

Push or Pull Kick-Off Meetings?

Think back to the past kick-off meetings that you've either run or participated in. How would you rate their degree of engagement and involvement? As you think back, can you recall your degree of energy during those meetings?

Observing numerous kick-off meetings over the past decade and a half, one observation to share is the high degree of PUSH that we experienced during most kick-off sessions. This means huge amounts of information pushed at the team or project members, countless powerful slides bombarding group members leaving little time for group development and allowing for individual contribution which breeds involvement.

An idea to create a more team or group identity, gather best practices to date and learn about the individual preferences of your new members could be to use your leadership PULL and draw this out of the group members.

Some examples of 'pull' include:

- When you think back to the best project and/or team you've worked in, what was it that made this an extraordinary experience for you?
- What style of leadership works best with you? What expectations do you have of me, as your team or project leader?
- What things are absolutely essential for us to have a well-functioning team and create great results in this group?

You can also frame your 'pull' questions around the following three frames:

1. Communication

- How do people **present** information?
- How do people express **opinions** and make **requests**?
- How do people give **feedback**?
- What **listening** style do people adopt?

2. Organization

- How much **time** should be spent doing what?
- How does the group make **decisions**?
- What are the **roles and responsibilities** of the team members?
- What is the **purpose** of a team meeting?
- How important are **plans** and **deadlines**?
- Should **problems** be solved individually or as a group?

3. Leadership

- How do they **motivate** team members to get things done?
- What criteria does the leader use when **making decisions**?
- How do they **delegate** tasks to team members?
- How do they build **trust** with the team members?
- How important is **hierarchy** in the group?

If you take a half day or full day to pull best practices and experiences from new group members before blasting (pushing) information, timelines, deadlines, process overviews on them, you stand a better chance of creating a common team template of understanding and respect from which to work from. Let us know how this works for you!