

Defining Team Purpose

From Ruth Wageman**:

It is the object for which the **team** exists as determined by the **team** leader and **team** members. It is a clearly stated **purpose** that serves to direct and motivate the **team** in its pursuit of its **goals**.

Wageman advocates that you need to have 3 elements in a good purpose statement:

- First, you need to spell out concisely and clearly **why** the team exists, or “This team exists to...”
- Second, explain the team’s task in concrete terms. **What** are the key activities the team will work on to achieve its purpose? **What** are the mission-critical things that can only be done by this team?
- Finally, you need to explain **how** the team will be successful, and what will be the beneficial impact of the team’s work on the organization and its customers. People’s individual commitment to any task is calibrated by how important they perceive that task.

Possible examples from the Educational Sector:

- *We bring our collective expertise and perspective to ensure the short and long term success of the school.*
- *We share our diverse expertise and perspectives to collectively ensure the sustainability of (school’s name) culture, strategy and operations.*

Ruth Wageman is **one of the foremost scholars and practitioners studying and working with teams, especially leadership teams. The core of Ruth's research, teaching, and consulting for the last 30 years has been focused on the conditions that influence superb team performance.

