

SONY MUSIC PERFORMANCE ACCELERATOR

THE POWER OF CHOICE

Build an A-team which embraces choice and consequence conversations

Manager Training

Facilitator Notes

**SME EXISTS TO:** Enable brilliant people to share their talent to the world.

This Accelerator will help participants understand what an A-Team looks like for them and create clear principles that make ‘tough love’ conversations easy to have.

**OUTCOMES:**

Every manager will leave the workshop knowing how to:

* Create a team of A-Players and still be supportive of everyone.
* Plan, prepare and manage tricky conversations.
* Ensure the team takes ownership for being A-Players.

 **PLAN FOR THE SESSION:**

1. The importance of a creative mind-set
2. Creating teams of A-Players
3. Being kind not nice
4. The art of tricky conversations
5. Managing choices and consequences
6. A-player acknowledgement

**THE PRE-WORK TO BE SENT OUT TO ATTENDEES:**

* Think of a tricky conversation that you have been putting off having.

**TO DO:**

* Book a room to use and set it up: organise the layout of room (with no table); test the equipment in the room, 3 x flip charts and pens.
* Arrange to have the following tools: coloured post-it notes, blue tack, sharpies, coloured paper, stopwatch, music & speakers.
* Distribute Journals and printouts.
* Prepare flipcharts, if needed.
* Lay out healthy snacks and sweets, if possible.
* Print off facilitator notes and read through.

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| **TIME & KIT** | **CONTENT** |
| **00.00****20 mins**SlidesJournalsPrint outsColoured paperSharpies | **WELCOME & INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP****Session purpose:** To set the tone & energy levels and get the group in the right mind-set for big thinking.**Welcome to the “Power of choice” Accelerator:**The Power of Choice Accelerator is about helping you to shift your mind-set and set your team up for success. It is about understanding what an A-Team looks like for you and creating clear principles that make ‘tough love’ conversations easy to have. **FACILITATOR NOTE:** Hand out Journal print outs – teams are to store these in their Performance Accelerator folders and use them as a reference of the key learnings and as a journal to make notes during each Accelerator.**Who we are:** Introduce yourself and background.**ENERGISER: PAPERCLIP STUDY*** Get into small groups and each group gets a paperclip
* You have five minutes. How many uses can you think of for a paper clip?
* Keep a note of how many different uses you can think of.
* The highest number wins.

**THE PAPERCLIP STUDY SLIDE****JOURNAL PAGE 2****Facilitator context:** * In 1968 George Land and Beth Jarman published a study in their book Breakpoint and Beyond, Land and Jarman administered a divergent thinking test to 1600 people; **divergent thinking being the capacity for creativity and the ability to determine multiple solutions to a problem**. This is the type of test administered by NASA to select innovative engineers and scientists.
* The results in the sample group were astounding – 98% of the participants scored at the genius level for divergent thinking. The sample group? Five-year-olds.
* Of 280,000 adults tested, only 2% reached genius level.
* They then kept testing the children at different age points. By the age of 10 the same group scored 32% and by the age of 15, the score was 12%
* Ken Robinson make the example when looking at this work: that divergent thinkers would be able to come up with 200 uses for a paper clip, whereas most of us could only come up with 10-15. A divergent thinker would think outside the box. Does the paper clip have to be in the form we know it? If there are no limitations, why not a 200-foot paper clip made of foam?
* The reason 5 year olds do so well at the test is they have yet to see the world as having ‘right answer and wrong answers’ and therefore think creatively about the situation.

**Facilitator sum up:*** We can learn from this as Managers and leaders. Sometimes we forget to be divergent thinkers. By looking at new and different solutions we can turn tricky situations into successful ones
* **Today we are going to take the opportunity to think differently about situations and use our power of choice to see new and creative ways to help people be the best they can be.**

**The plan for the next 2.5 hours:*** The importance of a creative mind-set
* Creating teams of A-Players
* Being kind not nice
* The art of tricky conversations
* Managing choices and consequences
* A-player acknowledgement

**How to be in this session:** We don’t like rules, but we know that if we all take responsibility for the energy in the room, we will make our time together even better.* **Phone –** please check your phone into the spa for today. We only have 2.5 hours together so let’s make the most of them.
* **Moustache and Shoes** – be your smart and stylish selves. Help me to give you the best experience today by not reading ahead in the journal. Help all of us by keeping to time when we break out in exercises.
* **Sparkle –** be your brightest sparkliest selves. This is your chance to practice in a safe environment with your colleagues, so throw yourselves into it.
* **Hand holding –** we appreciate that some people love these sessions and others don’t, so please be kind to each other and help everyone’s voice be heard today.

**Facilitator context:*** We only have 2.5 hours today. Some of you may come away with some new ideas and inspiration from this short session, and for some this may build on concepts you already use.
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| **00.2020 mins**3 flipcharts | **CREATING A TEAM OF A-PLAYERS** **Session purpose:** To introduce Brad Smart’s definition of an A-Player and developing a mental map of A-players. **Facilitator context:*** Brad Smart refers to a concept called A-Players. He uses it in relation to recruitment, with the view that we should aim to have 75% or more A-players in every role.
* He defines an A-Player as someone who is in the top 10% of talent available for the job. “Available” means at a certain compensation level, in the right location and the right industry for that manager.
* An A-Player is someone whom you would describe as an excellent high performer. An A-Player has not only the right skills for the job but the right attitude and outlook. They exhibit excellent behaviours as well as skills.
* Someone you rate as ‘good’ is not an A-Player for that role.
* He defines B Players as the next 25% of the population, and C Players are in the bottom 65% using the same definition.
* A B-Player is someone who has the potential to become an A-Player but is not there yet. They may not yet have the skill or behaviours needed. However, with coaching and development you believe they will become an A-Player.
* A C-Player is someone who is unlikely to ever make the grade in that particular role, whether because of a poor skills/ability match or an attitude gap.
* Everyone has the ability to be an A-Player in the right role.
* People are not naturally A, B or C Players it is just a matter of finding the right role and environment where each person can be an A-Player.
* Once you start thinking about whether someone is an A-Player in relation to their role and not whether they themselves are A-B-C players, you start to think of your team and their career development differently.
* Your goal is to ensure everyone has the chance to be an A-Player. Each of us move in and out of being an A-Player at different times in our careers as we learn, grown or plateau. We may sometimes find ourselves in the wrong job, company or team.
* We are now going to think about what makes an A-Player from a behavioural point of view at SME and what would make a C-Player.

**Exercise 1: A-Player Spotting** In small groups – write your responses to the following questions on a flip chart:* What does a A-player behaviour look like at Sony? What behaviours are valued which create the best results for the team and the business?
* What does C-Player behaviour look like at Sony? What behaviour causes challenges and detracts from business success from a behavioural perspective?
* Choose the top three behaviours of A and C Players to share back with the group.

Remember an A-Player is excellent so there should be no ‘good enough’ behaviours. If there are, move these behaviours onto a B-Player list to make sure you are keeping the benchmark high. **JOURNAL PAGE 3:*** “What are the three A-Player behaviours and three C-Player behaviours?”

**Facilitator sum up:*** Once you start thinking in terms of the skills/behaviours needed to be an A-Player you can share these, so everyone is clear on what excellent looks like. If people know the benchmark, they can aim for it. It is then clear what or where the shortfalls are if people are not achieving it.
* It is not fair for people to ‘guess’ what excellent is. Equally some people who may not reach it need to understand why not and see what can be done to help.
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| **00.4020 mins**3 flipcharts | **IT’S NOT ALWAYS NICE TO BE NICE – BEING KIND NOT NICE****Session purpose**: To tackle the common apprehension of giving feedback to friends and colleagues, and highlighting the difference between Nice vs. Kind.**Facilitator context:*** The role of feedback is to identify gaps between the absolute best outcome versus where you are today.
* All high performing people & teams understand that to improve, they must know what needs to change. When you have a friendly and informal culture, giving feedback can be more complicated, especially when it is developmental feedback.
* If as leader our main goal is for everyone to become an A-Player, then it is important to give timely, honest and constructive feedback.
* People want to be nice so they don’t raise issues or have honest conversations. However, in the long term it is not being nice if you fail to address issues. Being kind to someone is having the right discussion at the right time so they can take action.
* Think of yourself as the wing mirror to their blind spot.

**Exercise 2: PART 1****Nice vs. Kind** In small groups identify a performance management scenario which might occur at Sony.For each scenario capture:* The feedback you would give if you were being ‘Nice’.
* The feedback you would give if you were being ‘Kind’.
* Share back your scenario and the nice vs kind feedback to the group.

**Facilitator context:*** Being kind is about reframing difficult conversations as being important & totally necessary to help someone raise their game. You hold the key to helping them reach their full potential.
* For example, feeding back to candidates who have been unsuccessful with a job, so they can improve for next time.

**EXERCISE 2: PART 2 - NICE VERSUS KIND JOURNAL PAGE 4 AND PAGE 5**Take a few minutes to write in your journal: * Personal examples of being ‘nice’ and the consequences……………………
* Personal examples of being ’kind’ and the consequence…………………..
* What, if anything, would you have done differently?.........................
* What ‘kind’ feedback should you give to someone currently?

**Facilitator sum up:*** To avoid falling into the ‘Nice’ bucket when giving feedback:
1. If you are in doubt if you should give feedback, or if to make it nice or kind, ask yourself the question: ‘What will help this person become an A-Player?’
2. Once you have decided to give feedback, check in with the person you want to give the feedback to, so you choose the right time & place. Informal surroundings are good. In the middle of a big meeting or appraisal meeting is bad. Face to face is good, over email is not so good - pick up the phone if you have to!
3. Ensure your feedback is given with good intentions – are you giving this piece of feedback so the person can be their very best in the future? If yes – then it’s a good piece of feedback to be giving.
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| **01.00****10 mins** | **THE BENEFITS OF TOUGH LOVE****Session purpose:** To frame tough messages you need to think like a sports coach.**Facilitator context:*** If you have attempted coaching and skills development with a team member but their performance is still not improving, it may be time for a different type of conversation.
* We all naturally avoid conversations that we perceive as difficult, which means the situation invariably gets worse the longer we don’t address it.
* The best way to address a poor performance is with the same mindset as a sports coach.
* A sports coach needs to tell a squad member if their performance is not at the expected level and where they are falling short. They also need to tell them if they are not going to make the team. But, importantly, they need to say why and agree what they can do about it together.
* The coach’s goal is for every squad member to be performing at his or her best at all times. Therefore, the quicker they can address the issue the quicker they can back up to peak performance. To do that it is important for the coach to understand what is getting in the way.

**TOUGH LOVE – YOUR ROLE AS A MANAGER AND COACH SLIDE****JOURNAL PAGE 6*** To think more like a sports coach and give some tough love, you should consider the following:
* **Clear Expectations –** If it is clear to everyone what is expected then quality standards conversations are less surprising when they happen, as everyone can understand the gaps.
* **Swift Action -** Conversations are only difficult if you leave them too long before having them.
* **Championing Change –** Entering the conversation with the goal of the coach being to seek 100% mutual success helps to shift the mood.
* **Focus on the benefits –** short-term pain for long term gain.
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| **1.10****20 mins**Journals | **MIRROR MIRROR** **Session purpose:** To prepare for tricky conversations. **Facilitator context:*** Spending time before having a tricky conversation to get yourself prepared and open minded about the solution pays off**.**
* The thought of having a tricky conversation can make us feel nervous, anxious, annoyed, angry or frustrated. These emotions can result in us building up a case against the person.
* This means we start with the wrong mindset. Not one of making the person successful but one where we need to prove why we are right and they are wrong.
* We are going to try and shift how we plan and prepare for a tricky conversation by holding a mirror up to ourselves.

**Exercise 3: Mirror Mirror - Reflections Activity****JOURNAL PAGE 7**On you own, think about a team member now or in the past whose performance you want to address.* On the mirror handout in your Journal write the answers to the following questions, firstly from your perspective.
* Then we would like you to step out of yourself and into the mind of the other person. Answer exactly the same question from their perspective as of now.

**1. Your perspective:*** What do you consider the performance issue to be?
* What implication or impact does it have for you and the wider team?
* How have you contributed to the current performance issue?
* What have your intentions been?
* What does success look like for you?

**2. Their perspective:*** What do you consider the performance issue to be?
* What implication or impact does it have for you and the wider team?
* How have you contributed to the current performance issue?
* What have your intentions been?
* What does success look like for you?

Consider the language you use to describe each side. What emotion or perspective does it bring to light? Share back how you found the activity – look at the language you used for each perspective. **Facilitator sum up:*** Firstly, you need to share what the issue is. Then share what the impact of the issue is.
* Then give the person space to respond and you need to really focus on listening and understanding their perspective. This is not the same as agreeing but it is important to acknowledge their views.
* Once the emotion has gone out of the discussion you can move forward together, setting goals and actions to address the issue in the way you both see fit.
* Empathy really helps in this situation. The formal definition of which is “the ability to identify and understand another's situation, feelings and motives”. It's our capacity to recognize the concerns other people have. Empathy means: "putting yourself in the other person's shoes" or "seeing things through someone else's eyes."
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| **01.30****30 mins** | **IDEAS TO TACKLE TRICKY CONVERSATIONS** **Session purpose:** To plan and practicetricky conversations.**IDEAS TO TACKLE TRICKY CONVERSATIONS SLIDE*** When it comes to having the tricky conversation, it is helpful to structure it in a way that is clear for everyone. The IDEA Model can be a helpful way to do that:

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| * **I = IDENTIFY** the performance issue with any supporting data.
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| * **D = DESCRIBE** the impact that the issue is having on their ability to be successful and how it impacts others’ ability to be successful.
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| * **E = ENGAGE** with them to understand their perspective of the situation, any emotion they feel about it and to share your perception.
* As a coach your role is to help a person develop the best outcome for themselves. Therefore, any emotion or issue they raise should be of great interest to you. It is not for you to take the blame or feel accused but to show curiosity about what is that is getting in the way of their performance.
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| * **A = AGREE ACTIONS** together on how you can be successful moving forward.
* Once you have agreed what success looks like for the person to be excellent, then it is a matter of working out together what can done to achieve it and what support they need.
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**Exercise 4**: **Practice Time!** **JOURNAL PAGE 8*** On your own, use the IDEA model to prepare your tricky conversation.
* Refer to your ‘mirror mirror’ notes to ensure the conversation is objective and offers mutual benefit.
* Once prepared, get into pairs and brief each other on your tricky conversation context.
* Practice having your ‘tricky conversation’ with each other.
* Give each other feedback and insights.

Ask pairs to share back their feedback with the group. **Facilitator sum up:*** Shifting mind-sets and focusing on how you can move things forward, means the discussion is more positive rather than focusing only on the past or the issue.

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| **2.00****10 mins** | **MANAGING CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES** **Session purpose:** To tie it all together and understand cause and effect.**MANAGING CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES SLIDE****JOURNAL PAGE 9*** By clarifying what we expect from an A-Player and/or B Player we can be clear what we expect from people in any given role.
* As with team sports it is the Manager or Coach’s job to make expectations clear and to develop, inspire and motivate teams and individuals to deliver.
* If expectations are not met the Manager or Coach has to point out the shortfall in performance. Together they can work on a plan to address it.
* However, if due to poor skills, ability or attitude the player is not going to perform at the levels expected from the team, the Manager/Coach has to address the fact that they cannot be on the team.
* This only occurs when every opportunity to improve has been given.
* When this happens the Manager/coach has to say why performance is not at the expected level, and to explore whether the team member could be an A-Player elsewhere.
* Recognising that they may be an A-Player in a different role or team is the best next stage of conversation.
* The Manager or Coach would only move to this stage after discussing it with others. The same is true at Sony. It is not a conversation to be avoided but one to have after consulting people on the best next steps. On whether it is time to move to a formal disciplinary conversation or another type of development discussion.
* We recommend talking to HR or your Manager to choose the best route to ensuring your team member can be in a role where they are an A-Player.
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| **2.10** **15 mins** | **A-PLAYER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT****Session purpose:** To acknowledge great performance by giving gratitude. **Facilitator context:*** While it is important to develop people, and have the tough conversations it is equally important to celebrate success! If someone on your team performs well or shows great behaviours it is equally important to recognise and reward this.

**Exercise 5: SONY MUSIC Gratitude Gifts****JOURNAL PAGE 10** * Think who you would like to give your Sony Music Gratitude Gift Card to
* Each person completes a card with the following information:
1. Who they would give a Gratitude Gift to.
2. Why do they deserve gratitude?
3. What behaviours have they shown?
4. How did they make you feel as a result?
* Share back within the group.
* Commit to sharing your gratitude gifts with the recipients (**JOURNAL PAGE 11**).
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| **2.30** | **WRAP UP & WAVE GOOD-BYE** |