

## WHAT MAKES A GREAT TEAM: FOCUSING YOUR COLLECTIVE TIME

**Is the start of a new year a good moment to review how you and your team are spending your precious time together?** We notice that teams can settle into a pattern of working which they know to be suboptimal, but they somehow never find time to make practical improvements.

### **Might this be the right time to revisit:**

- What gets on to meeting agendas, and the allocation of time to items
- The balance between strategic long-term issues and short-term imperatives
- The way meetings are chaired to maintain engagement throughout
- Accountability for capturing the conclusions of meetings and next steps
- The mix between face to face and virtual conversation
- The balance between what is done in meetings and what is handled outside them.

**We observe that effective teams prioritise the things that must be done and can only be done by them acting collectively. They regularly question whether the items in front of them could be delegated to suitably empowered teams. In their conversations, they:**

- Ensure they have good data and intelligence on the key strategic issues
- Work purposefully at building forward direction, avoiding silo-based thinking
- Make timely decisions and respect collective accountability
- Agree their collective and individual roles in connecting with stakeholders
- Agree how to engage and develop the teams below them
- Regularly review the risks to success and how to mitigate them
- Openly discuss barriers to progress, including in their own behaviours
- Give honest and supportive feedback to each other.

### **Potential next steps might be to:**

- Reflect on your own contribution to teams in the light of the points above
- Invite teams you are part of to use this Prompt to review current ways of working
- Seek fresh feedback about a team's impact inside and outside the organisation
- Introduce some external challenge and support, possibly through team coaching

Our current sequence of Prompts looks at how teams can adapt and develop to meet changing expectations and opportunities.