

Five Steps for Team Building: How to Create and Nurture Teams*

*Learning Interdependence
to function in the 21st Century*

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Teaming is rapidly becoming one of the most important organization thrusts in business, military, medicine, and education. Research in most of these public and private sectors has shown that the majority of employees prefer working as part of a team rather than working solo. Other benefits cited by these people include: (1) lowers stress, (2) increases work quality, (3) improves attitude about work, and (4) increases productivity. (Michaelson & Associates, 1995). During the last decade hundreds of books and articles have been written on teaming. Ironically, (1) few authors, if any, have identified a step-by-step approach to the teaming process and (2) few have differentiated between groups, committees, teams, high performance team, and technology-based teams as a way to create a learning organization. At Kansas State University and Spring Hill School District in Spring Hill, Kansas, a ten year research and development cycle (R&D) has been conducted on the topic of effective teaming. Outcomes of this research and development project have been published in in form of a practitioner's handbook called 101 Tips, Traps, and To-dos for Creating Teams which is published by National Educational Service.

The first major finding of the R&D research project was that people need a information and training to determine the difference between groups, committees, teams, high-performance teams, and technology based teams perform. In simple terms, different needs by the organization dictate what kind of grouping is needed to accomplish the desired outcome, and high-performance and technology-based teams facilitate the development of learning organizations. The following distinguishing characteristics emerged which allowed people to understand what is expected of them when working together:

Committees are characterized by:

- Convened and led by chairperson
- Follows precise, printed agenda
- Uses Roberts' Rules of Order to conduct business
- Votes Yea, Nay, or Abstain to make decisions

Groups are characterized by:

- Members who share some information
- Minimum common purpose
- No common performance
- No joint product (frequently operates on divided tasks)
- No mutual accountability (dependent)
- Directed by supervisor or outside leader to achieve specific tasks

Teams are characterized by:

- Members who share considerable information and committed to sharing
- Usually have more clarity of purpose, goals, etc.
- Leadership roles shared by members and receptive to coaching
- Prepares and operates from informal agenda
- Commitment to operate as a team over a long time period
- Commitment to consensus building rather than voting

High Performance Teams are characterized by:

- People with complementary skills and thrives on synergy
- Common purpose, clear goals, and common working approach
- Members who are mutually accountable (interdependent)
- Self-directed but always receptive to coaching
- Highly skilled at assuming different team roles depending on need/situation
- Committed to incremental improvement by team self-improvement strategies
- Highly skilled at and passionate about consensus building

Technology-based Teams are characterized by:

- Abundance of high performance team skills
- Deeply committed to one another's success--interdependent via technology
- Uses technology both as communication, product, and creativity/creation tool
- Works/learns anything, anytime, anywhere--together and apart
- Uses technology in innovative, creative ways to enhance teaming process

The findings of the research have led the authors to believe that people must have scheduled opportunities (staff development) to practice skills in each of these categories if they are to be successful. The book 101 Tips, Traps, and To-dos for Creating Teams identifies numerous activities for people who want to learn how to develop teams, high performance teams, and technology-based teams.

The second major finding is that effective teams, during any given meeting time, use a five-step cyclical model (See Figure 1). These five steps include: (1) initiate whip activities, (2) assume team roles, (3) set an agenda, (4) monitor verbal and nonverbal behavior, (5) initiate fishbowling. Each step is defined:

1. Set an Agenda--making a plan; establishing goals; discussion and activities.

2. Assume Team Roles--assuming a distinct role or reviewing roles necessary in effective teaming.

3. Initiate Whip Activities--setting the stage for team productivity.

4. Monitor Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors--identifying, controlling, and modifying verbal and nonverbal cues which contribute to the team communication process.

5. Initiate Fishbowling--establishing closure by analyzing performance, behavior, roles, etc. of the current meeting and setting the stage for the next team meeting.

Essential Assumptions of the Bailey/Lumley Five Step Team Model

1. Utilization of the five steps are characteristic of teams who aspire to be high performance teams as well as tech-based teams.

2. Teams are able to create a rhythm of gradual, continuous improvement by following the five step model.

3. Each step is equal in importance and has a definite purpose in creating the rhythm of continuous team improvement .

4. The five step model provides the foundation for allowing teams to move from group to team, team to high-performance team, and high-performance team to technology-based team.

5. Effective teams make a conscious effort to include all five steps in each meeting period. In other words, effective teams don't skip or minimize one step to get to the next step.

6. While the five steps are not necessarily sequential in every instance, they are cyclical over a period of time. Teams use these steps to create a distinct and observable beginning, middle, and end in the teaming session. Eliminating or paying minimal attention to one of the five steps tends to minimize continuous improvement by teams.

Step # 1: Set an Agenda (See Figure 2)

The Agenda identifies what is to be discussed by the team. It provides a flexible road map to be used during the meeting period.

Definition: Items for discussion and dialogue; time allotment for each agenda item; team plan; organizer.

Characteristics of the Agenda:

- a. The purpose of the Agenda is to guide the team in a particular direction.
- b. After each agenda item is identified, a tentative amount of time allotted to that agenda item is established. Without the time allotment, teams have a tendency to

spend more time on some items and less time on others. This is not desirable unless it is planned.

c. The team leader guides the team through the Agenda, but all team members assist the team leader in getting through the Agenda.

d. The Agenda serves as the outline for the notes taken at the meeting.

e. The written Agenda serves more than identifying items of discussion. Team agendas plan for whip activities, team actions, closure/fishbowling and the creation of tentative agenda items for the next meeting.

Step # 2: Assume Team Roles (See Figure 3)

Identifying and assuming a team role is essential. Each team member needs to recognize that the role played is crucial to the success of the team.

Definition: Specific individuals who have distinct team responsibilities; cohort who are learning together leading to a particular outcome or product.

Characteristics of Team Roles:

a. Generally, there are five roles played irrespective of the number of team members. They include: (1) leader, (2) process observer, (3) recorder/time keeper, (4) contributor, and (5) coach or teacher.

b. The team leader schedules, arranges and conducts meetings. The team process observer keeps track of team behavior and interaction. The team recorder/time keeper takes minutes, notes. The team contributor assumes responsibility for seeing that the team remains engaged. The coach or teacher facilitates, champions, and motivates the team--both in process and product outcomes.

c. Beginning teams pay close attention to demonstrating each of the team roles by one or more individuals. As teams move into the category of high-performance, team roles become more natural and fluid. Team roles are filled as needed, and sharing of different roles becomes quite natural.

d. The process observer assists in “fishbowling” toward the end of the team meeting to allow the team to discuss the effectiveness of team roles.

e. In many instances, team roles that do not emerge lead to team dysfunction or breakdown.

f. For groups learning to be a team, assigning team roles may seem artificial; however, team roles must be understood and shared by all team members in the early stages of teaming.

Step # 3: Initiate Whip Activities (See Figure 4)

Whip Activities are designed to motivate teams and get them to focus on each other and upcoming activities. The Whip Activity is the “set” or beginning of the teaming session.

Definition: A strategy that allows teams to share ideas, communicate opinions, and focus on common themes which allows sharing, caring, and honesty in the teaming process. The purpose of a Whip Activity is to create a “bonding” and generate chemistry among team members. “Whip Activities” are intended to build trust and generate interest in the teaming process.

Characteristics of Whip Activities:

a. Generally, Whip Activities have a purpose of motivating or exciting team members. Often, they are linked to upcoming agenda items. In this way, they help structure team thinking and time to the task at hand.

b. Whip Activities tend to be short in duration or at least proportional to the time allotted to all other team agenda items.

c. The selection or creation of a Whip Activity is the team’s responsibility--not necessarily the team leader’s or coach’s responsibility. In short, whip activities are identified and initiated by the team.

d. On occasion, when the team is functioning at a “high performance level,” the whip activity may be delayed to the next team session or used as the sole team agenda item when it is appropriate to the team’s goals.

e. Whip activities provide the “glue” for building trust among team members. Whip activities should be motivational, fun, serious, and/or emotional (e.g., self-disclosure).

Step # 4: Monitor Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviors (See Figure 5)

The ability of team to communicate is dependent on their understanding various communication skills. Identifying, studying, and improving verbal and nonverbal cues is a prerequisite to teams dialoguing with each other as opposed to talking at each other.

Definition: Verbal and nonverbal behaviors are specific cues used by team members which influence other team member behavior; words that are spoken as well as unspoken physical behavior which impacts other team members’ behavior.

Verbal cues categories defined:

1. Questions--soliciting information. Subsets of questioning include: (a) content, (b) analysis, (c) decision, (d) feeling question, (e) process question, (f) throwback, (g) nonverbal, and (h) wait-time.
2. Reinforcement--constructive feedback intended to confirm opinion or behavior.
3. Building--elaborating or buttressing idea of another person.
4. Direction Giving--information which directs behavior.
5. Emotion--Expressing or accepting emotion of another person.
6. Criticism--negative feedback.

Nonverbal cues categories defined:

1. Eye Contact--looking into another person's eyes.
Purposes: approval, interest, disapproval, control, listening.
2. Gestures--acting out physically using legs, feet, head, shoulders, trunk, or hands.
Purposes: emphasis, order, directions; buttress of verbal message.
3. Mannerisms--mindless or unconscientious movement of head, hands, shoulders, trunk, legs, or feet; idiosyncratic movement.
Purpose: positive--endearing; negative--annoying, distracting.
4. Travel--physical movement from one area to another.
Purposes: reinforcement, availability, control, etc.
5. Touching--physical contact.
Purposes: reinforcement, control, reassurance, anger.
6. Facial Expressions--head movement using forehead, eyebrow, cheek, nose, ears, lips, tongue, chin, etc.
Purposes: anger, love, disapproval, approval, confusion, disinterest, etc.
7. Posture--body position using torso, arms, legs, etc.
Purposes: expression of warmth, sincerity, interest, expectations, etc.
8. Energy Level--movement of body and speed of movement using body parts.
Purpose: excitement, boredom, attitude, etc.
9. Use of Space--arrangement of environment which facilitates or impedes movement.
Purpose: denotes what will happen in environment; facilitates or impedes interaction, etc.
10. Silence--absence of sound.
Purpose: overstatement, understatement, suspense, humor, thought, etc.

11. Use of Time--what occurs between a beginning and an end; organization of events within space of time, etc.

Purpose: denotes interests, expertise, preferences, dislikes, lack of knowledge, etc.

Characteristics of Verbal and Nonverbal Teaming Behaviors:

- a. Verbal and nonverbal behaviors impact team members in highly significant ways.
- b. Verbal and nonverbal behaviors can be identified, analyzed, and modified to move groups to teams, teams to high-performance teams, and high-performance teams to technology-based teams.
- c. Verbal and nonverbal behaviors can also be effectively maintained through videotape playback and analysis.
- d. There are a myriad of verbal and nonverbal behaviors; the study of verbal and nonverbal cues can be exceedingly complex.
- e. Effective teams spend a lot of time analyzing verbal and nonverbal cues in order to sharpen team performance.

Step # 5: Initiate Fishbowling (See Figure 6)

Fishbowling occurs at the end of the teaming session and is intended as a debriefing activity. The “fishbowl” is a metaphor for the “fish” (team) to get on the outside of the fishbowl to determine where the fish (team) have been swimming (i.e., determining how to “swim” better; identifying areas of improvement).

Definition: determining progress; summary or closure; act of debriefing for the purpose of team improvement; performance improvement through reflection.

Characteristics of fishbowling:

- a. Most often, fishbowling occurs at the end of the teaming session; however, fishbowling can occur anytime the team deems necessary (beginning, middle, or end) depending on the need to rectify a problem or issue which is impeding team progress.
- b. Fishbowling is the responsibility of all team members--not just the team leader or coach.
- c. Often, the coach facilitates or leads the team in fishbowling until the team establishes a “comfort level” of team self-analysis and self-improvement.
- d. Fishbowling should be nonthreatening; undue criticism or attacks on other individuals should be avoided.
- e. The focus of fishbowling (improvement) should be interdependence rather

than dependence or independence.

Making Effective Teams

There are a number of questions that go beyond the five-step cyclical teaming model. The five-step model provides a foundation for sustained team group, but a host of questions surface when implementing teams in your organization. The following deal with some of the more significant questions raised by team leaders and potential team members:

Q: *When do you know that team size negatively impacts team effectiveness?*

A: *Teams can be too small or too large depending on a variety of factors*
(See Figure 7).

Q: *How do you know teams and teaming will work or not work?*

A: *There are a variety of variables which facilitate and hamper teams*
(See Figure 8).

Q: *What are general characteristics of effective teams?*

A: *Effective team members:*

1. accept themselves as human beings with frailties as well as strengths.
2. believe that they have they potential to become high-performance and tech-based team.
3. trust each other implicitly and have tremendous faith in each other's talents.
4. trust the team leader's and coach's judgment.
5. enjoy being part of a great team more than being great individually.
6. forgive each other's mistakes as well as their own.
7. work together, play together, eat together, mourn together, and support each other.
8. strive to become better continuously by sharing leadership and responsibility.

Conclusion

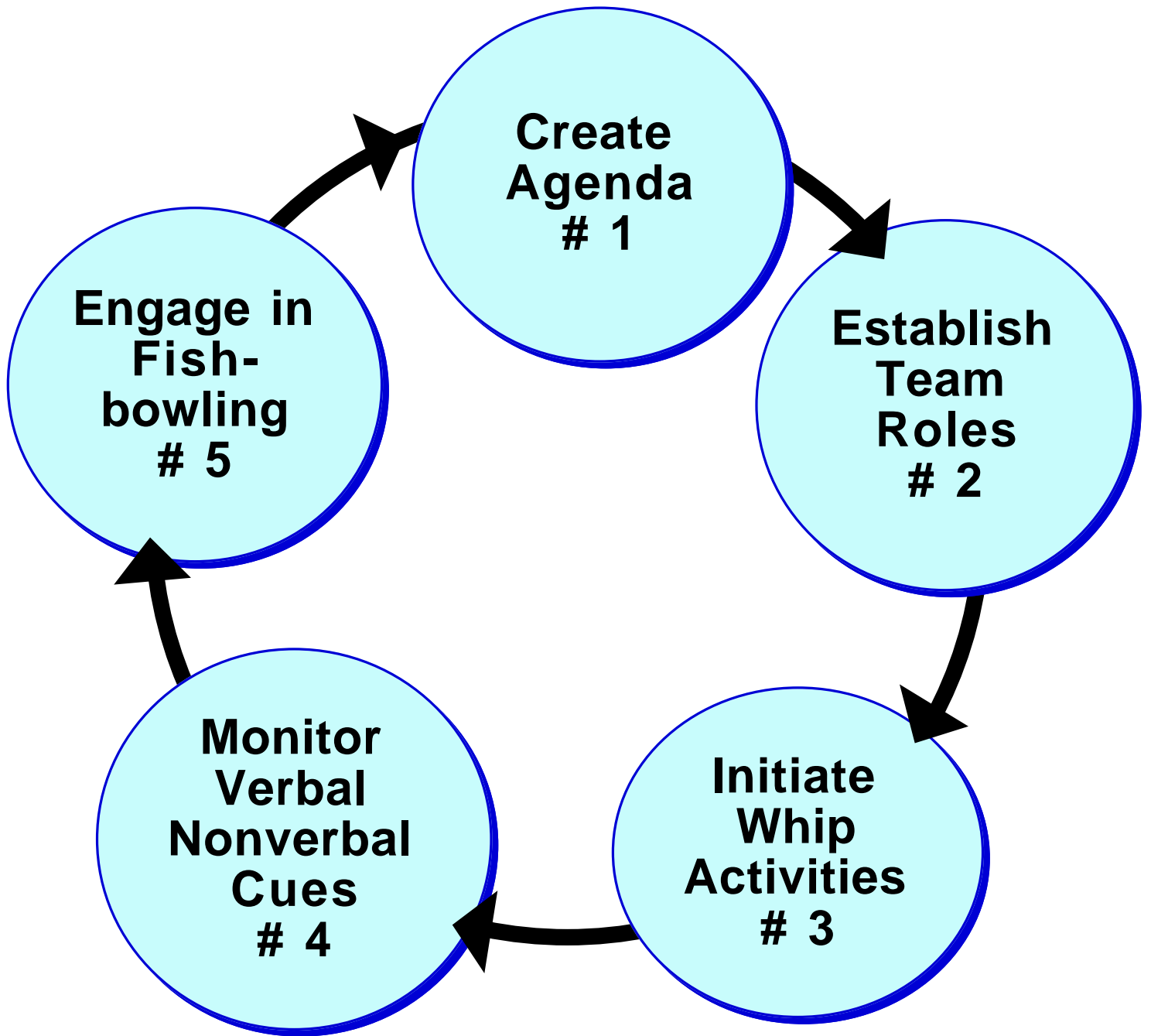
There is a wealth of information supporting the value of teams in the military, medicine, business, and sports world, and there are number of teams whose historical achievements attest to their value and potential: Edison and his team at Menlo Park; Michael De Bakey and his cardiac surgery team; Robert Oppenheimer and his team of Los Alamos scientists; Watson and Crick with their discovery of the DNA double helix. Lennon and McCartney of the Beatles, and the Wright Brothers and their flying machine. Teachers and administrators have the same potential for success. School

leaders play a critical role. They must foster the teaming process before school personnel can grow into high-performance or technology-based teams. Teams can not be left to find their own way. As a consequence, the Bailey-Lumley Five Step Teaming Model provides a unique perspective to helping people and organizations learn how to team.

References

Bailey, G., Ross, T., Bailey, G., & Lumley, D. (1998). 101 Tips, Traps, and To-Dos for Creating Teams: A Guidebook for School Leaders , Bloomington, Indiana: National Educational Service.

Michaelson & Associates for Dale Carnegie & Associates, October 31, 1995 - USA Today, D-1.



**Bailey-Lumley Five Step
Team Building Model**

Figure 1

Team Agenda

Team _____

Date _____

Meeting Time _____

Members Present:

Estimated Time

(required)

__ Minutes

1. **Announcements/Directions** (optional)

2. **Whip Activity** (required)

3. **Agenda Items for Discussion/Dialogue** (required)

a. __ Minutes

b. __ Minutes

c. __ Minutes

d. __ Minutes

4. **Actions to be Taken** (optional)

__ Minutes

a.

b.

c.

5. **Closure/Fishbowling/Assignments** (required)

__ Minutes

Agenda Items for Next Meeting (required)

__ Minutes

a.

b.

c.

d.

Next Scheduled Meeting is: _____ (required)

Notes:

Recorder Signature

Team Agenda

Figure 2

1 Team Leader/Facilitator	2 Team Process Observer	3 Team Recorder/Timekeeper	4 Team Member	5 Coach/ Teacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •schedules, arranges, & conducts meetings •organizes meetings with set, body, & closure •asks questions •protects rights of team members •facilitates goal setting, & activities to achieve goals •liaison to coach •consensus builder •facilitates cross teaming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •keeps track of team progress/interaction •encourages participation •works with team leader to improve team •works with team members on team skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •takes minutes, notes, etc. •keeps track of time •provides agenda at leader's request 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •contributes to discussion •prepares for meeting •offers ideas •fulfills team role(s) when void exists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •champions work of team •facilitates development of team •supports team with resources •provides information when asked •facilitates cross team training •resolves team conflict •facilitates cross-teaming

**Team Role Chart:
Roles Which Facilitate Team Effectiveness**

Figure 3

Building Team Relationships

***Defining Moment:** experiences that have left a profound impact on your life. According to Filson, they are “naked, startling, and wonderful instances in time that change you forever.”

Defining Moment

1. The single most important event that has had the greatest impact on my personal and professional life was:

_____.

Lesson(s) Learned

2. The greatest lesson I learned from that defining moment was:

_____.

Changed Behavior

3. As a result, I have changed by personal and/or profession behavior in the following way(s):

_____.

*See: Filson, B. (1992). Defining Moments: Motivating People to Take Action. Williamstown, MA: Williamstown Publishers.

Verbal Cues

- ___ 1. Questions--soliciting information.
 - ___ (a) content
 - ___ (b) analysis
 - ___ (c) decision
 - ___ (d) feeling question (emotion)
 - ___ (e) process question (procedural)
 - ___ (f) throwback
 - ___ (g) nonverbal
 - ___ (h) wait-time (silence after question)
- ___ 2. Reinforcement--constructive feedback intended to confirm opinion or behavior.
- ___ 3. Building--elaborating or buttressing idea of another person.
- ___ 4. Direction Giving--information which directs behavior;
- ___ 5. Emotion--Expressing or accepting emotion of another person.
- ___ 6. Criticism--negative feedback

Nonverbal Cues

- ___ 1. Eye Contact--looking into another person's eyes.
- ___ 2. Gestures--acting out physically using legs, feet, head, shoulders, trunk, or hands.
- ___ 3. Mannerisms--mindless or unconscious movement of head, hands, shoulders, trunk, legs, or feet; idiosyncratic movement.
- ___ 4. Travel--physical movement from one area to another.
- ___ 5. Touching--physical contact.
- ___ 6. Facial Expressions--head movement using forehead, eyebrow, cheek, nose, ears, lips, tongue, chin, etc.
- ___ 7. Posture--body position using torso, arms, legs, etc.
- ___ 8. Energy Level--movement of body and speed of movement using body parts.
- ___ 9. Use of Space--arrangement of environment which facilitates or impedes movement.
- ___ 10. Silence--absence of sound.
- ___ 11. Use of Time--what occurs between a beginning and an end; organization of events within space of time, etc.

Verbal and Nonverbal Checklist

Figure 5

Feedback/Fishbowling

•How well are we doing?

•How can we get better?

Name _____

- Yes No 1. Demonstrated team cooperation.
- Yes No 2. Shared leadership (team roles).
- Yes No 3. Division of responsibilities (assignments), but not division of competencies in team work.
- Yes No 4. Demonstration of minimum team skills (e.g., technology skills).
- Yes No 5. Demonstration of distinct beginning, middle, and end of sessions.
- Yes No 6. Dialog about content/concepts.
- Yes No 7. Involving and updating teacher or coach in team dialog.
- Yes No 8. Staying connected during the week (learning together a part).

Targeted Individual Needs for Next/Future Meetings:

- 1.
- 2.

Targeted Team Needs for Next/Future Meetings:

- 1.
- 2.

Fishbowling Checklist

Figure 6