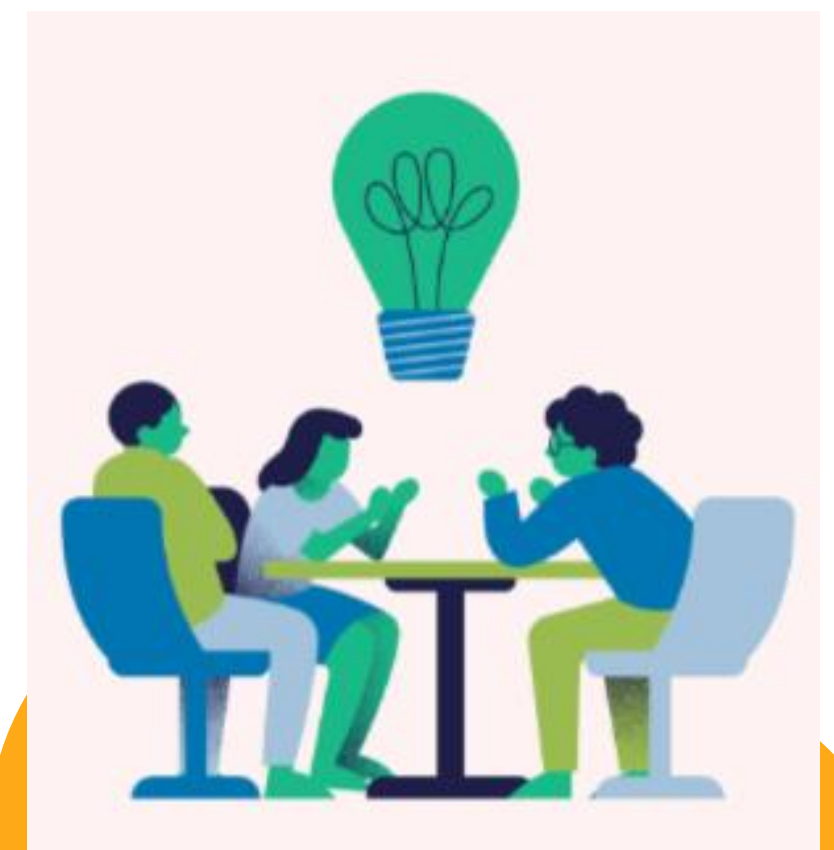


# Driven to Excel

## Creating a Motivating Workplace Culture



Wednesday Workforce Webinar  
March 25, 2026



# Agenda

- ➔ Identify research-based components of a motivated team
- ➔ Explore proven strategies to implement these components
- ➔ Yeah – but how can that work in my situation – let's talk
- ➔ Pick a practice to implement



# Before we jump in...

Poll:

I lead a work team

I am not the designated work team leader, but I function as the team leader

I am a member of a work team

I wish I had a work team



# Before we jump in...

People first – value our team’s people

Connections between not only the leader and each member but also between members

Know the mission and use everyone’s strengths to fulfill the mission

Taking time to build your team will reap a high return on the investment – it’s worth the time

Every team member has the power to influence the team’s culture



# What research and years of experience says

Creating trust – People-centered approach

Provide purpose & meaning

Offer autonomy & ownership

Recognize effort & achievement

Invest in growth & mastery

Foster connection & belonging

# What research and years of experience says

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Offer autonomy & ownership

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Invest in growth & mastery

Foster connection & belonging

*What do you value?  
What motivates you?*

# **Creating Trust**

## **People-centered Approach**

**People First – Design for variability**

**Ask people what they want – make sure they know what is valuable to them**

**Create a trusting environment where team members can share ideas and admit mistakes without fear**

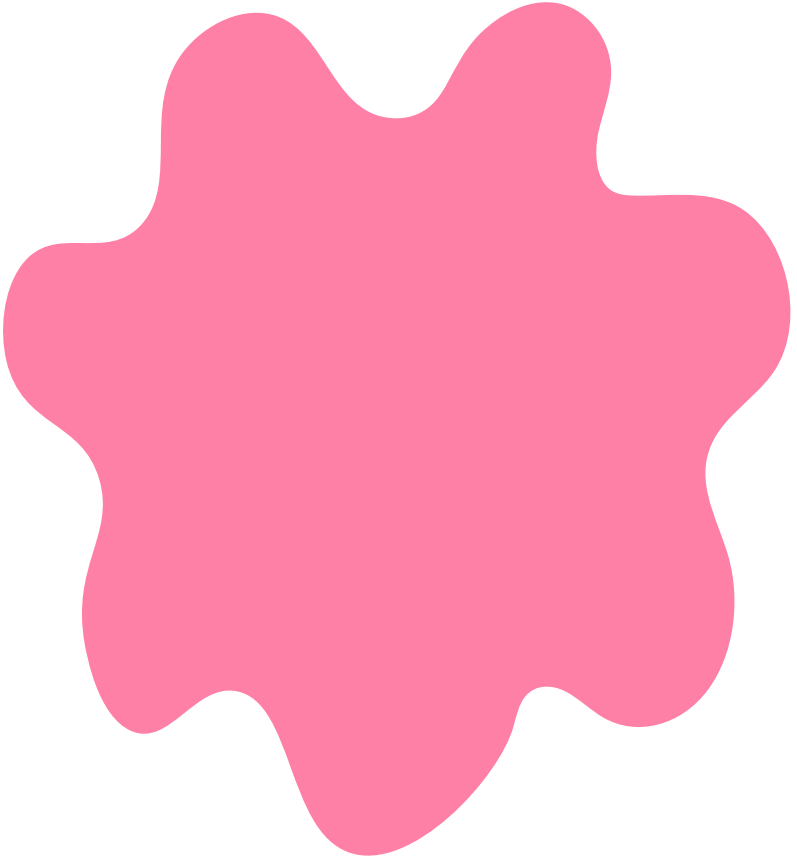


**Authentic respect for each team member's contributions**

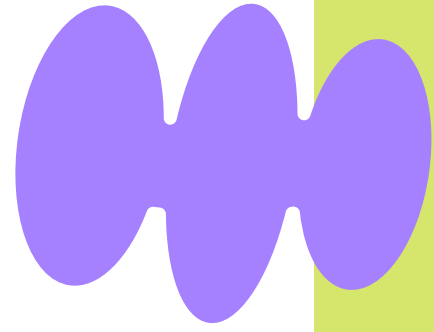
**Team recognizes it can't function effectively or reach its goals without real respect for each team member**

Research: Duke's Fuqua School of Business  
Harvard Extension School  
Loomly Blog

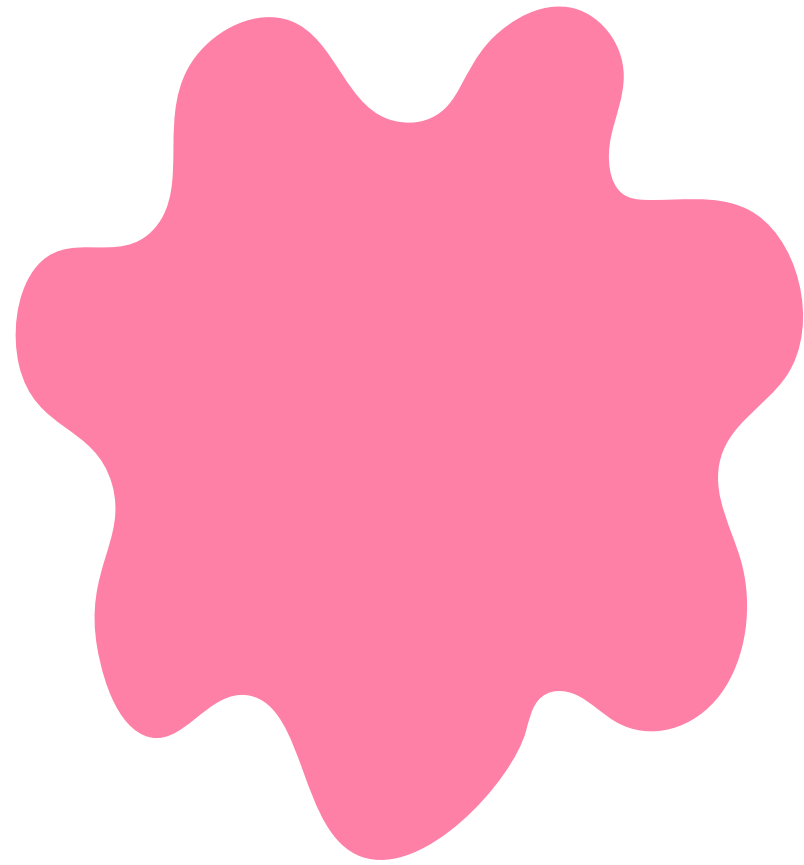


# To make this work:

- ✓ **Leader puts ego aside, makes it safe for team members to contribute and really listens to the team**
  - ✓ **Intentionally make time to build relationships throughout the team**
  - ✓ **Team building is a stated and supported goal**
- 
- 
- 



# **Concrete ideas to implement:**



- ✓ **Team meetings – everyone gets to contribute and are encouraged to contribute**
- ✓ **Ask team members open-ended questions**
- ✓ **Use growth-minded vocabulary**
- ✓ **Model humble inquiry – would it be possible?**
- ✓ **Yes...and approach**
- ✓ **Take time to know each other – seek first to understand**



# Creating Trust

# People-centered Approach

## SIPDC Weekly Team Meeting Agendas

### **March 2, 2026**

Celebrate last week's wins

Weekly communication to the field

Team Lifts

Project Needs

Upcoming Conference details

Amber will teach us the newest plugin for our LMS

Timecard changes

### **February 23, 2026**

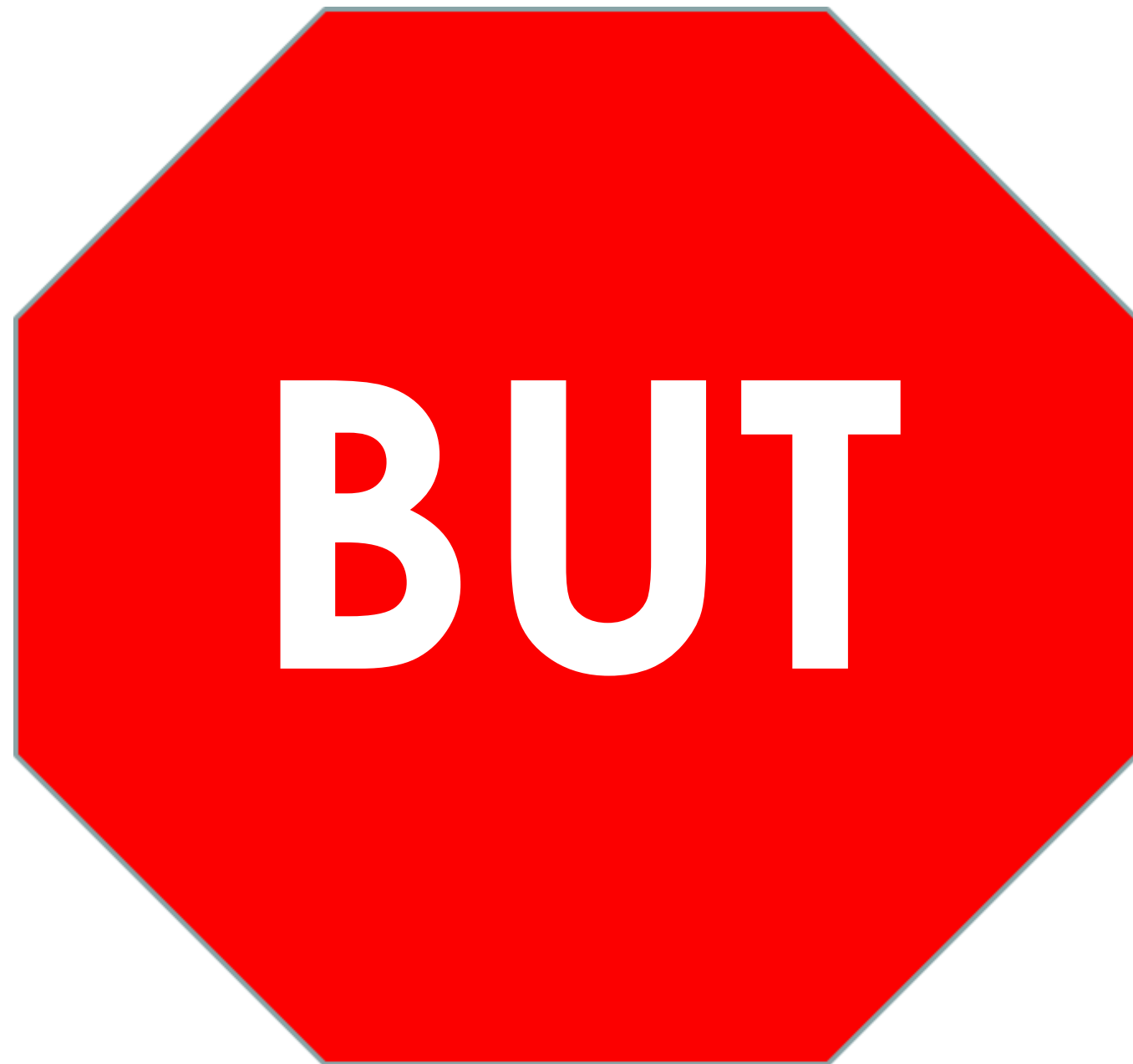
Celebrate last week's wins

Weekly Communication to the field

Team Lifts

# Creating Trust

## People-centered Approach





What  
Motivates  
You?

# **Provide Purpose & Meaning**

**Connect daily tasks to the team's larger mission**

**Individual buy-in to one's own goals and the team's goals**

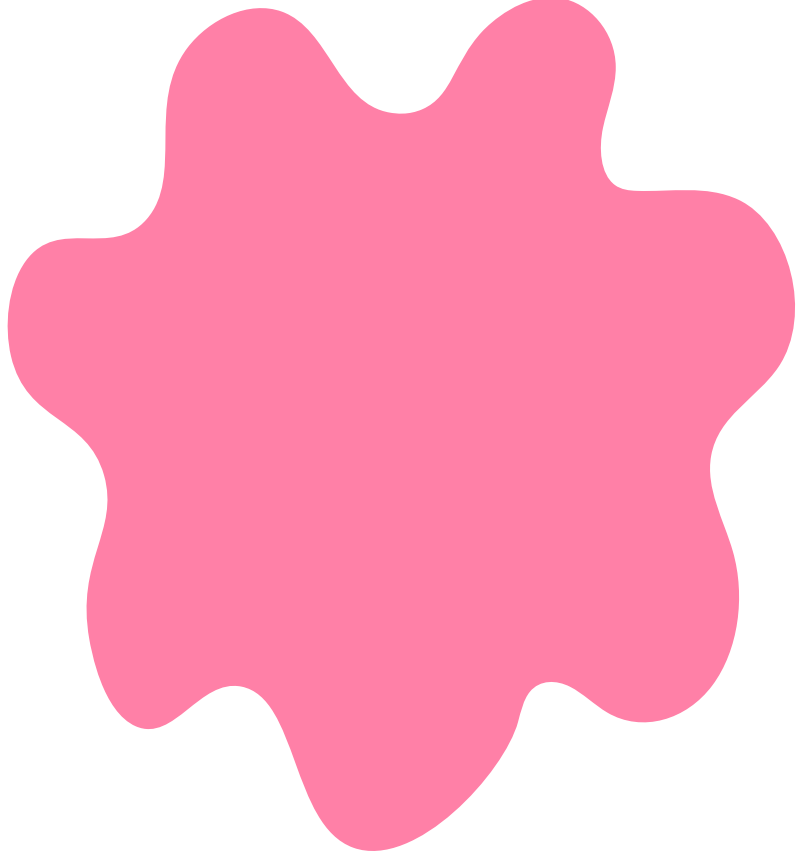

**Taking the time to discuss and set goals makes sure the team is pulling in the same direction**

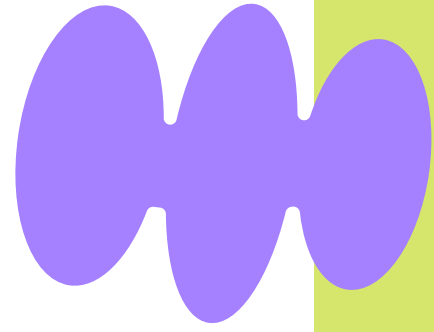
**Purpose and meaning ensures team reaches full potential**

Research: Duke's Fuqua School of Business  
Richard Reid  
RISEUP Global

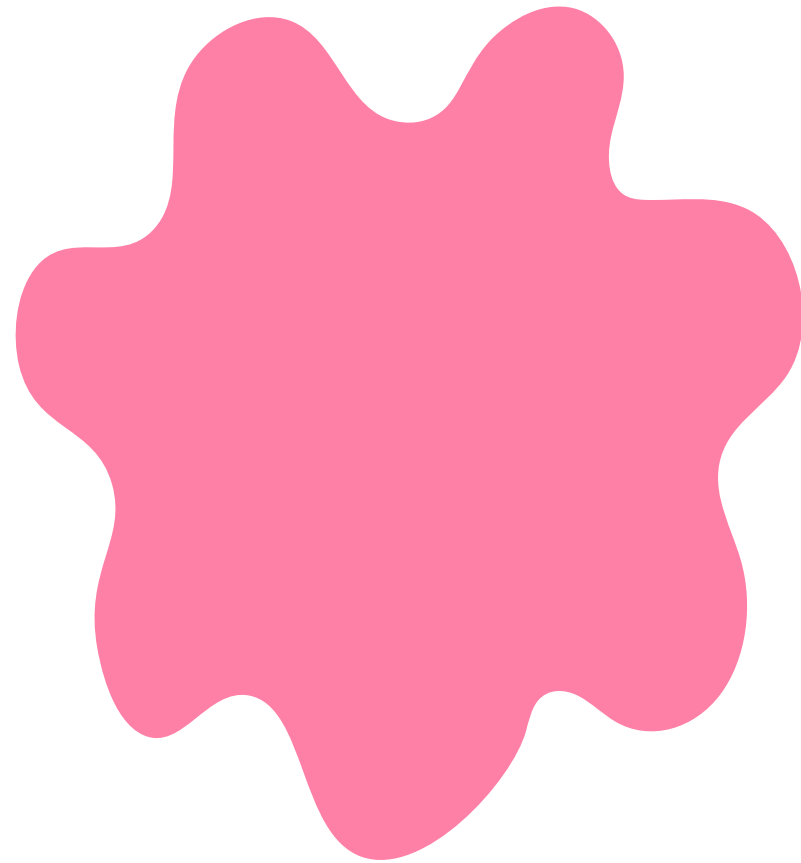


# To make this work:

- 
- ✓ Leader prioritizes team and individual goals
  - ✓ Intentionally make time to set and revisit goals
  - ✓ Link individual goals to team goals – everyone should know their **WHY**
  - ✓ Create sense of belonging – everyone *knows* their value and *feels* valued
- 



# **Concrete ideas to implement:**



- ✓ **Set and post team and individual goals**
- ✓ **Align individual goals to team goals and revisit them often**
- ✓ **Celebrate individual and team “wins” often and tie those wins to the goals so everyone sees the value of the work**



# Provide Purpose & Meaning - Goals

Review team's mission and deliverables

Set team and individual goals

Align individual goals with team goals

– not everything needs to align

Create a way to share these goals

Create a process to check on goal progress

Goal progress is a great way to celebrate those wins!

Checking on goal progress often helps stay on track and motivated!

# Provide Purpose & Meaning

## FY26 Team Goals

**Team Goal 1 (Diane will lead):** Review internal processes and procedures to improve support for our funder, our students/clients, and our institution. This goal focuses on sustainability, efficiency, and team capacity. Review processes and procedures weekly and create Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for at least 10% of our deliverables by the end of the fiscal year.

**Individual Goal Alignment:** KS3, SM2, DT1&2, LA1&3

**Progress:**

- Updated General SOP in Q1
- Updated Pcard SOP in Q1
- Developed and implemented procedures for the entire team on how to report attendance for our database in Q2
- Developed office guidelines and procedures on how to create a new course in our Learning Management System (LMS) that correctly flows information to the database
- Bridge and ICAPS Data SOP developed in Q2
- Completed process for LinkedIn posting to enhance awareness of AE's offerings to our IL employers and WIOA partners
- Created Travel Voucher template and SOP in Q2.

**Team Goal 2 (Susan, Kendall, Laura will lead):** Enhance the effectiveness and visibility of professional development by embedding microlearning opportunities, including whisper courses for teachers, into at least 10 courses or trainings, with intentional integration of core concepts and clear mechanisms for recording, sharing, and reflecting on these connections.

**Individual Goal Alignment:** LA2, KS2, SM1

**Progress:**

- Teacher Exchange – crowd sourcing resources, use of Padlet, recording of mass uploading student numbers for texting
- Data VLC – 7 core data checks
- CTAE UDL SIG - Three short intro AI recordings
- Teacher Exchange Two Padlets sent as a whisper course through LMS announcement and as a Friday Feature
- Teacher Exchange – Student Feedback with examples of help from participants answering another teacher's question sent as a whisper course
- UDL Master – reshared exceptional content from a participant spotlighting the resource as a re-engagement tool for participants (modeling re-engagement as this is a topic of the course)

# Provide Purpose & Meaning

Kendall Smith, Educational Training Specialist, FY26 Goals	
KS1: Identify at least two sources of existing training content and convert it to asynchronous course offerings in LMS or other venues. <b>(Team Goal __)</b>	
<b>Progress:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In collaboration with Laura, converted Retention PD from previous years to almost entirely asynchronous LMS Persistence VLC – 2 courses</li><li>•</li></ul>
KS2: Explore microlearning options and pilot at least two versions of microlearning in our <u>trainings</u> this year. <b>(Team Goal 2)</b>	
<b>Progress:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher Exchange – Student Feedback with examples of help from participants answering another teacher's question sent as a whisper course</li><li>• Attended a microlearning training offered by the LMS provider in Q2.</li></ul>
KS3: Increase the efficiency of LMS ADA compliance in new courses by creating a template for the team to use. <b>(Team Goal 1)</b>	
<b>Progress:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contacted LMS support to request all ADA compliance resources and reviewed all materials.</li><li>• Created collaborative shared resources in our TEAMS folder for team use.</li></ul>
KS4: [ _____ ] <b>(Team Goal [__])</b>	
<b>Progress:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
KS5: [ _____ ] <b>(Team Goal [__])</b>	
<b>Progress:</b>	



What  
Motivates  
You?

# Offer Autonomy & Ownership

**Build an effective “team of equals” based on buy-in of shared goals and authentic respect**

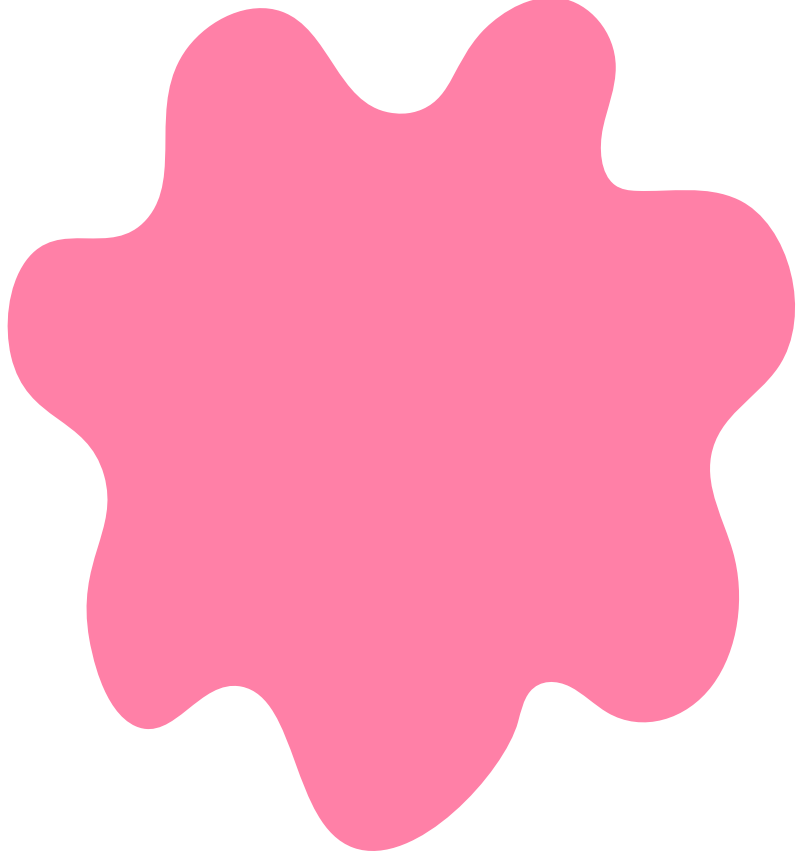

**Give team members freedom in *how* they work when possible (schedule, tasks) to boost satisfaction**

**Don't be a barrier to your team's progress**

Research: Northeastern University  
Graduate Programs

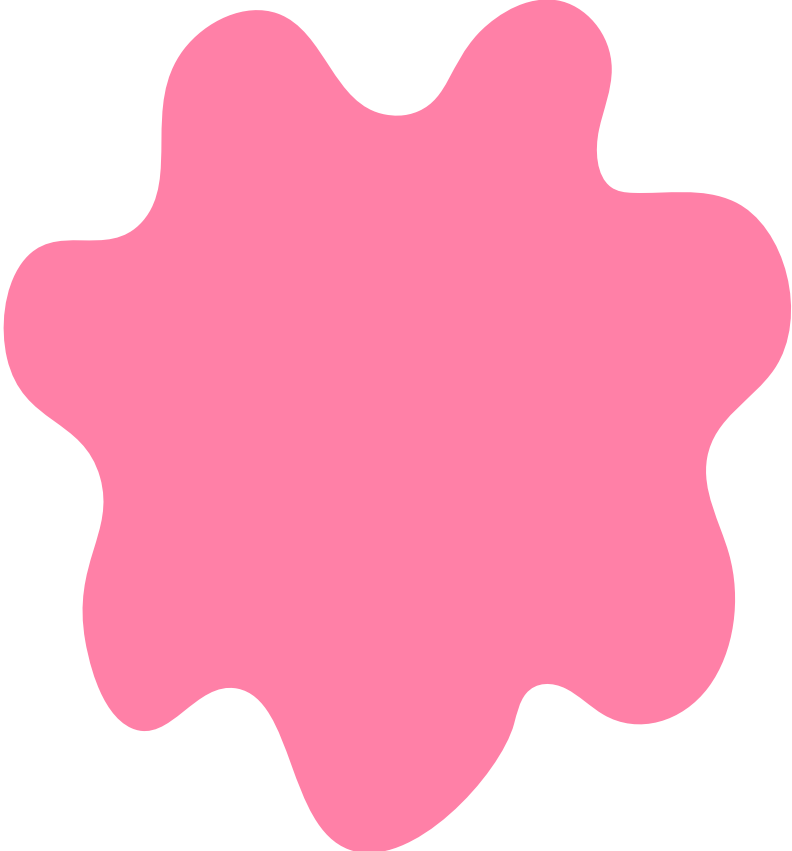




# **To make this work:**

- 
- ✓ **Think broadly and innovatively about timelines and task assignments – make sure each individual understands their role and assignments**
  - ✓ **Nothing kills momentum like a sluggish path, so consider if you need to review everything or if you can trust others to complete the task(s) (don't hold up progress)**
- 



# **Concrete ideas to implement:**

- 
- ✓ **Tasks/projects are assigned to team members who can involve others as needed**
  - ✓ **Asynchronous options to give each other feedback and to work collaboratively**
  - ✓ **Space and encouragement to innovate**
  - ✓ **Acceptable ways to give feedback – including upward feedback**
- 
- 



What  
Motivates  
You?

# **Recognize Effort & Achievement**

**Timely, specific praise makes people feel valued**

**Recognize and celebrate individual and team wins**

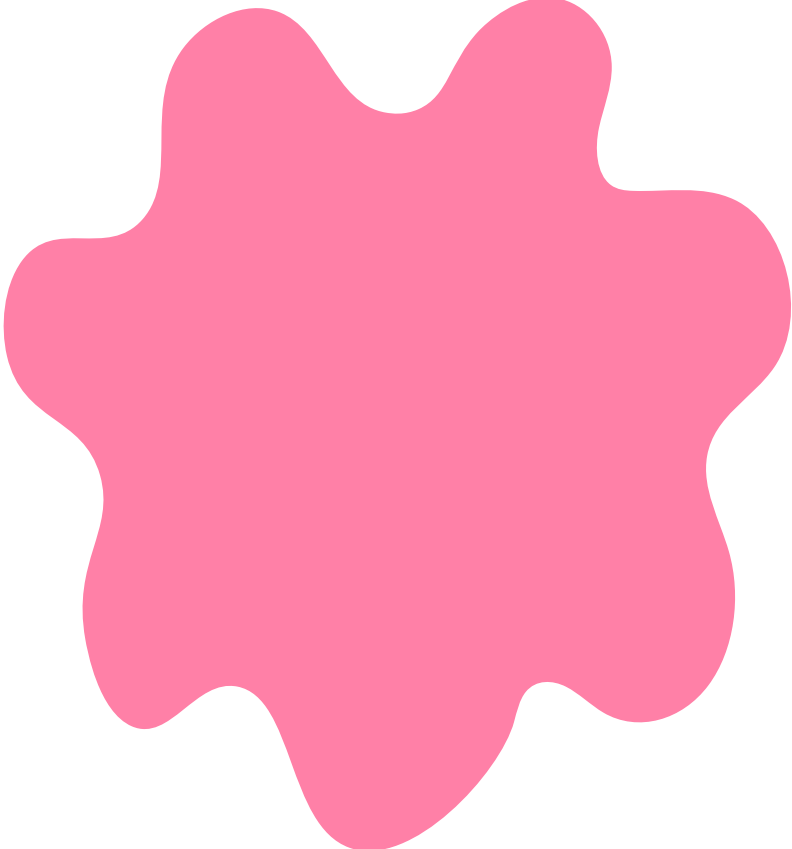

**Persisting through failure – failing forward**

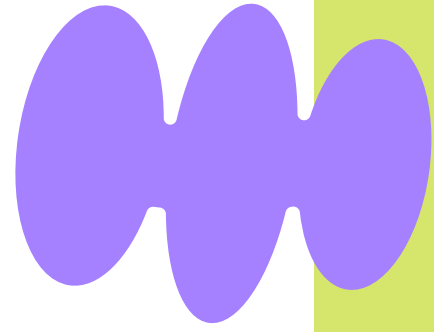
**Team support – part of the trust building**

Research: Northeastern University  
Graduate Programs

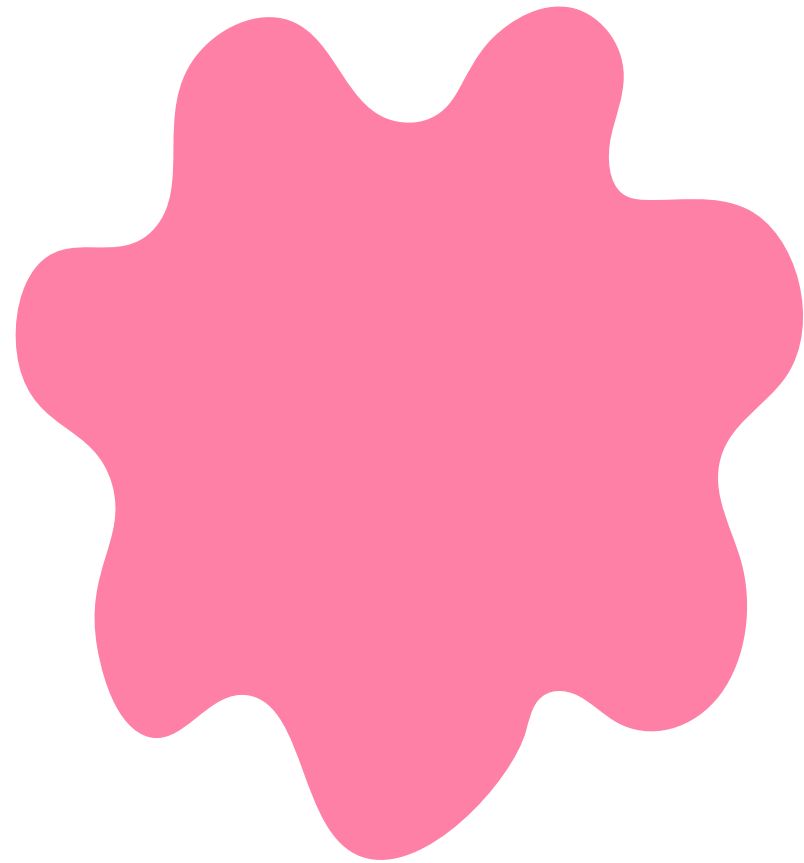


# To make this work:

- 
- ✓ Provide time and space for calling out good work – even good work that didn't necessarily result in the expected outcome
  - ✓ Encourage team members to support each other
  - ✓ Provide ways to call out when a team member “showed up,” “had another person’s back,” or “did what they said they would”
- 



# **Concrete ideas to implement:**



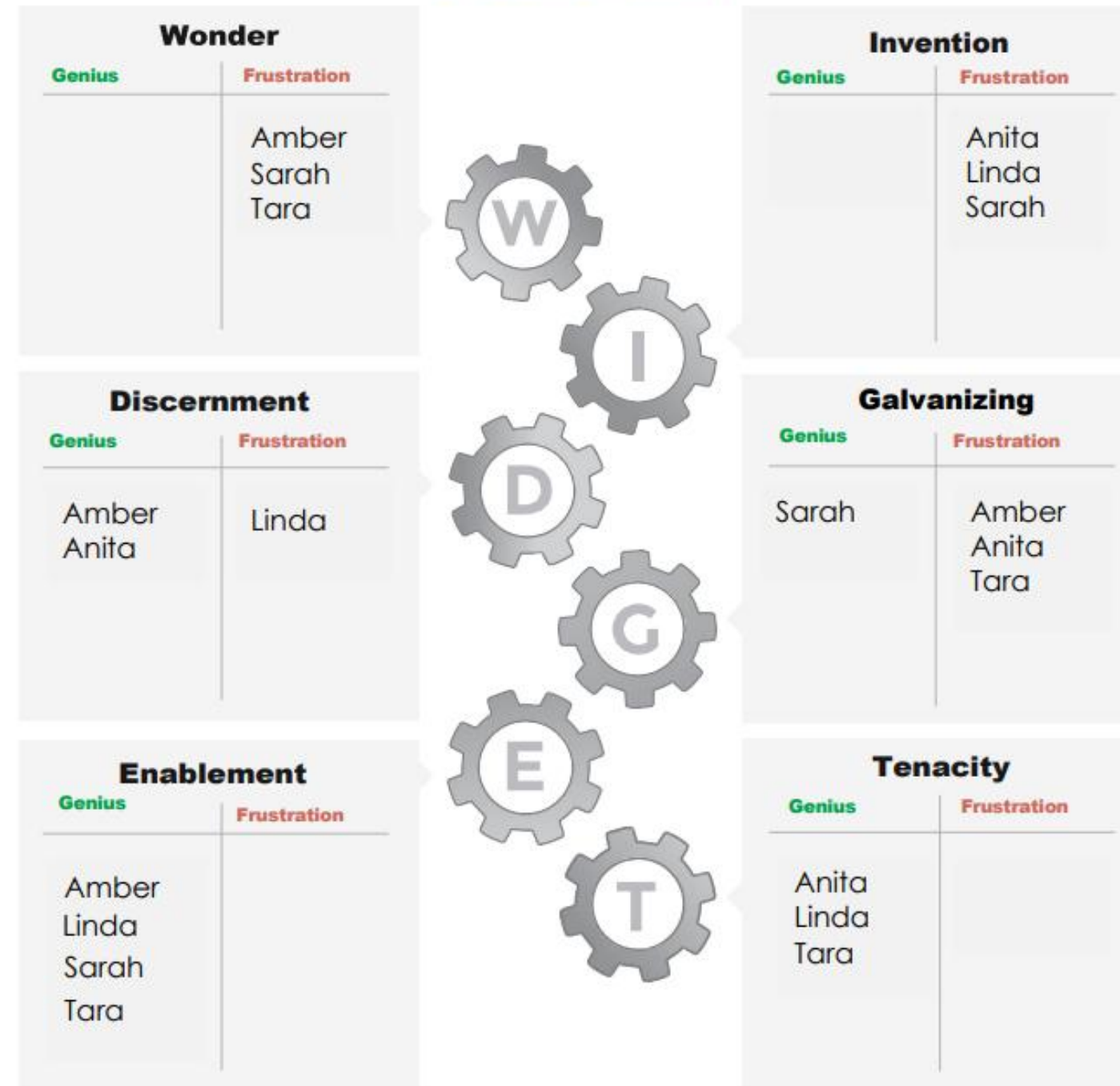
- ✓ **Weekly team meetings include celebrating wins and calling for “team lifts” – what is happening that you need help?**
- ✓ **Review team and individual goals**
- ✓ **Knowing strengths helps know what to ask**
- ✓ **Celebrate work-a-ver-sary**
- ✓ **Create a shared work vocabulary and use it**





## WORKING GENIUS TEAM MAP

### SIPDC Team Map



# Sarah says

Miss Sunshine

Tara has a strong "can do" attitude that inspires me every day!

Tara is a fantastic mother and daughter. She is always thinking about others

Tara has great wait time after asking a question

Tara cares passionately about making a difference and works diligently to make it so.

Thanks for being on the board for the

Tara is super smart and works at lightning speed!

Thanks for making our team special and effective. Thanks for being uniquely and perfectly you!



What  
Motivates  
You?



# **Invest in Growth & Mastery**

**Provide stretch assignments, mentorship, and clear career paths**

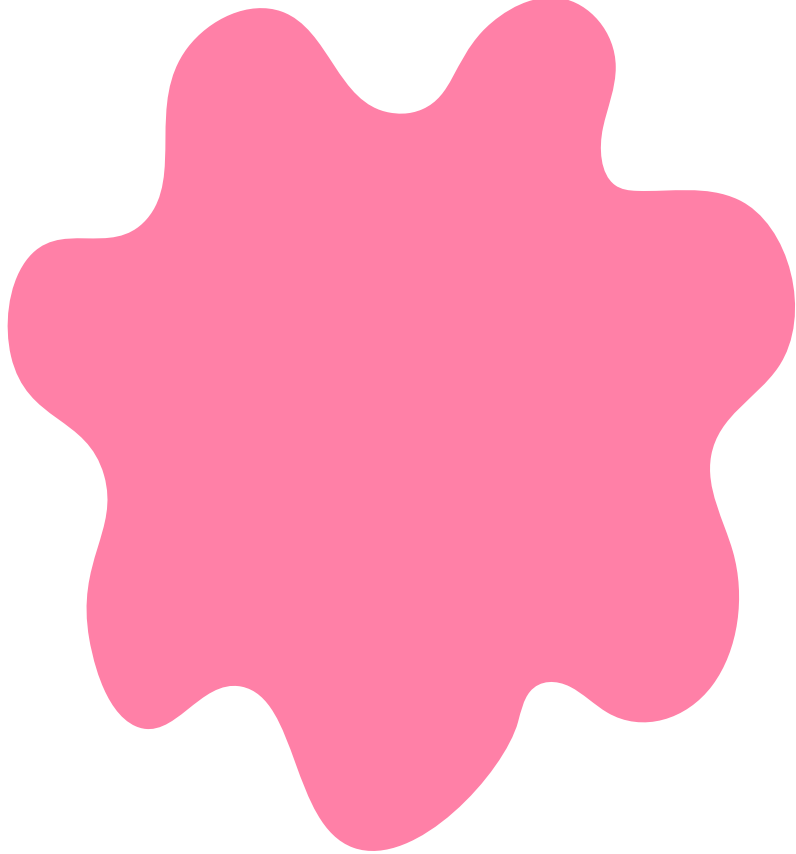

**Encourage a growth mindset through onboarding and continuous training and development**

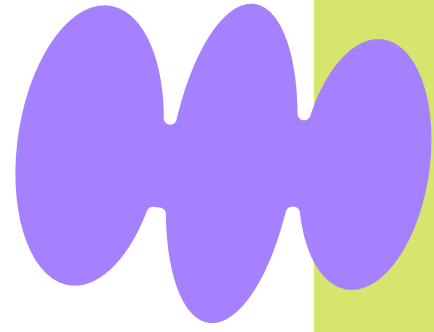
**Use growth mindset language**

Research: Duke's Fuqua School of Business

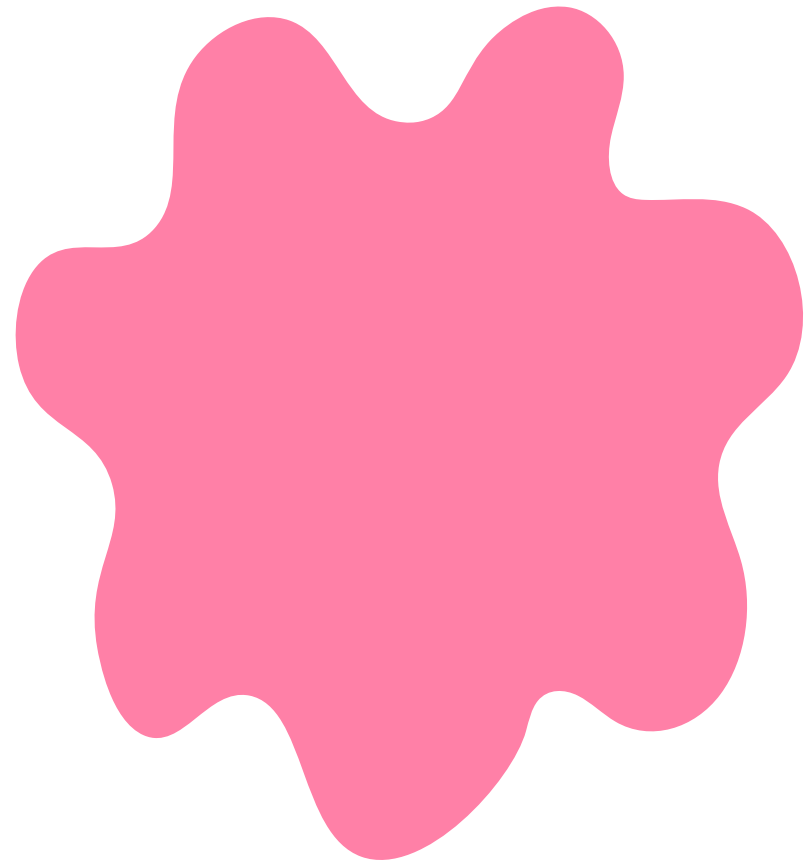


# **To make this work:**

- 
- ✓ **Ask open-ended questions to help team members reflect on what they value**
  - ✓ **Encourage challenges with support and link those challenges to what is valued**
  - ✓ **Link team members for mentorship – everyone is an expert in something, so mentorship is more than a one direction relationship**
- 



# **Concrete ideas to implement:**



- ✓ **Team time to teach a skill or share a concept with others – everyone is an expert in something**
- ✓ **Attend meetings/trainings that are outside of a specific job duty – learn broadly – lifelong learners**
- ✓ **Teach what is learned to the entire team**





What  
Motivates  
You?

# **Foster Connection & Belonging**

**Purposeful time for relationship building and create shared experiences to boost cohesion**

**Tasks have some component of collaboration (stronger together)**

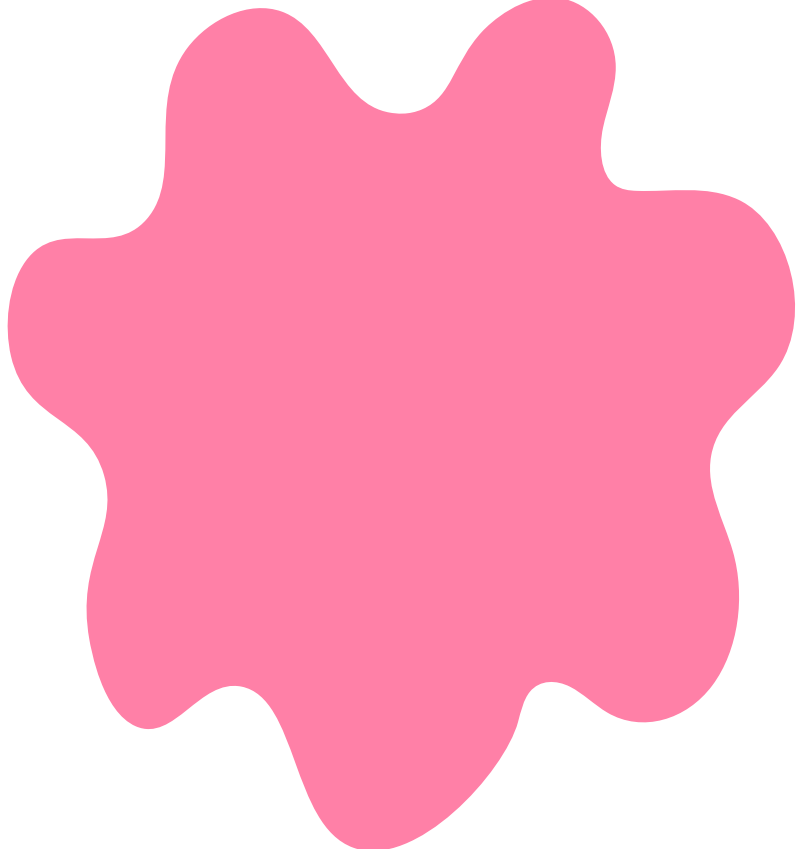
**Take time to make time**

**Vocabulary building**

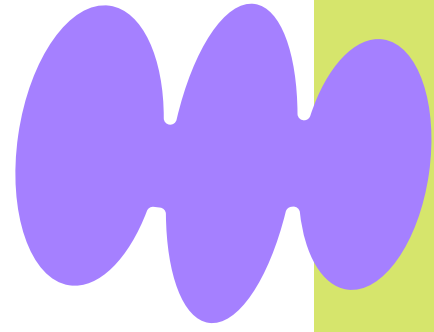
**Clear communication of expectations and success**



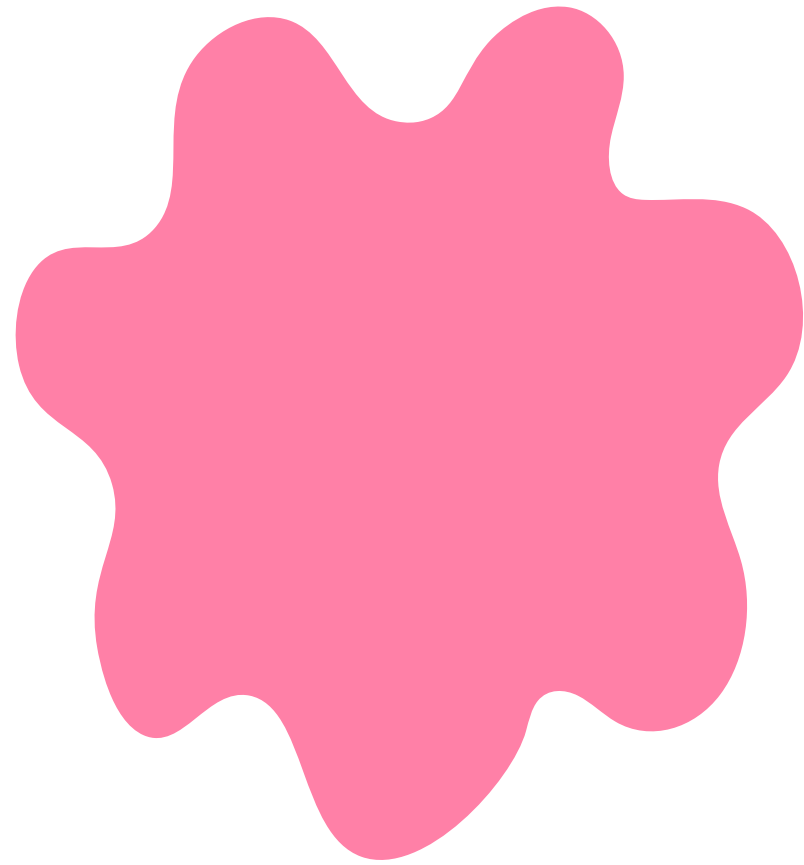
# To make this work:

- 
- ✓ Intentionally taking time to build relationships
  - ✓ Trust enough to ask for feedback on your work
    - believe we're better together
  - ✓ Seek first to understand, then to be understood
    - Stephen Covey
  - ✓ Varied communication options





# Concrete ideas to implement:



- ✓ **Shared docs space to work collaboratively – ask for feedback asynchronously**
- ✓ **Every task has some collaboration – helps understand each other’s work and assignments and connection to the team’s success**
- ✓ **Time to learn from each other during team time**
- ✓ **Team agenda – everyone can add and share**





What  
Motivates  
You?

# One idea to try

What is one step you can take towards a more motivated you and a more motivated team?





# Questions?



Sarah Goldammer

Southern Illinois Professional  
Development Center – Part of the ICCB  
Adult Education Professional  
Development Network

[sgoldam@siue.edu](mailto:sgoldam@siue.edu)

