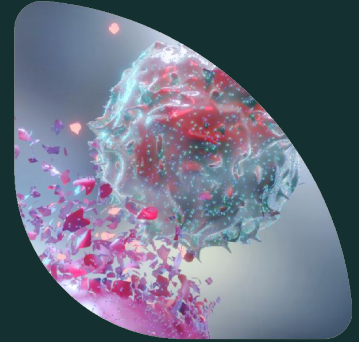




Plumtree
Services

How to Define a Team Purpose Statement





What is a Purpose Statement

A team purpose statement is a short, shared description of why a team exists and how it creates value. It acts as a north star for day to day decisions and for how the team works together.

It also serves as a clear communication tool. Internally, it helps team members stay aligned on priorities and tradeoffs. Externally, it helps stakeholders and senior leaders understand what the team is accountable for and how its work contributes to the broader organization.

A strong purpose statement is practical. It should be easy to remember, easy to explain, and useful in real moments of decision making.

Why is it important

A clear purpose statement helps a team:

- Focus on what truly matters and let go of lower value work
- Make decisions faster with a shared point of reference
- Align day to day actions with the team's broader contribution
- Navigate change by clarifying when priorities or ways of working need to shift
- Build a stronger sense of team identity and shared ownership
- Stay grounded and coordinated when work becomes complex or uncertain

A strong purpose does not lock a team in. It gives them clarity so they can adapt with intent.



How to...

Step	Action
Set up the conversation	• Choose a discussion facilitator • The facilitator sets clear expectations: No judging or critiquing ideas. Capture all perspectives before narrowing, the goal is shared understanding, not perfection • Decide whether to work as a full team, or In small group breakouts, in person or virtual
Work through the questions	• Use the purpose statement template • Give each person or breakout group 5 to 10 minutes per question • Ask them to write their responses clearly and simply
Share and converge	• Ask one person or group to go first • Have them read their full purpose statement out loud • Ask the group: “Does anyone have something meaningfully different?” • Invite one more person or group to share if there is a different perspective • Capture common themes and language • As a group, refine toward one shared statement. Keep it short and usable
Close the activity	• Read the draft purpose statement out loud together • Confirm that it feels true, clear, and useful for guiding daily work • Agree on where it will live and how it will be used

Purpose Mad Libs Template



The _____ team exists to...

(NAME of team)

1

_____ for _____.

(WHAT are we here to do?)

2

(WHO benefits most from our work?)

3

We show up everyday determined to _____

(HOW do we work together to do our best work?)

4

because _____.

(OUTCOME: What do we want to be uniquely known for?)

5



Want Help?

Plumtree partners with leaders and teams to co-design their operating system that accelerates delivery. Contact us to learn more about our adaptive teaming services.

Let's explore what's possible together

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