

Team cohesion that lasts: Commitments between colleagues

Adaptive module

~20 min

A team that decides quickly, where everyone knows what the others will do, is no accident: it depends on the quality of the commitments between colleagues. This module takes the opposite view from manager-centered approaches: it builds team cohesion on the promises peers make to each other, informed by the sociology of cooperation. And the manager gains a more sustainable role: architect of cohesion rather than the person everything has to go through.

— LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 01 Identify the four sociological conditions for cohesion that lasts, from a shared desire to valuing each person.
- 02 Move from a manager-centered star team to a network of peer commitments, with the manager as architect of cohesion.
- 03 State mutual commitments with your colleagues and tactfully remind them of a commitment not kept.
- 04 Use AI to find ideas for team rituals or to prepare a difficult conversation, with clear commitments to transparency.

— WHO IT'S FOR

Managers and team members who want a team where people can count on each other.

- **Prerequisite:** none

— HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

- 1 **Self-assessment:** on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
- 2 **Expert video:** 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
- 3 **Practice scenarios:** the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
- 4 **Dated commitment:** one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
- 5 **Memo to download:** key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

— ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Working agreements / team agreements – an agile practice, popularized by Scrum and retrospectives
- Public commitment in front of peers – inspired by the psychology of commitment (Cialdini; Joule & Beauvois)
- Top-down vs. peer accountability – inspired by P. Lencioni (peer accountability)
- Afthonios method: 3 model phrasings for mutual commitment and a 15-minute exercise in writing down commitments

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- McKinsey, 2025: 63% of operating model redesigns meet their goals, compared with 21% ten years earlier
- Gallup, August 2025 survey (23,068 employees): “creating accountability” ranks last of the 7 leadership skills measured
- Patrick Lencioni, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team, 2002 – trust as the foundation of a team
- Norbert Alter, Donner et prendre. La coopération en entreprise, 2009 – giving and giving back, after Marcel Mauss (Essai sur le don, 1925)