

# Quality Improvement Basics

## Project Teams and Leadership

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## Objectives

After completing this module, participants will be able to

- Recognize the necessity of a team approach to quality improvement
- Identify several barriers to team performance
- Describe what effective team leaders do to empower team members to participate in quality improvement

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## QI Is a Team Process

A team approach is needed when:

- The process or system is complex
- You are dealing with a recurring problem that you've tried to resolve in the past without success
- No one person in an organization knows all the dimensions of an issue
- The process involves more than one discipline or work area
- Solutions require creativity
- Staff commitment and buy-in are needed

Source: <https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/quality/toolbox/508pdfs/qualityimprovement.pdf>

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## High-Performing Teams

Teams that perform well:

- Have a clear and shared vision (a shared “mental model”)
- Have a clear direction and aim
- Have strong team leadership
- Have clear roles and responsibilities
- Communicate with each other, sharing feedback regularly
- Develop a strong sense of collective trust and confidence
- Create and implement ways to work together collaboratively
- Identify monitor and measure performance outcomes

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## Barriers to Team Performance

- Inconsistent participation/team member turnover
- Lack of strong leadership
- Unclear team goals and expectations
- Lack of time for team member participation and follow up.
- Lack of information sharing
- Unnecessary bureaucratic hierarchy
- Defensiveness
- Unwillingness to think differently or try new ideas
- Not adjusting to varying communication styles
- Conflict (Sometimes necessary, but still challenging to navigate in a team setting)
- Lack of coordination and follow-up
- Distractions and competing priorities.
- Fatigue and burn out.
- Heavy Workload
- Misinterpretation of cues
- Lack of role clarity

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## Effective Team Leaders

- Support the team with developing, implementing and monitoring a plan to carry out and evaluate the teams work (convene and organize the team)
- Articulate goals clearly
- Support effective meeting facilitation
- Make sure the right people are at the table and part of the project
- Empower members to speak up and share their ideas, knowledge, and perspectives
- Focus on the use of quantitative and qualitative data to help guide decision making
- Enable decisions through collective input of members
- Actively promote and facilitate good teamwork
- Skillfully work with the team to resolve conflict
- Secure senior leader support of resources needed for the project

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## Building Your QI Team

Each team member should:

- Review and understand the specific QI Project Charter
- Understand their QI team roles and responsibilities
- Provide useful ideas, information, and respectful feedback
- Participate in team decision-making
- Assist and enable their fellow team members in carrying out the work of the QI team
- Contribute to conflict resolution
- Reduce stress on the team by putting the needs of the team first

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## In Summary

- Why its important to use a team approach when working on quality improvement
- What the barriers are to team performance
- What team leaders can do to empower team members to participate in quality improvement efforts

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