



# **MAT Health Clinic**

## **Leadership Development Guide**

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# 1 THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Being an effective leader for your team is a very important part of your role at MAT Health Clinic (MHC). Much of your job is about leading, supporting, influencing and motivating your team to complete the work that needs to be done.

As a leader, you need to identify more effective and efficient ways to work and continually develop your team and the individuals within your team. This all relies on good leadership. You can learn to become a more effective leader by improving your leadership skills and your attitude toward leading other people.

This Leadership Development Guide provides you with the key principles and techniques to become a more effective leader at MHC. It is divided into the following sections:

- Leadership effectiveness
- Improving workplace relationships
- Teams and team planning
- Developing your team
- Managing and developing team performance
- Consultation and networking

## 2 LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Management and leadership are not the same thing. Managers are appointed to a specific position in the organisation. Leaders are people whose knowledge, experience, personality and characteristics encourage others to follow them. Leaders can be found at all levels in an organisation.

Management and leadership are not mutually exclusive – good managers can and should also be good leaders.

The biggest difference between managers and leaders is the way they motivate the people who work or follow them, and this sets the tone for all aspects of what they do.

A good leader will:

- harness their team's energies
- coach, guide and support their team in their efforts
- see that their team have what they need to do their jobs to the best of their ability
- express goals clearly and precisely, in a way that encourages people to work willingly and cooperatively towards achieving them
- supply the vision and an overall sense of purpose, which will inspire the team

### 2.1. Key features of common leadership styles

<sup>1</sup>In order to be an effective leader at MHC it is important to understand your leadership style. Leadership styles can be broadly grouped into 5 different categories:

- Authoritarian Leadership
- Participative Leadership
- Delegative Leadership
- Transactional Leadership
- Transformational Leadership

#### 2.1.1. Authoritarian Leadership

Authoritarian leadership styles allow a leader to impose expectations and define outcomes. A one-person show can turn out to be successful in situations when a leader is the most knowledgeable in the team. Although this is an efficient strategy in time-constrained periods, creativity will be sacrificed since input from the team is limited. The authoritarian leadership style is also used when team members need clear guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.imd.org/imd-reflections/reflection-page/leadership-styles/>

**Advantages:**

Time spent on making crucial decisions can be reduced.

- Chain of command can be clearly emphasised.
- Mistakes in the implementation of plans can be reduced.
- Using authoritarian leadership style creates consistent results.

**Disadvantages:**

- A very strict leadership style can sometimes lead to employee rebellion.
- It kills employee creativity and innovation.
- It reduces group synergy and collaboration.
- Group input is reduced dramatically.
- Authoritarian leadership increases employee turnover rate.

### 2.1.2. Participative leadership

Participative leadership styles are rooted in democratic theory. The essence is to involve team members in the decision-making process. Team members thus feel included, engaged and motivated to contribute. The leader will normally have the last word in the decision-making processes. However, if there are disagreements within a group, it can be a time-consuming process to reach a consensus.

**Advantages:**

- It increases employee motivation and job satisfaction.
- It encourages use of employee creativity.
- A participative leadership style helps in the creation of a strong team.
- High level of productivity can be achieved.

**Disadvantages:**

- Decision-making processes become time-consuming.
- Leaders have a high probability of being apologetic to employees.
- Communication failures can sometimes happen.
- Security issues can arise because of transparency in information sharing.
- Poor decisions can be made if the employees are unskilled.

### 2.1.3. Delegative leadership

Also known as "laissez-faire leadership", a delegative leadership style focuses on delegating initiative to team members. This can be a successful strategy if team members are competent, take responsibility and prefer engaging in individual work. However, disagreements among the members may split and divide a group, leading to poor motivation and low morale.

**Advantages:**

- Experienced employees can take advantage of their competence and experience.
- Innovation and creativity are highly valued.
- Delegative leadership creates a positive work environment.

**Disadvantages:**

- Command responsibility is not properly defined.
- Delegative leadership creates difficulty in adapting to change.

## 2.1.4. Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership styles use "transactions" between a leader and his or her followers - rewards, punishments and other exchanges - to get the job done. The leader sets clear goals, and team members know how they'll be rewarded for their compliance. This "give and take" leadership style is more concerned with following established routines and procedures in an efficient manner, than with making any transformational changes to an organisation.

**Advantages:**

- Leaders create specific, measurable and time-bound goals that are achievable for employees.
- Employee motivation and productivity is increased.
- Transactional leadership eliminates or minimizes confusion in the chain of command.
- It creates a system that is easy to implement for leaders and easy to follow by employees.
- Employees can choose reward systems.

**Disadvantages:**

- Innovation and creativity is minimised.
- Empathy is not valued.
- Transactional leadership creates more followers than leaders among employees.

## 2.1.5. Transformational leadership

In transformational leadership styles, the leader inspires his or her followers with a vision and then encourages and empowers them to achieve it. The leader also serves as a role model for the vision.

**Advantages:**

- It leads to a lower employee turnover rate.
- Transformational leadership places high value on corporate vision.
- High morale of employees is often experienced.
- It uses motivation and inspiration to gain the support of employees.
- It is not a coercive approach to leadership.
- It places high value on relationships.

## Disadvantages:

- Leaders can deceive employees.
- Consistent motivation and constant feedback may be required.
- Tasks can't be pushed through without the agreement of employees.
- Transformational leadership can sometimes lead to the deviation of protocols and regulations.

## 2.2. The role of a leader at MHC

As a leader at MHC, you will:

- assist your team in establishing its purpose, roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities in line with MHC's goals, plans and objectives.
- assist your team to monitor and adjust its performance within MHC's continuous improvement policies and processes.
- Monitor the team competencies and encourage your team to use the competencies of each member.

## 2.3. The key responsibilities of a leader at MHC

As a leader at MHC, your key responsibilities are to:

- Monitor and lead the ongoing development and improvement of your team.
- Provide supervision and support to your team and oversee skill development.
- Lead and participate in workplace meetings.
- Provide leadership in the development and implementation of new projects and initiatives.
- Contribute to the vision, strategic planning and relevant policy development, for MHC and actively participate as a member of the management team.
- Maintain high standards of file management ensuring that all patient files are stored in line with legislative requirements and organisational policies and procedures.
- Participate in data collection and evaluation processes that contribute to service improvement.
- Build and maintain effective relationships with key stakeholders involved in the provision of health and allied services.
- Deliver training and development activities to your team.



### 3 IMPROVING WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

As a leader at MHC, you have an important role to play in developing and maintaining positive relationships with your team members. Having a good relationship with your team will improve work satisfaction, trust and confidence within the team.

Here are five ways to build strong, positive relationships at work:

- Schedule time to build relationships. Even if it is for only a few minutes a day, it is important to be intentional around making time to talk with team members and take an interest in their life.
- Develop your emotional intelligence. Understanding your own emotional needs can help you to empathise with others.
- Appreciate others. Show your appreciation by complimenting a job well done.
- Manage your boundaries. Building friendships is important. But if a relationship becomes distracting, it's important to take action. Set clear boundaries around when and where it's acceptable to socialise.
- Avoid gossiping. If you are experiencing conflict with a team member, gossiping will only exacerbate the problem. Instead, talk directly to the person involved and find a way to work together amicably.

#### 3.1. Building trust and confidence

Trust and confidence take time to develop. The level of trust people have in you is often determined by your daily interactions with them and how you conduct yourself both professionally and personally.

As a leader at MHC, you must adjust your approach and style to relate to MHC's social and cultural environment. Your ability to set a positive example in accordance with MHC's expectations as set out in our policies and procedures are important if you are going to build and maintain the trust and confidence of others.

Team members need to trust each other, and you can act as a role model for this through your work with the team.

Leaders build trust and confidence within the work group by:

- behaving consistently
- behaving with integrity
- sharing control by delegating
- including team members in decision making
- providing accurate, clear information
- explaining decisions
- respecting the team's diversity
- demonstrating consideration and sensitivity.

**MHC's Code of Conduct** provide the appropriate standards of behaviour that are required at MHC. It is your responsibility as a leader at MHC to ensure that you understand and model this Code of Conduct in your work and in the relationships you have with your team.

## 3.2. Communication and interpersonal styles

Good communication and interpersonal skills are essential for any team leader. At MHC, your ability to communicate with your team members according to their preferences is a first step in developing team commitment and cooperation. Without the skills and knowledge to talk and act in ways that acknowledge the needs of your team members, obtaining commitment and cooperation in your team is difficult.

### 3.2.1. Communication

Effective leaders use communication as a tool to motivate and inspire, convey critical thoughts and ideas and to persuade others. If communication is lacking, important information can be misinterpreted, causing relationships to suffer and ultimately, creating barriers that hinder progress.

There are six main types of workplace communication:

- Informal
- Formal
- Verbal
- Active Listening
- Non-verbal
- Written

At MHC, each type of communication plays a vital role in successfully sharing information with your team members and patients and it is important that you have an understanding of the main benefits and drawbacks of each type of workplace communication.

#### Informal communication

Informal communication is an official term for casual conversations shared between team members. It tends to be more personal and because of that, one of the main benefits of encouraging and harnessing informal communication in the workplace is that it helps to build strong working relationships as well as promoting effective teamwork.

Informal communication can also be utilised to address minor misconduct situations. If a team member is not meeting MHC standards, or is often running late, an informal chat can often solve the problem without having to give them an intimidating formal warning that goes on their record.

The main drawback of informal communication is how it can sometimes lead to gossiping or inappropriate conversations which may offend some people or get out of hand and actually start to damage the company culture.

As a leader at MHC, it is important to remind team members, if necessary, that if informal communication gets out of hand that they should avoid saying or writing anything that might hurt someone or jeopardise someone's job.

#### Formal communication

At MHC, formal communication is used to communicate in an official and professional manner with a patient, senior colleague or a stakeholder from outside of MHC. In general, you would avoid using slang and being too familiar or casual in a formal communication with one of these types of people.

While formal communication might not be the most commonly used type of workplace communication, it is highly beneficial in these types of situations:

- When you email someone for the first time, especially if that person is more senior than you, a patient or stakeholder outside of MHC
- When you need to share serious or procedural information with your team
- When you send a follow-up email after a meeting to confirm what was discussed and any next steps you agreed on

The main benefit of formal communication is clarity, strength and respect.

## **Verbal communication**

Verbal or oral communication is when you communicate by speaking. Having effective verbal communication also helps to build a relationship and gauge people's reactions. Elements of speaking like, two-way conversation, the tone in someone's voice or the look on someone's face go a long way in building rapport.

Another benefit of verbal communication is how easy it is to make sure your message is received in the right way. If someone looks confused or a bit taken aback from something you've said, you have the opportunity to clear up any issues right away.

While it is great for avoiding miscommunication, the biggest drawback of verbal communication is not having a record of exactly what was said (unless of course you record a conversation). Written communication makes it easier to refer back to what has been discussed if questions arise at a later date.

## **Open-ended questions**

If you want to understand a team members motivations, thoughts, and goals better, practice asking open-ended questions.

Use the acronym TED, which stands for:

"Tell me more."

"Explain what you mean."

"Define that term or concept for me."

By leveraging those phrases when speaking with your team, you can elicit more thoughtful, thorough responses and ensure you also have clarity around what they need from you to succeed.

## **Non-verbal communication**

Non-verbal communication is everything other than words that people use when communicating. People pick up on more than just words in a conversation including things like:

- Body language - when giving feedback
- Tone of voice - when giving instructions
- Facial expressions - when reacting to an idea someone might not agree with
- Eye contact - when someone is listening
- Intonation - especially when talking on the phone
- Interaction - remembering personal details
- General disposition - when someone is working on a deadline or a tricky project

Effective non-verbal communication leads to clearer, more positive and effective communication overall. It is essentially the best mate of verbal communication. The right body language stimulates a productive conversation. Alternatively, the wrong body language can get someone offside quickly. So, the more your non-verbal cues align with your verbal message, the more successful your communication with your team will be.

The main drawback of encouraging non-verbal communication is when your team members use it without much thought. An inadvertent yawn, slouching posture or un-engaging tone of voice can ruin a meeting or worse, turn a patient off. So, it is important that as a leader at MHC, you take some time to give your team members some helpful pointers around using positive non-verbal cues across all types of workplace communication.

## **Active listening**

The most important communication skill for leaders is the ability to listen. Professional listening skills include listening for the message, listening for any emotions behind the message and considering relevant questions about the message.

Listening for the message means hearing the facts accurately, without prejudice or being distracted by other thoughts. It's also important to listen for any unusually strong stresses in the sentences or other signs of emotion.

Effective leaders know when they need to talk and, more importantly, when they need to listen. Listening to what a team member says or doesn't say, how they say it, their body language, and what information they share about their preferences, values, and experiences shows you care.

### **Written communication**

Written communication includes hand-writing or typing words (and numbers) to share information. Emails, company messenger platforms, text messages, letters, PowerPoint presentations and even short handwritten post-it notes all come under written communication.

Written communication offers five main benefits, including:

#### **Organisation**

Putting information into written words is a great way to organise your message. Laying words out in a visually appealing way (using bullet points, tables and subheadings for example) can help you and other people digest that information quickly and comprehensively.

#### **Clarity**

Writing makes it easier to be clear and concise when communicating complex information. It also allows you to edit and get your message as close to perfect as possible before delivering it.

#### **Reference**

When there is confusion about when something was submitted or if someone asks you about what happened in a meeting from last month and you remembered to write notes, you can refer back to your notes or emails when your memory deserts you.

#### **Proof**

Written words leave a detailed trail, this gives you facts if you're ever questioned about something down the line.

#### **Efficiency**

When you need to communicate with a team whose calendars are full, a quick email, presentation or collaborative document explaining the input you need from everyone can save time.

The main drawback of written communication is that it's hard to convey tone. This makes it easier for someone to take your message the wrong way if they don't understand some of the words or punctuation marks you chose to use. For example, a misplaced exclamation mark can be mistaken for yelling rather than excitement.

### **3.2.2. Adapting communication styles and methods**

Leaders need to adapt their communication style and methods to suit individuals and teams.

Taking the time to adjust the words, the structure, and approach in communicating with team members shows that you care enough to pay attention to individual differences in their perspectives, values, experiences, and strengths.

Knowing how each member of your team prefers to gather information and how each member prefers to get advice and to be given instructions will help you to communicate the team goals appropriately to each team member.

Team leaders are the people who spend the most time working with and observing team members in the workplace; therefore, they are usually the best person to identify communication preferences and requirements. There may be situations where you are unable to determine a team member's needs and will need to seek advice from other people.

### 3.2.3. Interpersonal styles

<sup>2</sup> Interpersonal style can be defined as how we interact with other people. Our style and behaviour is impacted by our personalities, our values and the environment we live and work in, and the styles of those we interact with.

As a team leader at MHC, awareness of your interpersonal style, including its strength and weaknesses, is an important step in determining how you can best lead your team. Communicating with team members in their preferred style will help you get the best out of them. A given situation will require you to refine your approach to meet the objective while leveraging your collective strengths and listening styles. Effective leaders get the best out of people by leveraging the strengths of team members in addition to their own. They are adept at building diverse teams comprising the right mix of capabilities and approaches.

A number of practical benefits result from understanding interpersonal style.

- understanding your style and that of others will help you communicate more effectively. An ability to adapt your style and communicate in your counterpart's preferred "listening" style is a key success factor in getting the best out of them.
- understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your style helps you to determine how you can make the most effective contribution with your team.
- being aware of your team members' styles (and associated strengths) will help you make conscious choices on team member selection when building "task teams" to meet a specific goal.

Interpersonal styles can be broken into 4 types:

1. <sup>3</sup>Accommodating ("Get along") types are good listeners and focus on team harmony and steadiness, seeking to creating a climate of trust
2. Enthusiastic ("Get attention") types are creative, good brain-stormers and encourage team innovation
3. Meditative ("Get it right") types are strong on critical thinking, accuracy and details and will encourage the team to solve problems through effective analysis
4. Targeted ("Get it done") types are excellent in crisis, are focused on goals and results and will encourage the team to get the job done.

## 3.3. Implement workplace diversity

People are the heart of what we do at MHC and we believe that equality, inclusion, and diversity are business imperatives. Our goal is to create a culture that is diverse, inclusive and respects and celebrates our differences. As a leader at MHC you will need to ensure that you have an understanding of the important role diversity and inclusion can play within a team.

Diversity in the workplace makes teams perform more creatively and innovatively than teams with similar backgrounds. When people react and think differently, approach challenges and solve

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<sup>2</sup> <http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/861003/22807151/1369960838953/The+importance+of+interpersonal+style.pdf?token=vO9M2PehGqjEcFwpnxvFHBCJ80%3D>

<sup>3</sup> Temme's, Team Power – How to build and grow successful teams

problems differently, it can mean that our patients will receive a better level of service and teams achieve their goals.

Diversity can include:

- Age
- Family responsibilities
- Gender
- Physical and mental needs
- Race and ethnicity
- Religious belief
- Language
- Cultural background

### 3.3.1. Value diversity in the workplace

Respect for cultural diversity includes valuing their unique characteristics, qualities, cultural practices and that their needs are recognised. Recognising the individual and cultural differences of the people you are working with is the first step in being able to set up a culturally safe environment.

### 3.3.2. Principles of equity in the workplace

These principles of equity are based on the fair employment and treatment of staff and patients at MHC:

- Treating each other with respect and dignity
- Providing a safe, secure and healthy workplace environment
- Making decisions that are generally based on equity and fairness
- Recognising the value of diversity
- Accommodating a range of cultural requirements
- Taking appropriate action to eliminate discrimination, stereotyping and bias

When accommodating diversity you need to;

- Challenge and strip away stereotypes
- Build significant relationships with people who are different from you
- Do not make assumptions about people
- Look for commonalities
- Set the example
- Break down the communication barriers
- Throw away the fear factor- prejudice stems from fear

### 3.3.3. Alternative communication strategies

Awareness of cultural differences includes realising that various cultural groups have different rules for:

- Use of humour and irony
- Courtesies in speech, such as when to say 'please', 'thank you' or 'excuse me'
- The meaning of 'yes' and 'no'
- Rules of politeness
- Dress
- Food preferences, choices and taboos
- Use or perceptions of time

For more information on being more inclusive at MHC please refer to our Workplace Diversity and Inclusion intranet information page for more information. [CLICK HERE](#)

### 3.4. Impact of legislation

In addition to MHC policies and procedures, you must ensure that you are aware of and understand the impact of workplace relations legislation on your workplace relationships.

<sup>4</sup>The national workplace relations system was established by the *Fair Work Act 2009* and other laws and covers the majority of private sector employees and employers in Australia

As set out in the Fair Work Act and other workplace legislation, the key elements of our workplace relations framework are:

- A safety net of minimum terms and conditions of employment.
- A system of enterprise-level collective bargaining underpinned by bargaining obligations and rules governing industrial action.
- Provision for individual flexibility arrangements as a way to allow an individual worker and an employer to make flexible work arrangements that meet their genuine needs, provided that the employee is better off overall.
- Protections against unfair or unlawful termination of employment.
- Protection of the freedom of both employers and employees to choose whether or not to be represented by a third party in workplace matters and the provision of rules governing the rights and responsibilities of employer and employee representatives.

Australia's workplace relations laws are enacted by the Commonwealth Parliament. The practical application of the Fair Work Act in workplaces is overseen by the Fair Work Commission and the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The practical application of the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* is overseen by the Fair Work Commission and the Registered Organisations Commission.

- The [Fair Work Commission- external site](#) is the independent national workplace relations tribunal and has the power to carry out a range of functions in relation to workplace matters. These include the safety net of minimum conditions, enterprise bargaining, industrial action, dispute resolution and termination of employment. The commission also carries out a range

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ag.gov.au/industrial-relations/australias-national-workplace-relations-system>

of functions relating to registered organisations (unions and employer organisations) such as their registration, amalgamation, rules and applications for WHS and entry permits.

- The [Fair Work Ombudsman- external site](#) helps employees, employers, contractors and the wider community to understand their workplace rights and responsibilities and enforces compliance with Australia's workplace laws.
- The [Registered Organisations Commission- external site](#) monitors and educates registered organisations about their responsibilities such as record keeping, finances and elections. The commission was established in 2017 to increase financial transparency and accountability in registered organisations.

### **3.5. Resolve workplace conflict and solving problems**

As a leader at MHC, you will be responsible for helping team members to resolve workplace conflicts. You will be responsible to provide support and assistance to your team and where appropriate help them address and resolve difficulties that they encounter at work. These difficulties might relate to individuals, to the team or to the organisation as a whole.

You can assist your team to resolve work difficulties by:

- Listening
- Observing
- Collecting information
- Analysing
- Collaborating

Resolving conflicts can be complex, but manageable. Keeping the discussion professional is key. To ensure you take a positive path to conflict resolution, ensure that you:

- Accept concern as legitimate
- Clarify both parties' point of view to understand it fully
- Choose a course of action that meets everyone's needs
- Follow up/adjust if needed
- Gather as much information as possible

Avoid what could be considered a negative path to conflict resolution by:

- Reacting to concern (with anger)
- Assigning blame
- Ignoring the conflict or allowing the conflict to escalate
- Lose one or more employee
- Not making assumptions

Even though you are responsible to recognise and respond to the problems as soon as they arise, you are not required to always solve the problem directly. You should be able to assist the team to facilitate a resolution.

As a leader you will act as a conduit for information and resources and as a catalyst for the problem resolution process.



This can include, but is not limited to:

- facilitating problem scoping/resolution within the team
- raising concerns with higher management
- sourcing external expertise/resources to aid with the resolution process
- facilitating group decision-making processes

## **3.6. Types of workplace conflicts**

The following sections outline the typical types of workplace conflicts that you may encounter as a team leader:

### **3.6.1. Task-based conflicts**

These disagreements arise in situations when individuals must coordinate their tasks so that everyone can successfully get their part of a project completed.

In these situations, you should,

- Delegate tasks effectively.
- Communicate with the team the importance of responsibility and accountability.
- Clarify what everyone should be doing in their role so they're all on the same page when deadlines approach.

### **3.6.2. Leadership conflicts**

Everybody has a different leadership style, and everybody reacts differently to those leadership styles. Some leaders are bold and charismatic, others are more laid-back, warm, and inviting. Some are highly technical and strict on rules and deadlines, and others are so hands-off you hardly see them.

To solve potential conflicts, you should emphasize mutual respect of differences within your team. Also, leaders should be aware of their own leadership styles and how they interact with the work styles and personalities of people on their team. They should be able to adjust and connect with their team members no matter their leadership preferences.

### **3.6.3. Work style conflicts**

Just as there are different leadership styles, there are different work styles. Some people prefer to work in groups while others do their best work alone. Some people need no extra direction to complete a task, while others like external input and direction every step of the way. Some people get more work done under pressure, and others like to knock their tasks out early.

The same idea of mutual respect and understanding applies here, as well as throughout all workplace conflicts and any interaction involving other people. We may prefer a particular work style, but sometimes in groups, teams must collaborate to come up with an idea greater than one mind could think up alone – meaning they have to learn to deal with each other's differences.

### **3.6.4. Interpersonal conflicts**

We're not always going to like everyone we meet, and it's not easy to work with someone whose personality we find difficult. It's helpful to remember that who we perceive someone to be is not necessarily who they actually are. This circles back to the theme of empathy and understanding. Don't let what you've seen define everything you'll think about someone in the future.

Interpersonal conflicts arise due to contrasting ethics, beliefs and values.

To resolve this type of conflict you should do the following:

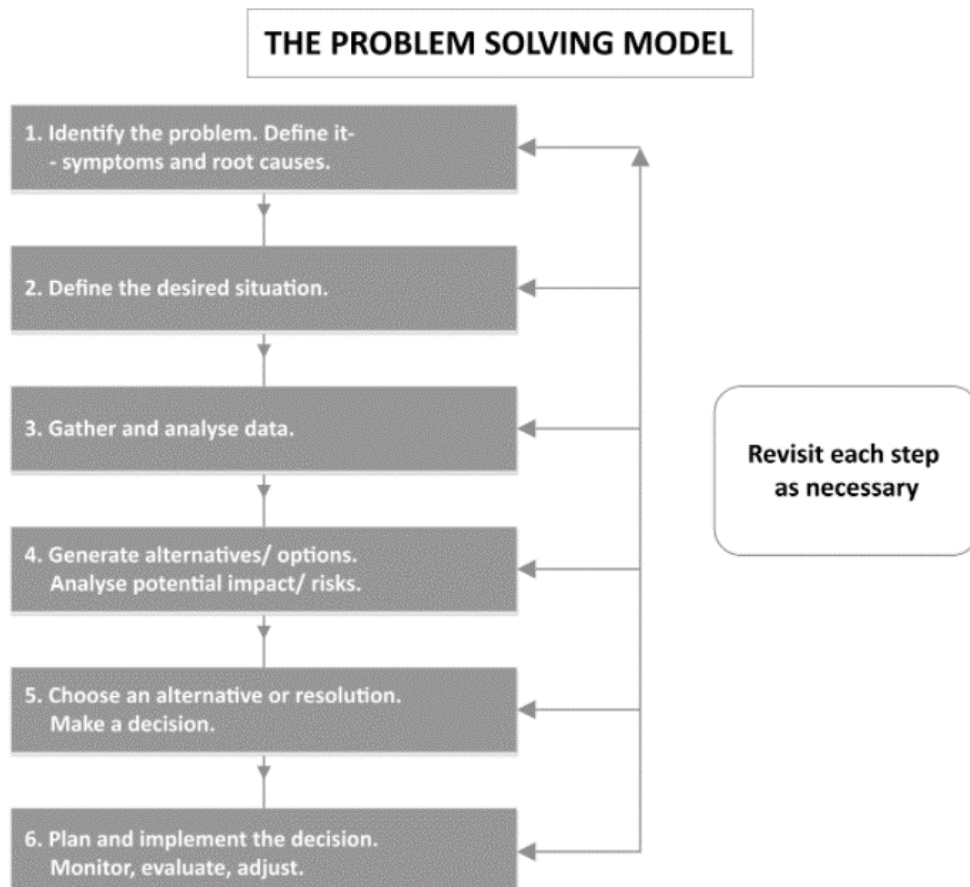
- Organise to meet one on one with each team member in a quiet, private space where issues can be voiced openly.
- Ask open questions to find out the issues
- Listen and gather the information
- Do not take sides or agree with the team member – it is important to remain impartial
- After meeting individually with each team member, facilitate an open discussion with both team members and assist them in coming to an understanding of each team members side.

### 3.6.5. Discrimination

This is where workplace conflict gets more serious, and where human resources might have to get involved. If there's harassment or discrimination going on due to age, race, ethnicity, gender, or what have you, there's a serious need for the company to explicitly emphasize open-mindedness, acceptance, and understanding.

## 3.7. How to solve workplace problems

It is important that workplace conflicts are resolved as soon as possible to ensure that the problems do not escalate. Many difficulties can be addressed using the following problem-solving process:



### 3.8. Common methods to monitor, analyse and improve team relationships

Team relationships can be improved through monitoring and analysing individual performance to identify areas that require development. Following are some common methods you can utilise with your team and yourself to improve performance:

#### Monitor

- Evaluate your own performance against your job role through self-reflection
- Asking for feedback from team members can not only improve leadership skills but also build trust among colleagues.

#### Analyse

- Review all feedback that has been received
- Review self-reflection notes
- Look for areas in the feedback that you can work on and identify specific skills you can develop

#### Improve

- Undertake training, coaching
- Take prompt action to remedy any issues that arise. If continued feedback is received, but there is no attempt to implement changes, the risk is that the team will lose faith in your ability to follow through.

### 3.9. Use feedback to improve as a leader

<sup>5</sup>A large part of being a great leader is being willing to be vulnerable and listen to (and act on) feedback.

Rather than waiting for your team members to come to you, reach out and seek feedback proactively. It not only makes you a more effective leader, but it also builds trust with team members and helps you develop a stronger professional relationship.

The following tactics will help you do your part to make your team more likely to give you the feedback you need to improve as a leader.

#### 3.9.1. Ask for specific feedback.

If you want more feedback from your team, then you should first focus on the actions you can take to make it happen. By getting specific, you make it easier for them to give you more feedback.

You should ask questions like the following:

- How could we change our team meetings to be more effective?
- Would you like more or less direction from me on your work?
- What could I do to make you enjoy your work more?

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<sup>5</sup> <https://availleadership.com/how-to-ask-for-feedback/> <https://www.tinypulse.com/blog/how-to-ask-for-employee-feedback-on-management-leadership>

You can ask for feedback from team members in a number of ways:

- informal discussions
- formal team meeting
- at the end of a team members performance review meeting
- survey provided to team members

### 3.9.2. Be grateful and accepting of feedback

Take the feedback that is given to you as a way to improve your leadership skills. If you are defensive with your team giving you feedback, they may hesitate to give you feedback in the future.

### 3.9.3. Assume positive intent

If a team member is giving you feedback, think of it as a gift. Even if it wasn't delivered in the most friendly manner, you can still learn from it.

You can use the following approach to ensure you continue getting feedback from your team members:

- Pause and thank them for the feedback before you say anything else.
- Ask them to share a recent situation where the feedback applies.
- Ask clarifying questions to ensure you understand the core of their feedback.
- Talk about possible solutions or changes with them, or explain the context they need to know.

## 4 TEAMS AND TEAM PLANNING

Team leaders are the link between management and its employees, the team members. A clear understanding of the goals, plans and objectives of MHC is essential to ensure that you are able to help your team members understand and act toward meeting work requirements. This understanding has to be combined with an ability to communicate well with team members.

This may mean ensuring that team members are aware of:

- how MHC expects team members to behave in the workplace
- what MHC expects team members to achieve in the workplace
- how tasks will be completed
- how performance will be measured.

Team members with an understanding of these issues will have a greater likelihood of working effectively towards team goals.

### 4.1. Developing team goals and plans at MHC

The Management team at MHC will establish broad aims and will then develop detailed goals and objectives for how it will achieve those aims. As a Team leader at MHC, you may be involved at some or all stages of the planning process, however, an integral part of your role is determining the targets, roles and responsibilities for your work team. These must have a direct link to the detailed goals and objectives developed by MHC and will guide the short-term targets for your team.

Work goals should be:

- specific
- measurable
- attainable
- realistic
- time related

#### 4.1.1. The team planning process

All team members should be involved in the team planning process. In addition to team members, management will have a role in confirming that the work plan aligns with MHC's organisational goals and objectives. Prior to commencing the planning process, team leaders should check with management to determine the reporting and communication requirements that the planning process will need to follow.

#### 4.1.2. Reviewing work plans

There is no set time when a work plan should be reviewed. However, they should be reviewed at regular intervals that are relevant to your team's goals. It also makes sense to undertake reviews when specific milestones are met or scheduled to have been met. The review dates or times should be decided when the work plan is being established.

### 4.1.3. Monitoring and adjusting team performance

Team leaders are expected to monitor and adjust team performance to assist the team in meeting its goals. At MHC, we require our team leaders to ensure that teams complete work:

- on time
- within budget
- to specifications.

An everyday part of your role as a team leader at MHC is to assist your team in completing its work successfully. This is greatly assisted by clear communication of your team's goals, objectives and targets in a manner that aligns with your team members' needs.

Team leaders should use a range of monitoring tools. The most commonly used ones include:

- task completion time
- patient satisfaction
- team membership turnover
- wastage
- absenteeism
- safety.

### 4.1.4. Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement means that all aspects of a team's work are reviewed to ensure it meets the standards, goals and expectations of the workplace.

Part of your role as a team leader at MHC is to ensure that employees are kept informed of work requirements. Team leaders also have a role in ensuring that employees are empowered to suggest and discuss potential improvements.

### 4.1.5. Monitoring team competencies and addressing gaps

Team leaders need to be aware of the skills, knowledge, abilities and competencies of team members before monitoring can proceed. Monitoring is essential to ensure a close alignment between team competencies and the team's ability to meet team goals.

Each team member will have an individual set of competencies. As a team leader, this information will assist you in making decisions about matching team members to tasks and developing appropriate training and development can begin.

When there are indications that the competencies needed by your team to reach its performance targets or goals are not available within the team, team leaders should consider providing training and development activities for the team or the team member/s.

## 4.2. Team contributions to the business plan

There are three essential criteria that must be met by you as a team leader at MHC to ensure that your team contributes positively to the business plan. Team leaders must have an understanding of:

- the links between the tasks each team member completes, the overall team performance and MHC's business plan
- your team's performance targets
- the communication needs of your team members and use of appropriate processes to communicate the tasks to each team member.

The complexity of the information about the organisation's business plan (that is provided to team members) will be dependent on the ability of your team members to relate the information to their daily work. An important skill for team leaders is the ability to give and receive information from team members, for example, providing opportunities at staff meetings for team members to discuss the team's work.

## 4.3. Encourage your team to be innovative

As a team leader at MHC, you can encourage your team members to be innovative by ensuring that your team members know that their ideas and suggestions are welcome. If team members know that their ideas will be thoughtfully considered and that they will be provided with useful feedback, team leaders are likely to receive ideas and suggestions that benefit team members, the team and MHC as a whole.

Innovation and use of initiative can have an element of risk taking. This should not be confused with unsafe behaviour. Innovation relates to the opportunities team members are provided to offer new ideas about ways to complete tasks. The risk is whether the innovation will be successful or otherwise.

Similarly, the use of initiative requires organisations and team leaders to create an environment where team members can try alternative ways to complete work.

## 4.4. Strategies to help your team improve work efficiency

You can assist your team to improve work efficiency by setting achievable goals, teaching team members how to manage their time and develop thoughtful habits.

Encourage team members to:

- Develop a routine that puts them in the best possible state to be productive at work.
- To-do lists are predominantly motivating because it gives a clear idea of what is to be accomplished each day. The best time to make a to-do list is at the end of each day so that you clearly know from where to resume work the following day.
- Take 15 minutes before work every day to clear off your desk and create a clean workspace, this will help you focus and avoid distractions.
- Focus on getting one project finished before switching to the next.
- Shut off your social media whilst at work.
- Spend time on priorities and do not waste time on non-priorities.
- Break tasks up into manageable chunks.
- Use your email calendar to set up alerts for meetings. An email calendar is also useful for inputting due dates on tasks so that you can complete your work on time and adhere to your routine.

- Time blocking your days can help you focus on your tasks. Time blocking involves planning out your calendar so that you complete certain tasks at specific times of the day, which helps minimize distractions
- Writing things down can help you remember important information and provide a place to reference your notes later on if needed.
- Develop checklists and templates to help you streamline and standardize your work processes.
- Clean up regularly, a clean workspace helps keep employees motivated, focused and productive. It also makes it quicker and easier to find important documents and other paperwork. Take some time each week to throw away unnecessary clutter and reorganize items into folders or desk drawers.
- Set aside specific time for emails, instead of spending a lot of time throughout the day checking your inbox whenever a new email comes in, set aside blocks of time in your schedule to check your email. During these times, respond to priority messages, flag any emails that you need to get to later and organize informational emails into folders.
- Read, don't skim. It's important to actually read the documents that come your way, not skim through them. Even though it doesn't always feel this way, skimming can be more time-consuming than reading because you may skip something and have to go back.



## 5 TEAM DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1. Group dynamics

An important aspect of effective teamwork entails understanding group dynamics in terms of both team situation and individual temperament. Group dynamics could be viewed as the feeling or mood in the group and how people in a group interact with each other. It can be influenced by the type of group, the leadership in the group, and by the relationships, interactions, attitudes, and behavioural patterns of group members.

As a leader, analysing and understanding the group dynamics in your team provides information on what is influencing the direction of a team's behaviour and assists in identifying improvement opportunities.

#### 5.1.1. Positive group dynamic characteristics

In a group with positive group dynamics, team members will trust one another, communicate openly, work collectively towards common goals and hold each other accountable for making things happen.

#### 5.1.2. Negative group dynamics characteristics

In a group with poor group dynamics, people's behaviour disrupts work. As a result, the group may not come to any decision, or it may make the wrong decision, because group members could not explore options effectively.

### 5.2. Team commitment and cooperation

Commitment means acceptance of the responsibilities and duties and cooperation means help and assistance. By developing team commitment and cooperation in your team you are assisting them to meet its goals and objectives. Work teams that are committed and cooperative are more likely to achieve the goals MHC has set.

Team commitment and cooperation is developed through good communication and effective decision making, as well as fostering mutual concern and camaraderie between team members.

There are a number of signals that indicate the work team is committed and cooperating. These include:

- maintaining or increasing quality
- reaching or exceeding set targets
- decreasing complaints from team members
- limited conflict between team members
- fewer workplace injuries.

### 5.3. Effective decision making within your team

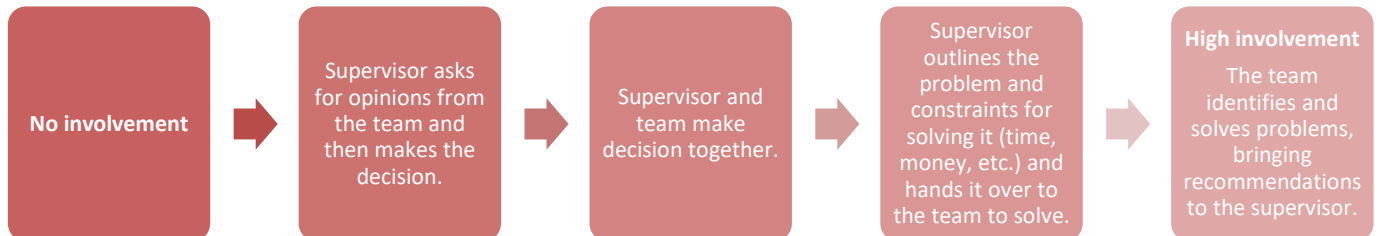
Team commitment and cooperation is also based on the team's capacity to make effective decisions. Many teams need assistance to learn how to make effective decisions and it is part of your role as the team leader to provide this assistance.

Team leaders can help teams make effective decisions by encouraging a work environment that supports the team and its members to make considered choices, act on them and review the results of the action.

## 5.4. Involving team members in decision making

There are degrees of team involvement in decision making. Your knowledge of the skills and abilities of your team members will guide your decision about the extent to which they can contribute to making a decision. There are no rules for when and how team members should be involved. It is a matter for your judgement.

The following diagram shows the degrees of involvement team members may have.



Involving team members in decision making, which can include problem solving, should be based on whether one or more of the following is met:

- The need for acceptance. The greater the need for the team to accept your decisions, the more you should involve them.
- The effect the decision will have on the team. The more the problem or decision affects the team, the more you should involve them.
- Their involvement in implementing the decision. If the team will be implementing or carrying out the decision, involve them.
- The ability and desire of the group to become involved. If the team wants to be involved, consider involving them, particularly if they have sufficient knowledge or expertise in the issue involved. Even if they do not, it could be useful for training and development purposes.

## **6 MANAGING TEAM PERFORMANCE**

### **5.5. Managing performance**

MHC believes that the purpose of performance management and review is to communicate with one another, provide feedback about job performance, facilitate good working relationships, and to look at ways to contribute to professional development. It is an important component of supporting team members in their work but also ensuring accountability for work performed.

MHC is committed to ensuring that all team members:

- have a clear understanding of the work they are required to complete
- are clear about the organisation's expectations and requirements of their work performance
- are provided with adequate direction and support in their work
- have the tools to perform their role to the best of their abilities, and
- are accountable for the quality and outcomes of their work.

MHC has two formal methods for managing performance:

- Regular formal review throughout the year when required
- Annual performance review

### **5.6. Formal reviews at MHC**

The purpose of the regular reviews by team leaders, is to provide accountability and direction for work completed by team members within a period of time in order to:

- ensure that each team member is completing agreed activities satisfactorily
- identify any impediments to the satisfactory completion of tasks
- identify any assistance, resources or professional development required; and
- reach agreements about work goals and performance for the coming period

### **5.7. Formal review process**

Team members will meet with their team leader for a formal review session. Team members may request informal consultation or direction from their team leader at other times, and the team leader will attempt to meet these requests within a mutually agreed time frame.

Formal review sessions will be held in a meeting room that provides privacy.

Supervision sessions will be structured so as to enable the team member and team leader to:

- identify and agree on KPI/work plans or tasks
- discuss any issues of concern or impediments experienced in performing duties
- discuss strategies or actions for achieving desired outcomes
- set priorities for the coming period; and
- identify any professional development or training needs.

### **5.8. Annual performance reviews at MHC**

The purpose of the performance review process is to provide a formal assessment of work performance over a longer period and:

- develop agreed realistic expectations in relation to the team member's position
- description and work plan, against which assessment of performance can be made
- provide a formal means by which achievements can be assessed and recognised
- discuss and document how the team member is performing from their point of view and from their team leader's point of view
- seek a common ground for ways to improve the team members performance where needed
- identify strengths in skills and knowledge and consider if these can be better utilised
- identify any weaknesses or problems in performance from the point of view of the team member and their team leader
- identify training needs and discuss other forms of support or on-the-job development required; and
- reach agreement on any specific goals to be pursued in the period following the assessment.

### **5.9. Timing of performance reviews**

The performance review is to be conducted by the team leader. It is their responsibility to schedule the review at a mutually convenient time. The first performance review will occur three months after appointment, then annually thereafter. More frequent reviews e.g., quarterly or 6-month, may be held as agreed between the team member, team leader, Management and Human Resource Department.

### **5.10. Annual performance review process**

- The team member completes a self-appraisal.
- The completed self-appraisal is made available to the team leader at least 3 days prior to the review meeting.
- Team leaders prepare their own assessment comments for the review meeting.
- The team member, and team leader meet to discuss findings, performance, future goals and development needs. The discussion includes opportunities for both parties to clarify and explain their comments.
- The outcome is documented and agreed actions included into relevant work plans.

## **5.11. Review meeting**

The team leader will address the following in discussion with the team member:

### **1. Review work goals.**

- Review the statement of duties and any other documentation about the role, ensuring that the position description reflects the current duties of the role.
- Review work goals established at the last review.

### **2. Review performance**

- Review progress against documented work goals
- Review assessment information provided by the team member, team leader and any others, identifying areas of strength and achievement and areas for improvement
- Review impediments to work performance and factors impacting on the person's job performance and satisfaction

### **3. Identify action**

- Identify any training and development needs, focusing on areas that could be improved or where outstanding performance could enable the team member to play a mentoring and support role with other team members.
- Identify any resourcing or support required.
- Identify any other action.

### **4. Agree goals for next twelve months (short period can be arranged if necessary).**

- Review MHC's strategic plans and the team's objectives or service plan.
- Establish work goals which are closely related to the job role and the outcomes required in the objectives.
- Agree how the goals will be measured and reported.
- Identify any training and development needs necessary for the team member to achieve the goals.
- Where performance is satisfactory or above satisfactory, identify any incentives, rewards or recognition appropriate to acknowledge the achievement of goals.

### **5. Documentation**

- A record of the main discussion points and agreed actions is written at the meeting or immediately by the team leader.
- The record of discussion is reviewed by both parties, corrections or changes made, and a final version signed by both parties.
- Documentation of the review should be completed within 2 weeks of the review meeting.
- The record is kept on a confidential personnel file in HR Department
- The record should be used as reference for the implementation of the agreed actions and for consideration of progress at the next review.

## 5.12. Managing poor performance

It is the team leader's responsibility to address poor performance issues with their team members as soon as possible in order to correct the behaviours and try to resolve any issues the team member may be facing.

Try to remember that there may be a valid reason as to why there may be a performance issue (for example the team member may have an illness, family problem, or self-esteem issues etc.). It is not your place to ask why and it's not your role to fix it for the team. As a team leader, your role is to:

- Clearly state the performance issues.
- Clearly state what you expect from the team member.
- Clearly state the consequences if the behaviour/s do not change within a set time frame
- Provide available appropriate resources that may assist the team member in meeting the abovementioned expectations. For example: Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy.

### DON'T

- Ignore the situation and hope it will go away
- Commiserate or speculate with other employees
- Jump to a disciplinary action

### DO

- Address the quickly and directly with the employee
- Seek insight before deciding on action
- Follow through until it's resolved

Team leaders must follow the following process when addressing a performance issue with one of their team members:

- Schedule a private meeting
- Explain what you've noticed and why you're concerned
- Stick to facts and share examples
- Give the team member an opportunity to explain
- Listen carefully to identify the root cause
- Be compassionate, but stay professional
- Determine a plan of action

If the performance does not improve you may need to start the formal disciplinary procedure as outlined in the **MHC Discipline Policy**.

### 5.13. Managing misconduct

A staff misconduct issue may arise or be identified from a number of sources, such as:

- internally or externally raised allegations
- complaints or concerns
- managers' or colleagues' observations
- notifications including self-disclosure by a staff member
- inquiries or investigations; or
- other workplace processes.

There must be an initial review of any allegation or concern about potential misconduct without delay.

### 5.14. Unlawful dismissal rules and due process

Commonwealth workplace laws have rules about terminating employment. These rules establish whether the termination of the employment was unlawful or unfair, what entitlements an employee is owed at the end of their employment, and what must be done when an employee is dismissed because of redundancy.

Unfair dismissal is when an employee is dismissed from their job in a harsh, unjust or unreasonable manner.

The Fair Work Commission may consider an employee has been unfairly dismissed if:

- the person was dismissed
- the dismissal was harsh, unjust or unreasonable
- the dismissal was not a case of genuine redundancy

As a leader at MHC, you must ensure that you follow and understand ***MHC Discipline Policy***.

### 5.15. Relevant legislation, policies and procedures

The following legislation, MHC policies and procedures that are relevant to managing performance are listed below:

#### Legislation

- [Age Discrimination ACT 2004](#) – Makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their age in areas including work, education and access to premises. To remove barriers for older people participating society and change negative stereotypes about older people
- [Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986](#) – Provides an avenue of redress for those alleging discrimination and provides for the rights of these persons.
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) – Makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of a disability (including disease).
- [Fair Work Act 2009](#) – Provides a safety net of minimum terms and conditions of employment through the National Employment Standards (NES).
- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#) – Makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin.
- [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#) – Makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the basis of a person's sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy or to sexually

harass another person

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) – Requires that employers and employees must maintain a secure, healthy and safe workplace environment; and an employer must take practicable precautions to prevent harassment.
- [Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012](#) – Provides a regulatory framework for the Australian Government to assist employers to improve gender equality outcomes within their workplaces.

### **MHC Clinic Policies:**

- Discipline Policy
- [MHC Code of Conduct](#)
- [MHC Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#)
- [MHC Inclusive Communication Guide](#)
- [MHC Health and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Stress Management Policy](#)

### **Tools that may assist**

- [Employsure](#)
- [Fair Work Tools for managing underperformance](#)
- [MHC Conflict of Interest Analysis and Record](#)



## 7 CONSULTATION AND NETWORKING

### 6.1. Consultation

Consultation is the process by which management must discuss the development of systems, policies, practices and issues of mutual concern with workers or their representatives. It involves seeking acceptable solutions to problems through a genuine exchange of views and information. An important principle of consultation is reaching an agreeable outcome on an issue or topic that is satisfactory to all parties and persons.

Consultation can be used to identify opportunities, assist decision making and help ensure any new ideas are captured, or to determine whether new ideas work effectively in practice.

Consultation should be undertaken when major workplace changes are proposed and when issues in the workplace are likely to impact on the welfare and productivity of employees or on work outputs and customer/consumer satisfaction.

Consultation processes and opportunities for employees to share their ideas and thoughts about issues related to their work might be formal or informal and could involve:

- Ad hoc or formal meetings
- One-to-one discussions/chats
- Small group discussions
- Focus groups
- The use of suggestion boxes so employees can share their ideas
- Asking for responses to emailed or hard copy survey questions
- Skype or videoconferencing if staff are not on site.

Consultation can take the form of:

- Establishment of employer/employee representative committees
- Using regular staff meetings to communicate with employees and ask for their input
- Holding regular performance and training reviews where feedback is given and received
- Encouraging employee feedback on business and administrative decisions
- Participation in special-purpose teams

At MHC, team leaders can lead consultative processes by:

- Observing the work done by their team members
- Asking questions
- Listening to team members
- Raising their own concerns
- Arranging discussion groups, meeting or other consultative processes and giving team members time to participate
- Encouraging team members to contribute to the consultation
- Promptly relaying feedback to the work team regarding any outcomes of the consultation

## 6.2. Networking

Networking is the ability to effectively communicate with others who have similar professional needs for information, ideas, and/or common interests. Effective networks are where there are mutual gains because all members of the network support and assist each other when required.

Networks provide the opportunity to build and maintain relationships for your benefit and that of your team and MHC. Some of the advantages of professional networking are:

- It increases business connections
- Networking is a great way to identify business best practices or industry benchmarks.
- You build self-confidence
- You develop long-lasting relationships
- Identify New Business Leads
- Networking can help you stay on the cutting edge of technology and new business trends.

## 6.3. Group discussion

Effective facilitation of a discussion involves the recognition and employment of different perspectives and different skills to create an inclusive environment. In order to do so, it is important to consider the features of effective discussions, and conditions that promote small group interaction and engagement. Discussion is a powerful mechanism for active learning; a well-facilitated discussion allows the participant to explore new ideas while recognising and valuing the contributions of others. Have a clear focus of what you want to achieve. Be clear about the outcomes you are seeking and identify the objectives

Some strategies for leading productive group discussions include:

- Know what you need to accomplish and be clear about the outcomes you are seeking.
- Don't be the focus – facilitate don't dominate and listen more than you talk
- Ask open ended questions for example, 'how so?' and 'tell me more?'. If possible, avoid asking questions that can be answered with a simple yes/no answer.
- Provide timeliness for circling back on outcomes
- Don't let someone dominate, allow those who are not so outspoken to have an opportunity to speak.
- If someone continuously interrupts, validate their comments in a respectful way to mitigate the tangents and stay on track.
- Invite, but don't force, participation
- Don't use (or allow others to use) disrespectful language or tone, or disrespectful non-verbal communication
- Give recognition where it is warranted

## 6.4. Collaboration software tools

MHC uses the following collaboration software tools to communicate with work teams, both internally and externally:

- One Drive
- Outlook Email
- Skype for Business
- Office 365 Groups
- Microsoft Teams
- SharePoint
- Zoom or workplace intranet