

Creating a Team Narrative

90 Minutes

Narratives are an extremely important part of the improvement journey and do much to shape the trajectory of improvement work. The power of a group narrative is when individuals can see themselves in it. The narrative of “us” becomes a force, a tool, and glue for the improvement team/community. It explains the “why” of the work and fuels aspirational goals. When individuals are connected to a community of others who share the same values, there is a synergy that occurs as they develop a “narrative of us” and is driven as a group by a sense of urgency in their improvement work.

The following guide provides an outline of activities you can do with your team to create a shared narrative.

1. **Individual Reflection:** The first step in creating a shared narrative is to invite individuals to reflect on their own purpose and motivation for engaging in the work of your team.
 - Activity: Using sticky notes, invite the members of your team to briefly write/ or doodle out their reasons for why they were drawn to their work and what drives them to continue.
2. **Surfacing Common Themes:** After your team has completed their individual reflections, host a share out and invite each person to read aloud their written reflections or describe their drawings. As a team, point out common themes that you hear.
 - Activity: After all members of the team have shared out, encourage them to post their reflections on the whiteboard. Use bold and colorful markers to draw connections between the reflections.
3. **Craft Your Team’s Narrative:** Take a look at the common themes. Pay special attention to the ones that mirror the values of your team and ideas that were voiced by multiple team members.
 - Activity: Now that your team has identified common themes, the fun can truly begin! Draft out a preliminary narrative that your team can review. It is okay if it is not perfect the first go-around; collectively, your team will decide on what it should look like. Expect for there to be many drafts. This shared narrative will help propel your team and shape your improvement journey so enjoy the ride!