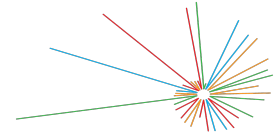


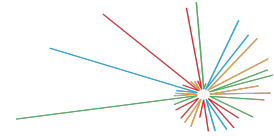
Leader Tips: Guiding a Culture in Action Session

The meeting agenda provides step-by-step instructions for each of the practices, as well as the suggested amount of time to spend on each practice. These tips provide additional information for the session leader.

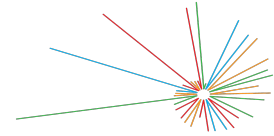
Practice	Tips
General	<p>Relax, enjoy yourself, and trust your instincts.</p> <p>Pay attention to the group to make sure everybody has a chance to be heard.</p>
Presence & Focus	<p>Open the session by taking a few moments of silence. Tell everybody to turn off/put away phones and other devices, to breath deeply, and to take a moment to become present, open, and aware.</p> <p>For some groups, this may take some getting used to. But stopping for a moment of silence is powerful. It lets everybody let go of whatever was on their mind as they walked into the room so that you can all switch, to really focus on the work you're doing here and now. Feel free to normalize the moment of silence however makes sense in your organization.</p> <p>When people have had a minute or two for PRESENCE, gently (without breaking the silence) let people it's time to practice FOCUS. Ask them to think about what they are experiencing and to direct their attention to this meeting.</p> <p>Use a consistent practice to go into and out of silence – make it a habit.</p>
Check-In	<p>You can start check-in yourself, or let people start whenever they are ready.</p> <p>When possible, let people choose when to speak. The minimum is "I am here" or "ready".</p> <p>Participants can also briefly share with the group what's competing for their attention, or anything that is making it difficult to be present. Encourage people to focus on what's going on at this moment and not to get into generalized "what I did over the last two weeks" debriefs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EXAMPLE: "I just heard some great news and am feeling really happy." Or "I'm facing a deadline and am finding it hard to focus on this meeting." Or "I just came from a contentious meeting and am still feeling edgy." ➤ NOT: "It's been a busy week." Or "I've been working on what we talked about at the last meeting – let me summarize what I've accomplished" <p>Leave a moment at the end to give people a chance to feel where the group is – individually and collectively.</p> <p>Pay attention to who's spoken, and make sure everybody speaks. It's fine if there are some moments of silence – some people need more time before jumping in. Without rushing, gently draw in anybody who doesn't voluntarily speak up. It helps reinforce the value of hearing from everybody. In addition, it builds people's comfort with speaking up, which is important as you head toward CONVERSATION.</p>
Stories	<p>Spend up to 10 minutes giving participants a chance to share quick, one or two sentence STORIES highlighting the best of the team's culture in action. The goal is to make the cultural practices you want clear, explicit, and observed.</p> <p>Guide people to keep the STORIES recent, short, and specific – not generalized</p>



	<p>attributes, but specific actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EXAMPLE: “Last week I was facing a major deadline. Bill noticed I was stressed and brought me a sandwich. It meant a lot – both because eating let me get my work done and because I didn’t think Bill would have noticed. It shifted how I thought of him as a colleague.” ➤ NOT: “Bob’s a great colleague – I really appreciate the nice things he does.” <p>Often, the most important STORIES are the ones that otherwise would go unnoticed – the small (and often unconscious) things we do for one another.</p> <p>Not everybody has to speak, and some people may share more than one story.</p> <p>Leave some silence at the end – sometimes people speak up only when there’s a big enough opening.</p>
<p>Tensions</p>	<p>Start by briefly recapping the TENSION(S) from the last session and the agreed-upon ACTIONS. Don’t discuss the TENSION – just make sure to pull forward the content from the last session into this session.</p> <p>Then, spend up to 8 minutes letting participants name other TENSIONS they would like to discuss.</p> <p><i>Remember:</i> TENSIONS are NOT merely criticisms of the status quo or problems to be solved. They are gaps – often gaps that exist for important, legitimate reasons – between the current reality and the desired future state. Often, it helps to use “how might I/we” to frame the TENSION.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EXAMPLE: “It’s really important to me to get the new product launched on time. At the same time, I’ve stopped exercising, which I miss. How might I integrate exercise back into my life while still getting done what I need to get done at work?” ➤ NOT: “I’m working so hard I never get to exercise. I hate my job.” <p>Have people describe TENSIONS specifically and honestly, in a way that both acknowledges why you are where you are and maximizes the room to see how to get to where you want to be. Help people avoid simplistic, negative, self-fulfilling descriptions of the current state, or self-defeating views of the challenges involved in getting to the future state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EXAMPLE: “I know we need to make some headcount reductions. But the uncertainty is creating a lot of stress for my team ... and for me. How might we handle this, recognizing we don’t want to rush into a decision prematurely but also acknowledging that the uncertainty is really hard on everybody?” ➤ NOT: “I know management is getting ready to fire people. What game are they playing by keeping us in the dark?” <p>TENSIONS can be very tactical, highly strategic, or anything in between. The objective is to select things that matter.</p> <p>Hold off on CONVERSATIONS about how to deal with the TENSIONS – for now, just focus on getting a list.</p> <p>Keep a log of the TENSIONS, so that you can track them from one meeting to the next and can come back to them later.</p> <p>Use the last 2 minutes to agree on which TENSION(S) you want to work on during the</p>



	<p>current session and to delete any TENSIONS from the log that are no longer relevant or important.</p> <p>If you want, you can agree to have other groups or a subgroup of this group tackle some of the TENSIONS on your list.</p> <p>If you selected more than one TENSION, deal with each TENSION fully – TENSION, CONVERSATION, and ACTION – before turning to the next TENSION.</p>
<p>Conversation</p>	<p>Spend the next 35 minutes confronting the agreed-upon TENSION(S) with open-mindedness and creativity. Think of it like exercise – isolating and intentionally stretching the muscle that connects the present to future.</p> <p>There is no fixed objective – this isn’t a problem to be solved, but rather a TENSION to be explored, understood, and addressed in a concrete way. Your discussion may explore whether and if so how to move to the future reality. Equally, it may consider ways to re-think how people perceive the TENSION – potentially reframing the TENSION in a way that opens up new possibilities. Similarly, it may involve acknowledging ways in which the TENSION is desired or has value, or that eliminating the TENSION isn’t feasible or would come at too high a price.</p> <p>For example, imagine you’re in a highly competitive job market and as a result your team is experiencing high turnover, which is causing burnout for those in the room. You might frame your TENSION as “How might we approach staffing differently so that team members can get necessary work done without burning out?” Your CONVERSATION could then go in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Address the TENSION: You might focus on things like investing in training tools so that it’s less time-consuming to onboard and train new employees, augmenting the team in another city with less competition for talent, investing in tools that streamline work processes and free up time, or creating a prioritization process so that when the group is under-staffed they can adjust the workload. ➤ Re-frame the TENSION: You might decide that it’s not the tight job market but something else that’s causing the high turnover. You could then focus on what you can do to reduce turnover. Or you might realize that turnover will always be a challenge because your team is small and highly specialized – so every person who quits leaves a big hole. You could then focus on how you could do more cross training with a similar team, to increase resiliency, or possibly rely on an outsourced solution with the necessary scale to deal with turnover. ➤ Acknowledge the TENSION: You might realize that you are at a pivotal point in your organization’s growth, and that high turnover is actually necessary because you’re fundamentally changing the nature of the work your team does. In that case, you might decide that you’re going to need to live with high turnover for now, and focus instead on what you can do to address burnout and how you can develop a clear plan so everybody knows how (and how quickly) you will get to the end of this challenging time. <p>Your role as moderator is crucial.</p> <p>First, help people stay focused on the TENSION you agreed to discuss.</p>



	<p>Second, help them avoid falling into STORIES that aren't fully true or are no longer true.</p> <p>Third, pay attention to the dynamics within the group. Who's talking? Who's silent? Who looks uncomfortable? What is body language saying about how people are reacting? Actively moderate the discussion to ensure all voices are being heard that no individuals are dominating the CONVERSATION. Sometimes, people with less "skin in the game" will have interesting perspectives and insights.</p> <p>It will take time and practice to get great at TENSION and CONVERSATION – don't worry if it's sometimes hard or uncomfortable.</p>
<p>Actions</p>	<p>Take 10 minutes to agree on specific ACTIONS. Be specific about who will do what by when.</p> <p>Write it down in a place people can refer to between sessions and as they prepare for the next session.</p> <p>Continue to pay attention to the dynamics within the group to ensure that the ACTIONS have real buy-in.</p> <p>As you wrap up the TENSION – CONVERSTION – ACTION phase, pause for a moment to let each person mark the moment. Individuals may want to confirm completion of a conversation or agreement on next steps. It's also possible some members will want to name something they want to address at a future session. Ending with a conscious group process of naming both what is complete and also what must be brought forward into a future session is an important step that connects the present to the future.</p>
<p>Appreciation</p>	<p>Spend your final 10 minutes in APPRECIATION.</p> <p>Call for a moment of silence before beginning, to release the energy that's probably built up as you worked through TENSION-CONVERSATION-ACTION.</p> <p>Give all participants the chance to briefly name <u>specific things they valued during today's session</u>. Keep these quick, short, and specific.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EXAMPLE: "Kate's idea to split the launch process into two steps was creative and opened up a lot of new possibilities for dealing with the staffing constraints." ➤ NOT: "Kate is always so creative." <p>The purpose is to bring specific actions or contributions front and center specific by naming them, so that the team notices them, appreciates them, and is more likely to repeat them.</p>