



Dependency Dialog

“It is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one’s actions” - Mahatma Gandhi

What is this?

This practice helps teams and individuals to clarify dependencies and take accountability for selected tasks. It also creates a habit of following up on these commitments.

When studying teams, MIT researchers found that what really mattered was less about who is on the team, and more about how the team worked together. The second most important factor was rather simple; could the team members depend on one another to do what they said they would.

Primers

- Listen to yourself. Be authentic about your needs.
- Also, listen to the best part of others. When expressing a need, or a dependency towards someone, try to connect in an empathic way with that person and feel what they feel as they receive it.
- Reality is not objective, it’s subjective. Especially in relation to social aspects of being a team.

Outcomes

- Clarity on dependencies, and how to collaborate to solve them.
- Process for following up on this.

Set up

- Perhaps integrate this practice in your daily existing practices.
- Encourage or help those uncomfortable in taking on this type of dialogue. Only by feeling into their needs you can reach mutuality.



How to...

Step 1. Dependencies

To map dependencies, ask the following questions:

- a. Who do I have interactions with to be able to do my job?
- b. What specific tasks I have are dependant on someone? Within my team? Outside my team? Who?

Note important dependencies to follow up on.

Step 2. 6 Question Dialogue

Meet the person(s) you are dependant on, and hold a dialogue on the 6 questions below.

- a. Describe your understanding of the dependency and ask about the stakeholder perspective.
- b. Agree on how to communicate delays and blockers.
- c. Ask: How can you be of service in order to help your stakeholder.
- d. Are there any actions you can take to help loosen the dependency?
- e. Ask: How can the stakeholder be of service in order to help you?
- f. Are there any actions your stakeholder can take to loosen the dependency?

Step 3. Plan & Follow-up

Plan how to follow up with your stakeholders; flkas, meetings or any other way. The important thing is that there is a clear way and a next date for the follow up!

At whatever ceremony you apply where you follow up tasks and work items (e.g. daily stand-up or similar), use the following questions:

1. What dependencies are not working?
2. What stakeholders do we need to re-address with our dependencies?

3. What dependencies do we want to keep an eye on?
4. What dependencies are not hurting us?
5. Celebrate! ...and make sure to let the stakeholders know! An email is ok, live is always better! This is the single most important factor in getting mutuality to really fly.

Tips and Tricks

Use live meetings to discuss mutual or single way dependencies. A personal and empathetic relation is unbeatable for building a nourishing team culture.

Use the Dependability Questionnaire form to facilitate the tool and take notes.