Operating Principles

When teams jump into doing the work without establishing how they want to collaborate, it's a recipe for clashing and miscommunication. *Operating Principles* provides a structure for the team to draft 4-6 ground rules everyone can agree on and abide by, to help you work together more effectively from the start. Works well as a follow-up to *Working Styles* or *How We Roll*.

TIME: 10–30 MINUTES

When should I use it?

When you need to establish some shared agreements about how you want to work together. Especially useful when people have varied working styles.

What will I need?

+ Post-it notes
+ Whiteboard or table
+ *Operating Principles* 24"x36" poster (or whiteboard, flip chart, or 20"x23" Post-It pad)

1. Explain that the team will be creating a set of 4-6 operating principles that everyone can commit to (e.g., "Always say what we need, from whom, by when" or "Assume positive intent").

2. Give each person a minute or so to write down 4-6 suggested principles, each one on a Post-it note.

3. Have the first person read off and lay out their suggestions on the board or table. Then invite the rest of the team to add their own Post-its, making clusters of duplicates or similar ideas.

4. Have each person vote for their top 3 suggestions.

5. Make any refinements to the wording, and commit to the principles with the most votes. Write them on the *Operating Principles* poster and keep it visible in the team's workspace (and/or distribute a photo to remote collaborators).

Our Operating Principles

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