

CCMA Community Chat: Effectively Managing Remote Service Teams

Tue, Apr 14, 2020 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM BST

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CCMA Ireland are running our CCMA community chat initiative (series of short interactive webinars) so we can support our members and colleagues who are working remotely.

In this webinar, we will discuss factors to be discussed in managing remote service teams.

Topics for discussion will include:

- Team size, tools, metrics and feedback to deliver improved sustainable results
- What is the right size for a remote team, why is it different to inhouse teams
- What are the rules of the game for remote working, who sets those rules
- What can be measured remotely and what is useful to measure & target
- What should my ambition as a manager be for my remote team



This webinar will be hosted by Cormac Murphy, Partner at Ennovate Consulting. Cormac works with organisations to help them improve the quality of their conversations with customers whilst helping team members have a much better work experience.



- Employment of married women rose sharply.
- Many women working as domestic servants before went permanently to higher paid jobs.
- First womens labour strike in 1918 to demand equal pay for transport workers was won by women
- An “emergency” in WW1 and the Flu Pandemic led to a ***permanent change in the structure of work.***

Women’s employment rates increased during WWI, from 23.6% of women in 1914 to between 37.7% and 46.7% in 1918 (Braybon 1989, p.49)

What seems initially to be a temporary change can lead to a “new normal”

People like remote working and companies that do it productively will win.

- People really like not commuting every day.
- They are discovering that they are getting quite a lot done.
- There are new benefits (stroking my cat after a tough call is great!)

But there are new stresses too...

- Backlogs feel bigger when we are working apart from others
- It is harder to just “pick up” tips and tricks from others.

But some companies will get this mode of working *very* right.

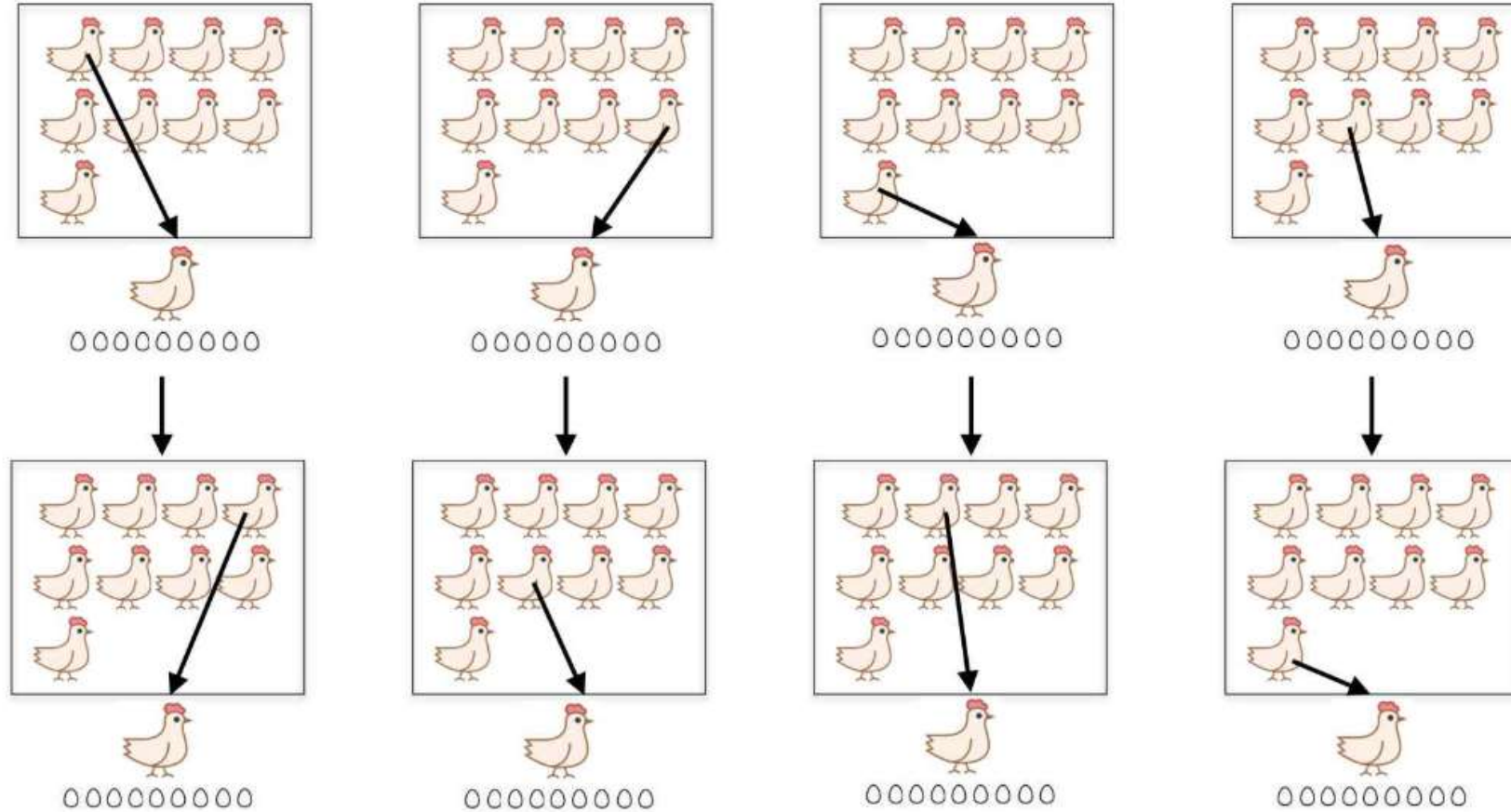
They will not “return to normal”, they will continue with the super-normal.

Your opportunity right now as a manager is to help make your company that!





Select Top-Performing *Chicken*

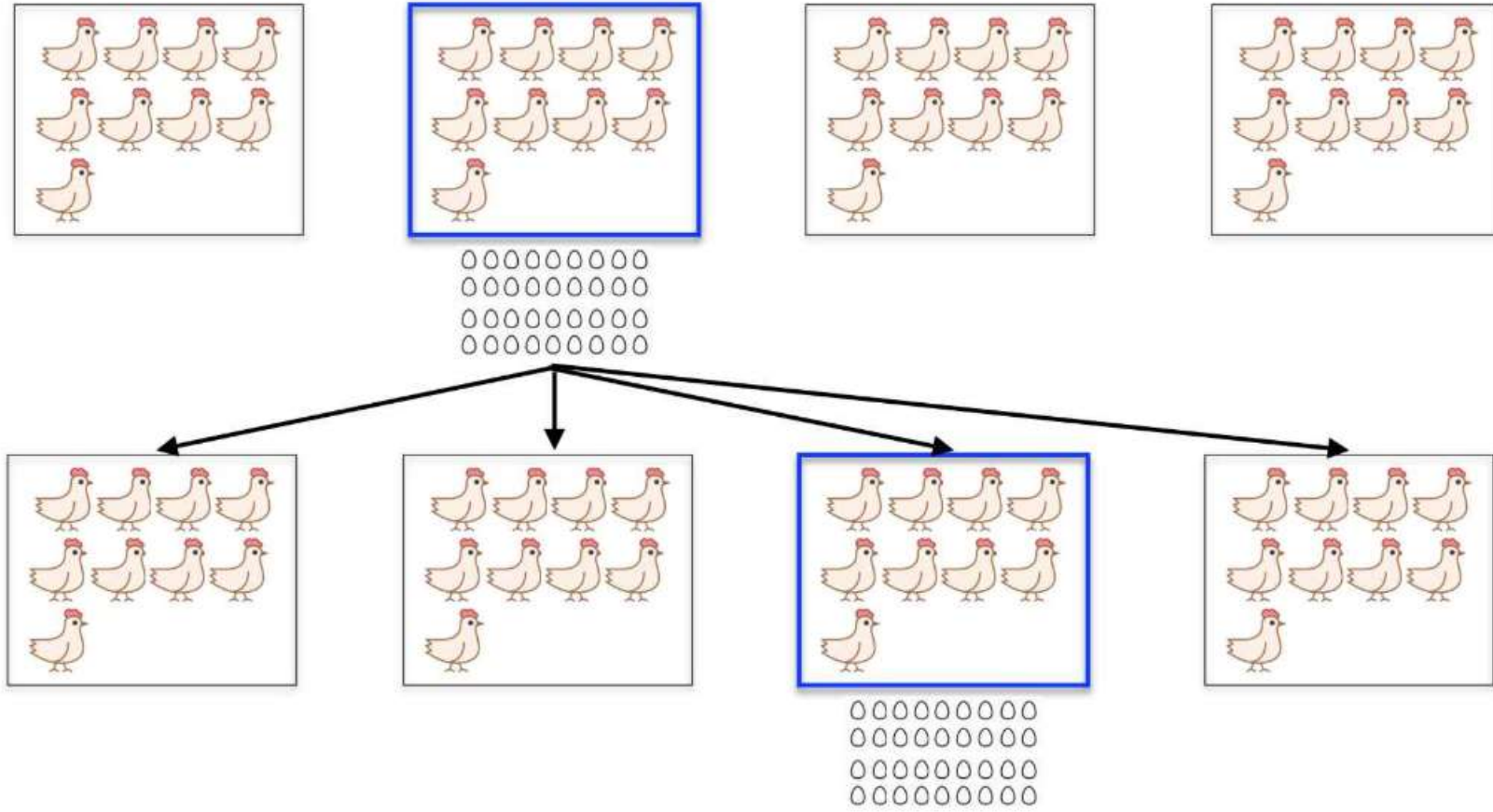


... for 6 generations


3 half-dead
hyper-aggressive
chickens,
6 killed.
Almost no eggs



Select Top-Performing Group



... for 6 generations



9 healthy chickens
Egg production up 160%

- Selecting for the “best” individual can cause a co-operative group to collapse in unpredictable ways.
- It is not possible to explicitly understand all the things that make a group work.
- By creating or recognizing groups which have shared resources and goals, and then managing the group rather than the individual, better results are possible.

Need to think about operational teams from the ground up



Elinor Ostrom: The only woman to receive a Nobel prize in economics.

Lin thought a lot about how people who live and work together share resources

“There is no reason to believe that bureaucrats and politicians, no matter how well meaning, are better at solving problems than the people on the spot, who have the strongest incentive to get the solution right”



- Human relationships in groups (teams) are complex, when rules are applied from an external source, unexpected consequences often dominate.
- When teams are distributed, the pressures to break externally created rules rise exponentially.
- There exists a set of design principles that teams can use to utilize their resources more effectively to achieve their goals



Clearly defined boundaries of the team resources, clear group identity of those using it, & effective exclusion of un-entitled parties.



Warning! Managing a commons is vulnerable to free-riding.

Unless undermining strategies can be detected at low cost by norm-abiding team members, people will cheat. They will take more & do less than they should.



Graduated sanctions for rule violators

“friendly social pressure” is often sufficient to start, but more severe forms of punishment must exist.



The group – those affected by the arrangements (“rules”) – can participate in creating them.

Team decide arrangements by consensus & minimize externally imposed rules.



Ensure the rule making rights of the team are respected. The more senior members and structures in the company must recognize the right of the team to make its own rules.

Team must negotiate a system to proportionately reward members for their contribution.



Fast/simple & fair conflict resolution mechanisms. Disputes within the team should be able to be surfaced and be resolved and “seen to be resolved” fairly.



Additional benefits must be earned through special contribution.

Unfair or non-transparent inequality poisons collective efforts

Operational Teams

1. Lots of smaller deliverables
2. Immediate or days to deliver
3. Team members make personal promises to customers
4. Easier to separate out individual performance

Belbin research



3 is a crowd



Four is a well-balanced team



5 risks odd man out



6 gets there... More slowly

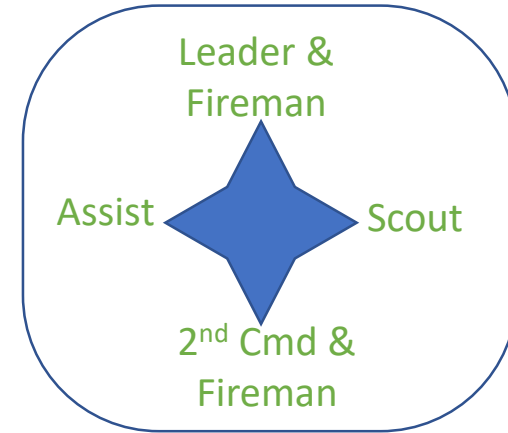


7; too many random contributions



9; only leader has a voice

US Marines - Fireteam



**More similar to our new-environment operational teams
Than project teams.**

1. Operating away from a close-control environment
2. But frequent check-in with more senior “manager”
3. Many small goals rather than one big mission

But note..

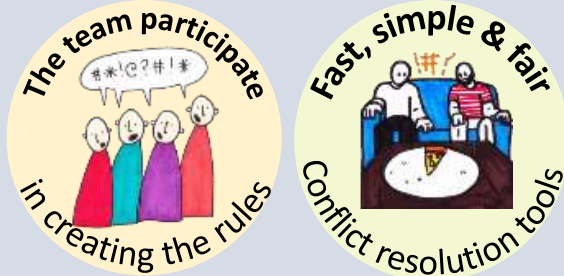
4. They succeed or fail together
5. The team members have team-roles as well as goals

Resource Banker



1. Service Level promises to the team are being met
2. Budget owner for team home-office improvements
3. Up-to-date on what can help home working
4. Good role for a more junior team member

Rules Keeper



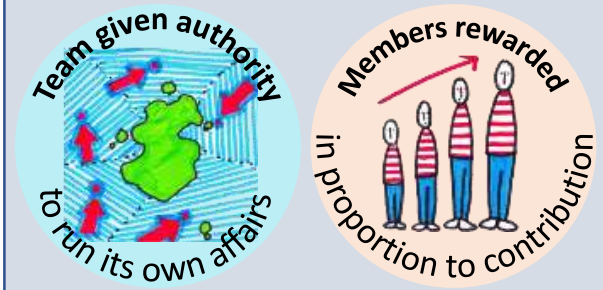
1. Responsible to write up the agreed team rules
2. Keep a journal to record what there is conflict about
3. First point-of-contact as adjudicator if members cannot resolve own conflict
4. Drive team buy-in

Pacemaker



1. Run reports to let team see what everyone is doing.
2. Stay abreast of own team & other teams performance
3. Highlight where certain behaviours damage team performance.
4. Monitor day-to-day productivity of everyone

Protector



1. Keep team rules within the scope of allowable rules
2. Liaise with team manager to align fireteam with overall
3. Organise fireteam meetings to decide bonus allocation
4. Good role for the most senior member of the team



1. It is everyone's responsibility to expect the highest standards from each other and to expect each other to follow rules
2. For persistent rule-breakers then go to the Rules Keeper, then escalate out of the fireteam to the Team Manager

Team Manager

FT1

| Resource Banker | Rules Keeper | Pacemaker | Protector |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Only our team can use our stuff</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Service Level promises to the team are being met Budget owner for team home-office improvements Up-to-date on what can help home working Good role for a more junior team member | <p>The team participate in creating the rules</p> <p>Fast, simple & fair Conflict resolution tools</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible to write up the agreed team rules Keep a journal to record what there is conflict about First point-of-contact as adjudicator if members cannot resolve own conflict Drive team buy-in | <p>Clear & continual monitoring of agreed behaviours</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Run reports to let team see what everyone is doing. Stay abreast of own team & other teams performance Highlight where certain behaviours damage team performance. Monitor day-to-day productivity of everyone | <p>Team given authority to run its own affairs</p> <p>Members rewarded in proportion to contribution</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Keep team rules within the scope of allowable rules Liaise with team manager to align fireteam with overall Organise fireteam meetings to decide bonus allocation Good role for the most senior member of the team |
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FT2

| Resource Banker | Rules Keeper | Pacemaker | Protector |
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FT3

| Resource Banker | Rules Keeper | Pacemaker | Protector |
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For groups that are part of larger groups,
there must be appropriate co-ordination
among peer and tiered groups,
with polycentric governance and subsidiarity.

Weekly the Team Manager will meet:

- Each of the fireteams (3 meetings)
- The Resource Bankers meeting
- The Rules Keepers meeting
- The Pacemakers meeting
- The Protectors meeting

Seven meetings per week, seeing everyone twice.

As well as individual 1:1s for coaching and development

NB: Part of Ennovate's core business

Agenda:

1. What is broken in peoples work environments
2. What is broken elsewhere (failing SLA's)
3. What people want to improve their environment
4. What has worked well recently

Things that might be considered...

- Second screens for everyone
- One-sided recording of all mobile calls with cloud backup
- Headsets (Bluetooth?) for everyone
- Panoramic photo recording of everyones working space
- Home printers for everyone; audit what CAN be printed without GDPR risk
- Shared working tools from google sheets to slack



Clearly defined boundaries of the team resources,

clear group identity of those using it,

& effective exclusion of un-entitled parties.

Agenda:

1. Any changes to the rules of the team?
2. Any rules that are causing disputes
3. What is causing conflict between team members
4. Any conflict with people outside of the team

Things that might be considered...

- Some rules that are enforced in the fireteam using local information (not published up)
- How disputes can be brought into the open
- Vigilance for bullying
- “How we do things” rules; Everyone has a cup of tea at our morning Zoom Call



Agenda:

1. How connected are staff to the fireteam and its goals – are people happy!!
2. How is the teams overall performance
3. How is each fireteams performance – compare to each other
4. What is causing problems in each team hitting its objectives
5. WITHOUT NAMING NAMES; How are people cheating
6. How could we better track effective performance

Things that might be considered...

- Tracking call volumes made by mobiles using one-sided recording apps
- Fireteams getting aggregate NPS scores and being accountable
- Shared workqueues for the fireteam and free item selection within the team
- Rules about what transgressions are escalated out of the fireteam and which not
- Acceptance that different fireteams will have different rules



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Agenda:

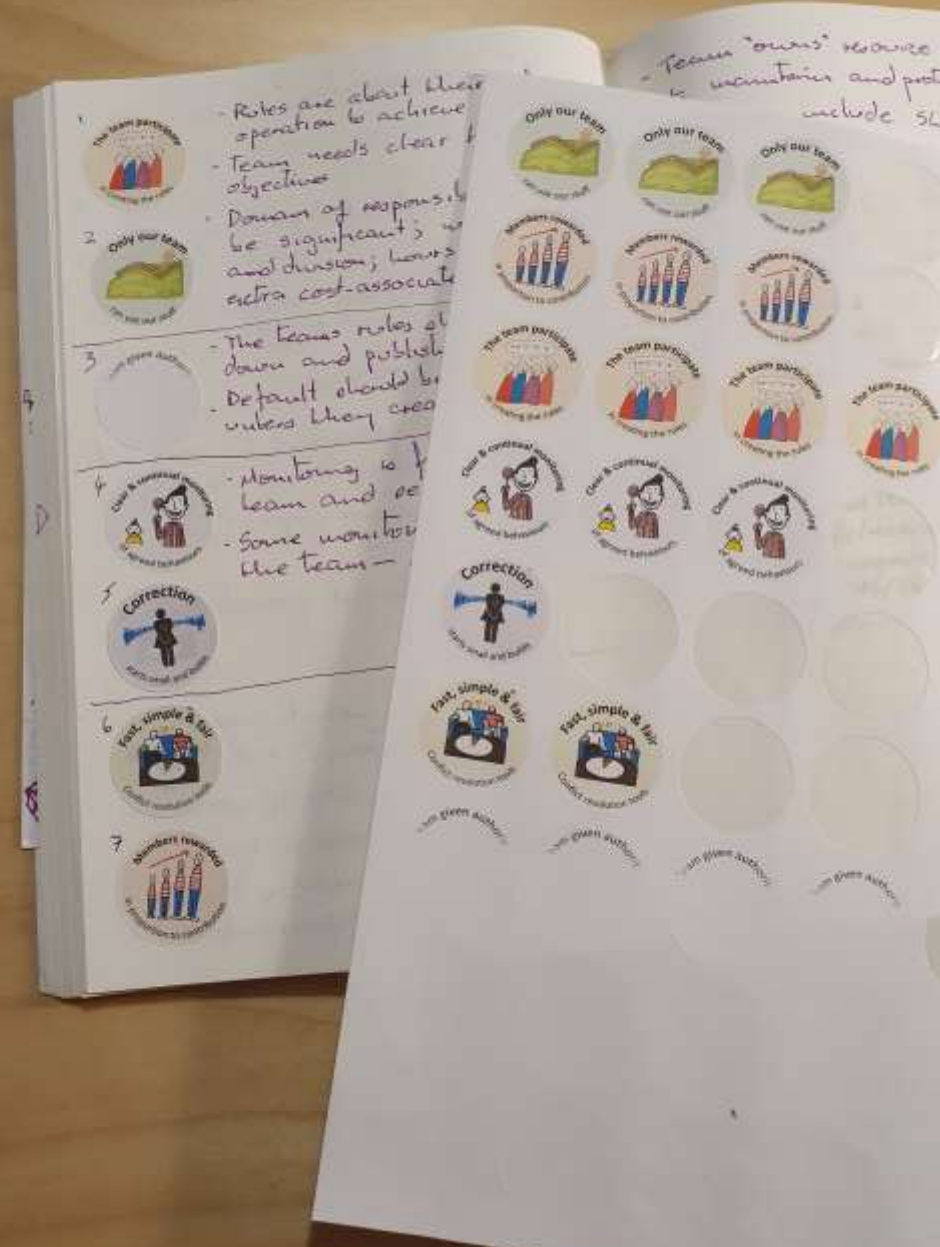
1. How new company direction affects the fireteams
2. Changes of emphasis from the Team Manager and impact discussion
3. Resources that each fireteam needs
4. Discussion of rewards and bonuses if appropriate

Things that might be considered...

- A bonus allocation for the fireteam to divide up
- How to implement new company directives; fireteam or individual?
- Discussion on how to coach staff
- ...



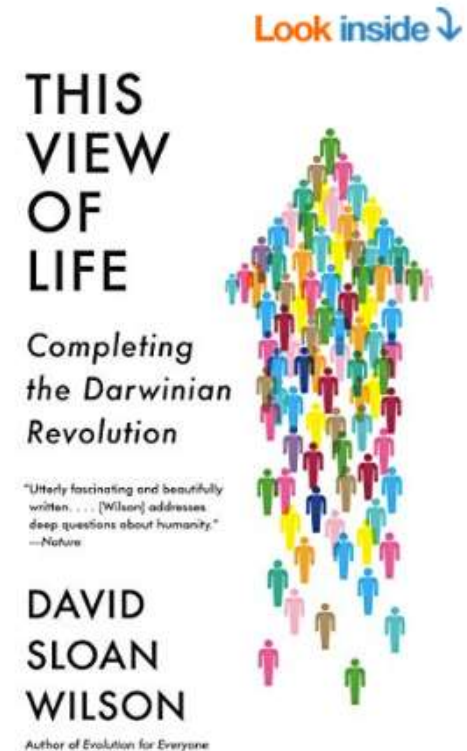
1. Decide what your project objective is;
Manage the crisis OR Build a new way to work
2. How will you measure success?
Productivity metrics; Quality metrics; Team Sustainability metrics
3. Agree the fireteams concept with your manager;
Explain why it will be more productive.
4. Choose the size of your fireteams and then design the roles in the team.
5. Implement fireteams with a single experienced team manager for 4 weeks to evaluate (min 2 fireteams) → Rollout



When working at the team design stage, sheets of stickers which represent each of Ostrom's 8 rules can be very useful.

Send Dorothy your postal address and I can send you some sheets of stickers...

Best interpretation of Elinor Ostrom’s concepts for business



This View of Life: Completing the Darwinian Revolution Kindle Edition

by [David Sloan Wilson](#) (Author)

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