Team Health Graphic/Cards

Team health is vital to the success of your program.

Many organizations use employee surveys to assess how people feel about their program teams and about their work. Those surveys can help highlight areas that need improvement.

But other organizations use more direct and interpersonal methods to judge a team's health.

Spotify has created what it calls its Squad Health Check model to assess a team's health. Here's how the exercise works:

All of a team's members gather in a physical/virtual room. A predesignated exercise leader distributes three laminated cards to each participant. (Each trio of laminated cards includes one card displaying an image of a red traffic light, one card displaying an image of a yellow traffic light, and one card displaying an image of a green traffic light.) The leader then holds up one in a series of health indicator cards, each card representing a particular aspect of the work experience. Next, the leader instructs all team members to flash the appropriate card in response to one of the health indicator cards. The leader and the team repeat the process with each subsequent health indicator card in the series. Green means a team member thinks the team or organization does well in this area. Yellow means the team or organization is doing only OK. Red means the team or organization is failing in this area.

Here are some general health indicators modeled after Spotify's Health Check model, along with responses to each area suggesting success or failure. These health indicators aren't necessarily specific to technology or software development; you can use them for a wide variety of organizations and program teams.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Our Work Adds Value to the Organization	
GREEN	We deliver good products or effective service. We're proud of our work, and our stakeholders are happy with the value we add.
RED	We deliver little value. Our internal teams and stakeholders are generally dissatisfied with what we produce.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Fun	
GREEN	We actually enjoy working together and with one another.
RED	We're bored at work and don't really like each other very much.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Learning	
GREEN	We're continually learning.
RED	We are so focused on incremental and questionable work that we seldom learn anything new.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Mission	
GREEN	We know exactly what the mission of our organization is and how we're serving that mission.
RED	We have no real idea of our organization's mission or how our work has anything to do with that.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Pawns or Players?	
GREEN	We are in control of our own work. We decide what to create, how to create it, and how that serves our organization.
RED	We are inconsequential pawns with no influence over what we build or why we build it.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Speed	
GREEN	We produce stuff quickly, with no unnecessary waiting or delays.
RED	We never seem to get anything done. We keep dealing with delays, interruptions, and rework.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Good Processes	
GREEN	The way we work complements our team and our goals.
RED	How we work is ineffective and frustrating.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Support	
GREEN	Our program and organizational leaders always give us the support we need to do our work.
RED	Our program and organizational leaders seldom give us the support we ask for or need.

HEALTH INDICATOR	
Teamwork	
GREEN	We always collaborate and work exceptionally well together.
RED	We work as a bunch of individuals and don't know or care what our other team members are doing.

Final Step:

It's important that your team members come together to work on possible fixes after they do this exercise. As part of the same session or a later session, team members should decide on the most important issues to work on and suggest fixes for areas that aren't working well.

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