must change for your team. All 24 norms are original examples, not rules.

Area	Example norm	Keep, adapt or skip
Meetings	Every invite names the decision or output the meeting is for. A meeting with no stated purpose may be declined.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Meetings	We start on time and end five minutes early so people can reach their next call.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Meetings	The person who called the meeting writes actions, owners and dates in the shared notes before it ends.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Meetings	Anyone may say “this could be a message” and move an item to the team channel.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Communication channels	Requests that need action go in the team channel with a name and a date, not in a direct message.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Communication channels	We reply to a channel request within one working day, even if the reply is “seen, answer by Thursday”.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Communication channels	Urgent means a customer or a deadline is affected today. Urgent requests go by phone or the on-call channel, never by email alone.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Communication channels	Chat is for quick questions, email for people outside the team, and the shared drive for anything that must be found later.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Decisions	Before a discussion, we say how the decision will be made: by the owner, by the lead after input, or by agreement.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip

Area	Example norm	Keep, adapt or skip
Decisions	Reversible decisions are made by the person closest to the work and posted in the decision log the same day.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Decisions	A logged decision is reopened only with new information, raised first with the person who owns it.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Decisions	People who were absent have one working day to comment before a decision that affects their work is final.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Focus time	Two mornings a week have no internal meetings.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Focus time	A “focus” status means messages wait unless they meet our definition of urgent.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Focus time	We collect non-urgent questions into one message instead of several small interruptions.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Focus time	Nobody is expected to reply outside their own working hours. Late messages use scheduled send.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Feedback	Feedback on a draft names one thing to keep and one specific change, with an example.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Feedback	When we ask for feedback, we say what stage the work is at: early idea, near-final draft or final check.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Feedback	A disagreement about someone’s work is raised with that person first, within a week, not in a group thread.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Feedback	At each review, everyone may name one thing a colleague did that made their work easier. Passing is fine.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Hybrid and online work	If one person joins remotely, everyone joins from their own device so all see the same screen.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Hybrid and online work	Cameras are optional. We take turns with the raise-hand function and the chat.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Hybrid and online work	A decision made in the office or a corridor counts only once it is written in the team channel.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip
Hybrid and online work	When the team spans time zones, meeting times rotate so the same people do not always take the early or late slot.	☐ Keep ☐ Adapt ☐ Skip

Working agreement template

Write each agreement as one sentence across the row: when this happens, we will do this, here, by then. Start with three. Add more only at a review.

Area	When this happens	We will	Where	By when	Exception
Agreement 1					
Agreement 2					
Agreement 3					
Agreement 4					

Team, date agreed, steward and review date

_____

_____

Working agreement example

A fictional six-person learning team in two offices. The steward keeps the agreement visible; nobody polices it.

Area	When this happens	We will	Where	By when	Exception
Meetings	We book a meeting of more than 15 minutes	State the decision or output needed and attach a short agenda	Calendar invite	One working day before	Same-day calls about a learner complaint
Communication channels	A request needs action from a colleague	Post it with a name and a due date, not in a direct message	Team channel	Reply within one working day	Personal or confidential matters go by direct message
Focus time	It is Tuesday or Thursday morning	Book no internal meetings and set our status to focus	Shared calendar	09:00 to 11:30 every week	Live learner sessions and requests that meet our urgent definition

Team: Learning team, six people in two offices (fictional). Agreed on Tuesday 13 October 2026. Steward: learning coordinator. Review on Tuesday 27 October 2026, two weeks later. Review question: Which agreement did we break most, and why?

Team charter examples

Two more invented charters in brief. They describe what a group decided, not what a charter guarantees.

Situation	What the team agreed	Why it helped
A design studio of eight people, hybrid, with two part-time members	Comments on each other's work arrive within one working day, and anyone may say that a piece needs a longer conversation rather than a written reply.	Reviewers stopped writing long critiques that arrived too late to use, and part-time members stopped missing decisions.
A hospital admin team of twelve people sharing one inbox	Every message gets a named owner within four hours, and the owner writes the next action even when the answer is not ready.	Handovers stopped depending on who remembered what, and patients received a holding reply the same day.

Facilitator run of show

1 Set the scope | 5 minutes

Say: “Today we will agree on a few practical ways to work together. These are experiments we will review, not a statement of everyone’s personality.” Confirm what the group can decide and what needs outside approval.

2 Find useful patterns | 10 minutes

Give everyone three minutes to write habits that help and points where work gets stuck. Invite examples without naming or blaming colleagues. Then hand out the team norms examples as a menu. Say: “Tick keep, adapt or skip next to any norm that speaks to a problem you just wrote down. The list prompts us. It does not decide for us.” Group the observations and the ticked norms under communication, decisions, handovers and support.

3 Select three priorities | 10 minutes

Each person marks two areas where a clearer agreement would help. Discuss the top three. Ask who will be affected and whether their perspective is represented. Park other topics with a clear owner rather than squeezing them into vague rules.

4 Write observable agreements | 15 minutes

In pairs, draft a sentence for each priority on the working agreement template: “When [trigger], we [behaviour], using [channel or record], by [time].” Example: “When a deadline is at risk, we post the impact and a proposed next step in the project channel before the end of our working day.” Pairs may start from a ticked example norm and rewrite it for this team. Avoid “always communicate better.”

5 Test realistic situations | 10 minutes

Try each agreement against a missed deadline, an urgent request and a colleague outside their working hours. Ask whether the rule is feasible across time zones. Record exceptions and an escalation route. Amend any agreement that requires people to be permanently available.

6 Commit and schedule review | 10 minutes

Read each agreement aloud. Ask for concerns before asking for support. Assign a steward to keep the agreement visible, not to police colleagues. Set a review two weeks from now and define what evidence will tell you whether it helped.

Debrief and next steps

Questions for reflection

- Which agreement is clear enough for a new colleague to use?
- What might make this hard to follow?
- How will we notice whether the agreement reduces friction?
- Which example norm did we skip, and what does that tell us about how we already work?

Adapt the session

- For a new team, use hypothetical coordination examples and label the agreements provisional.

- For an established team, review one existing agreement before adding another. Retire rules that no longer help.
- For hybrid meetings, let everyone contribute through the same written channel and invite remote voices before in-room discussion.
- Short version for 30 minutes or a team of three or four: skip the vote, let each person pick one norm from the examples list, and adapt two of them into the working agreement template.
- For quiet participants, collect the keep, adapt or skip ticks on paper or in a shared document before any discussion, and read the totals aloud rather than asking people to defend a choice.

After the session

Publish the one-page agreement in the team's usual workspace. At the review, bring examples of what helped and what was hard. Revise the behaviour or conditions rather than assigning blame.

Questions people ask

What should a team charter contain?

A purpose sentence, who the agreement covers, two or three observable working agreements, decision rights, what counts as urgent, and a review date with a named steward. One or two pages is enough; a longer charter usually holds values rather than agreements.

How do we write agreements that people actually follow?

Write what someone would see and hear: the trigger, the action, the channel and the timing. An agreement such as communication is clear is not testable, while a reply within one working day is.

How often should we review the charter?

Monthly for the first three months, then quarterly. Review the agreements against what actually happened and delete anything the team keeps ignoring.

Is a team charter the same as a project charter?

No. A project charter covers a project: scope, budget, deliverables. A team charter covers how a standing group works together and outlives any single project.

What are good team norms examples?

Good team norms describe something you could see or hear, such as replying to channel requests within one working day or keeping two mornings a week free of internal meetings. The 24 team norms examples on this page cover meetings, communication channels, decisions, focus time, feedback and hybrid work. Pick the few that answer a problem your team actually has, then rewrite the numbers and channels for your team.

What is the difference between a team charter, team norms and a working agreement?

Team norms are single habits. A working agreement is a short written set of them, each with a trigger, an action, a channel and a time, so the working agreement template here is the agreements part of a charter on its own. A team charter adds purpose, who is covered, decision rights and a review. The retrospective template is where you review whether the charter works. Use the RACI template when the open question is who does and who approves each task, and the team values workshop when you need to turn company values into behaviours first.

What is included in the free and editable files?

The open PDF has the blank team charter template, a filled example, the 24 team norms examples with keep, adapt or skip boxes, the working agreement template and a filled working agreement, and the 60-minute workshop. Subscribers also receive the editable Word file, an Excel workbook with the workshop plan, a norms menu that counts your keep and adapt choices by area, and a blank and filled working agreement that flag missing parts and work out the review date, and a CSV of the workshop timings.

Use and sharing

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