

5 STEP PROCESS TO INCREASE WORKPLACE COLLABORATION IMMEDIATELY

The following worksheet can be used to audit existing departments and teams that act like silos within any organization. Silos are a mentality that may exist when departments or teams within an organization do not effectively share information and knowledge with others in the organization. The 5 step process identifies the silos, examines them externally and internally, aligns the silos with other silos they work well with and don't work well with and provides actual feedback depending on the level of collaboration that can be acted upon immediately.

1 Identify the silos in your organization.

Silos exist within departments and related divisions in an organization because employees make them. They're thought to be formed to provide safety and security or to give teams an identity within the larger workforce. These silos can create deep trouble in an organization when members prioritize their silos' interests over the greater good for the entire organization.

List the departments in your organization who represent silos:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

2 Define the silos unique characteristics and collaboration opportunities.

The more you understand each silo's role in the organization, who they are, how they work, who they rely on and who relies on them, the more likely you'll be able to break down their walls to foster collaboration.

Example:

Silo: IT Department

Functions: Maintains Internal IT Infrastructure, Plans and Builds Product & Service Elements, Operates IP networks, Develops, Collects, Stores, Manages, Secures and Distributes Data, Information Security Management, IT Support for Internal Employees & External Clients

Leaders: Jeremy Portman

Other Silos They Rely On to Complete Work: All Departments

Other Silos That Rely On Them to Complete Work: Human Resources, Marketing, Sales, ... or ALL?

Fill in Your Own:

Silo: _____

Functions: _____

Leaders: _____

Other Silos They Rely On to Complete Work: _____

Other Silos That Rely On Them to Complete Work: _____

3 Identify what's working within those silos.

Ask silos to provide feedback on how they view other silos. You can refer to the silos as departments or teams in any employee-facing communication, and save the silo-talk for HR internal conversations.

Your Department: _____

Department in Question: _____

What functions does your department perform for this department: _____

What functions does this department perform for your department: _____

What works well between this partnership? _____

What does not work well between this partnership? _____

4 Look for areas of opportunity to create momentum.

Whether you do this internally, or ask departments to provide their own feedback, make a list in the order of "works the best with" to "works the worst with".

Silo/Department: _____

Works Best



↓
Works Worst

5 Create collaboration between opposing departments and build on wins from existing strong partnerships.

Encourage departments to perform the following tactics in response to those at the bottom of their list to foster collaboration.

- Schedule a brainstorm session with the department(s) you work best with.
- Schedule a brainstorm session with the department(s) you don't work well with.
- Assemble a joint task force between opposing department heads.
- Kick off a job shadow or job swap day where employees from different departments go work in other departments to give them a new perspective on the work being done in each.

Encourage departments to perform the following tactics in response to those at the top of their list to build on existing wins.

- Share your success stories internally through newsletters, emails, podcasts, reports, videos, etc to build excitement and rapport over past wins to honor collective wins.
- Offer bonuses based on collaborative performance metrics to keep the momentum going, and make sure to communicate this to non-collaborative departments so they keep their eye on the prize.
- Step up the job shadow/job swap day to a systematic rotation where employees move into a different department at least once a week to serve as liaisons and experience a bigger picture of the total organization.