# Set a Team Direction Together

A sentence on the wall is easy. A direction people can recognize themselves in takes a conversation.

Use this when: People are working hard but carrying different pictures of what the work is for.

Leave with: A provisional direction, the tensions still present, and one practice to try.

## Start here

1. Give each person a quiet moment to name a hope and a concern. Record their words with permission; people can pass.

2. Look for overlap without erasing differences. Draft a direction that reflects what you heard and ask what it leaves out.

3. Record the degree of agreement honestly. Choose a small practice to test the direction, and return to it with the people affected.

## The work we are here to do

## What seems to matter across the different accounts?

## What remains in tension?

A real disagreement belongs in the record.

## Our provisional direction

Use ordinary language people can question.

## Where are we now?

Options: Still exploring / Some support; concerns remain / Everyone present agrees to try it

## One small practice that would make this visible

## When and with whom will we revisit it?

## Repeat for each item

Voice or perspective: [Write here]

What do you hope this work makes possible?: [Write here]

What should we be careful not to lose?: [Write here]

Copy this item section to add another.

## A question worth staying with

What changed in my own view because I listened?

## The thinking behind it

In Nic's account, shared vision grows through relationship rather than being installed from above. Keep the differences in the room long enough for the direction—and the leader—to change.

Read You Have a Culture Problem by Nic Payne.

## Where this tool comes from

An original Leader Rebellion exercise. This workshop draws on Nic Payne's account of identity, relationship, shared vision, and emergent culture. It does not generate a vision statement from votes or treat silence as agreement.

# Worked example

One team wants faster replies; another wants fewer avoidable follow-up contacts. A shared direction might be “help people get a useful answer the first time”—but only if the teams recognize their concerns in it.

The work we are here to do: How our service responds to requests

What seems to matter across the different accounts?: Useful answers and promises the team can keep.

What remains in tension?: We have not agreed how to handle complex requests that need more time.

Our provisional direction: Help people get a useful answer, with a clear next step when we need more time.

Where are we now?: Some support; concerns remain

One small practice that would make this visible: Try naming the next step and its owner in every unresolved reply for one week.

When and with whom will we revisit it?: Friday with service and operations colleagues

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Voice or perspective: Service team

What do you hope this work makes possible?: People get useful answers without chasing.

What should we be careful not to lose?: Time to resolve the need, not only send a fast reply.

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Voice or perspective: Operations team

What do you hope this work makes possible?: Work can be planned without constant escalation.

What should we be careful not to lose?: Clear promises and a sustainable working day.

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A shared direction is allowed to remain unfinished while you learn how to live it.

This is a paper worksheet. The interactive Lab provides the interactive controls and calculations.

Optional: Get Nic’s notes.

Hope is rebellious.