

TOGETHER
~~LOVELY~~
AT THE
TOP

From Lonely To Together

How Do I Move From Lonely To Together?

Identify your goal

Teams are the foundational part of being together at the top (discussed in Chapter 3), and goal setting is what helps you use that foundation to achieve your results. You have to be clear on what you want to achieve so you know who should be on your team and why. The goal should be broad enough to encompass a variety of tasks, but also specific enough that everyone can see themselves and their work in that goal.

“Hosting a successful annual gala” is a perfect goal for a team. So is “launching a new product in the next few months.” They are specific goals that have clear timelines and deliverables. “Growing the company’s customer base” could also be a great goal for a team, if people know what that goal will take and share an understanding that there will be frequent check-ins along the way to know whether or not you are meeting expectations as a team.

The goal does not have to be that formal, though. It could be simply “supporting Josh at this phase in his life.” Or “helping junior staff at Company X feel connected to each other and identifying career advancement opportunities.”

Really anything can be a goal for a team, as long as it is measurable and people can understand how to show up and be a part of it in the most effective way they can. A goal like “being the most awesome group of people in the company” might not be the best team goal, since “awesome” is a subjective idea and might cause some bad feelings with those not on the team. (Unless it’s at a company retreat when “awesome” means scoring the most points in a company basketball game!)

Identify the needs

Once you know the goal, you can figure out what you need to achieve that goal. If it’s a fundraising goal, you should bring on people who are good at raising money or have connections to wealthy individuals. If you are creating a new software product, you’ll need developers, but also customer service experts and user-experience professionals.

TOGETHER
~~LOVELY~~
AT THE
TOP

From Lonely To Together

If the team goal is more informal, like “supporting you at this phase in your life,” you may think about what you want to achieve professionally as well as what your personal struggles are. You may be going through a challenging career transition, or you could be navigating a tricky divorce at home. You can reach out to someone who knows you very well, all the way back to your childhood, as well as someone who may not know you as well but is experienced in your professional field.

Invite your team members

Once you know the needs, the next step is to invite the potential members of your team. This can be as simple as reaching out with a phone call to check in, or as formal as establishing a team charter or organizing document at a company meeting.

If you are doing this in a formal work context, you don't have to worry about people saying no. If they work for or with you and their job depends on their involvement in the team, they should sign right up.

If you are assembling a team of people from outside your organization for formal, board reasons, or for more informal purposes, it may be intimidating to invite someone to be a part of a team. It can be a big ask to commit to working with someone to achieve a goal, no matter how big or small. You have to be gracious with your asks and understand that people can always say no.

But just as it's intimidating to ask someone to help you and your work, it's also very flattering to be asked to be a part of something because of your unique skills or experience. Most people that I've engaged around team-based asks are thrilled to be a part of something bigger than themselves. And since I've established myself as a leader who respects those he works with, people know they are in good hands with me.

Do not be afraid to reach out to people to ask for help, whether you know them well or not. Being together at the top is not just about helping others, but also allowing yourself to ask for help. You will be surprised at who says yes.

TOGETHER
~~LOVELY~~
AT THE
TOP

From Lonely To Together

Create a plan for action

With your team in place, you are almost ready to get to work! You need to complete one more step: Creating your plan for your work together. Many teams skip this step and jump right into the day-to-day. This is understandable but misguided. Especially if you want to work in a collaborative way, you must understand how each member of your team works best, and craft a plan that suits all of your needs and work styles. We'll get more into this plan for action in Chapter 4.