



Biography Sharing

#workhack

Regardless of what a team does in terms of content, the quality of the collaboration has a strong influence on the results; this is scientifically proven. In addition, good teamwork is becoming increasingly important in our complex world. Many tasks can no longer be mastered by individuals alone today. The crazy thing, however, is that most companies leave the way they work together completely to chance – or to the already overwhelmed manager. That doesn't have to be the case and can be hacked.

The basis for good cooperation is trust. So, the question is: how can you create trust with a #workhack? Social research shows that we develop trusting relationships more quickly when we show ourselves to be vulnerable; when we admit our own weaknesses and mistakes, or when we share failures that we have experienced in our lives. But that's exactly what many people in the professional environment try to avoid. They fear being thought of as less competent or resilient if they show themselves to be vulnerable. Interestingly, however, the exact opposite is true: people who show themselves to be vulnerable appear more competent and trustworthy.

Biography Sharing is a format in which the team members tell each other their life story in an ultra-short form. It has a clear framework and clear questions. Each team member has a turn and speaks for about 20 minutes (depending on the size of the team) and answers the following questions:

- Where do I come from?
(geographic, temporal, cultural, family, etc.)
- What has shaped me?
(important people, history, events, ...)
- What are the obstacles in my life?
- What am I proud of?
- What should you know about me?

HELPS WITH

- minimizing exclusion and prejudice in teams.
- when the team is stuck in well-established structures.
- when a team is newly formed.
- when “inexplicable” conflicts often break out in the team.

TO BE CONSIDERED

- The first person to speak sets the tone. It is therefore important that the first person to share starts with openness and honesty.
- The format requires quiet attention and should not be interrupted by day-to-day business.
- Timeboxing helps to give everyone the same amount of speaking time.
- Volunteering is important! Nobody should be forced to answer all the questions.
- It must be clear, and therefore explicitly discussed beforehand, that nothing that is shared within the circle is discussed outside of it.
- Discuss the group of participants in detail: of course, interns, new team members and superiors can also take part, but it is best to discuss this in detail with the team in advance.

TOOLS

- Even if it feels strange with this topic: use timeboxing. Everyone should have about the same amount of time for his/her story. Using a cosy space outside of the company as a venue can also make a significant difference.