

Transform Team Challenges Into Home Runs

People make the world go round. We are all different, yet collectively we make up teams, families, friend groups, and organizations. How we collaborate determines if you strike out, make it to first base, or hit a home run. Everyone aspires to hit the ball out of the park, but challenges along the way are inevitable. The way you and your team handle these challenges can make a significant difference.

Think about a challenge you recently had with someone. Did you address the issue directly or sweep it under the rug?

In my book, *Culture Infusion: 9 Principles to Create and Maintain a Thriving Organization*, one of my principles is to Handle Challenges Directly, Openly, and Immediately. Consider the impact of incorporating this approach into your daily interactions instead of letting feedback go unaddressed. My experiences with the Actualize team, baseball, and volunteering remind me that, despite any conflict, you have the power to change the outcome.

Here are steps you can take to improve your game and empower your team.



1. Step Up to the Plate (Take Accountability)

Start early. If you notice a team member struggling or having difficulty with an assignment, take the initiative to ask if they have questions or if there's anything you can do to support their success. This gesture keeps you actively involved and shows your willingness to assist them in their next inning. Be sure to truly listen and refrain from interrupting to offer solutions. For active listening tips, visit <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/4-guidelines-active-listening-kerry-wekelo/>



2. Get off the Bench (Build Team Loyalty)

Don't just watch from the sidelines; stay engaged and cheer your teammate on with regular check-ins. Your genuine interest in their success on the project, week after week, fosters trust and demonstrates that you are all on the same team. Being a team player takes time, thoughtfulness, and action. When your colleague sees that you will pick up the missed ball or applaud them as they round the base, you gain their trust and respect. By assisting each other, you can hit a home run with your client.



3. Find Most Valuable Player Moments (Celebrate Wins)

When someone is struggling, they often experience a loss of confidence, increased anxiety, and diminished trust in themselves, which can lead to making more mistakes. To counteract those negative feelings, it's important to help your teammate by recognizing and celebrating their strengths—those moments when they truly shine as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) on your team. The size of the achievement doesn't matter; what's important is acknowledging and celebrating those wins by complimenting them and sharing their accomplishments with your team or organization.

At Actualize, we have a program that encourages our team to nominate their peers for Star Player Awards. By being your colleague's biggest fan and providing management with information on why they deserve acknowledgment, we can cheer them on and celebrate their success with the entire firm!



5. Be a Real Fan (Invest in Your People)

Make it a point to let your teammate know you are their number one fan and committed to helping them on their journey. This is crucial for team cohesion and individual well-being. Build trust by showing them they can come to you with questions or when struggling with an assignment. Even when you don't have the answer, you have company resources you can utilize, and just as baseball teams have coaches that specialize in areas like hitting, catching, and conditioning, your team is filled with people who have expertise in areas you may not. Tap into that pool of knowledge.



4. Be a Coach (Build Connection)

Don't just show up on game day; check in with the person you provided feedback to and see if they are still on the right track. What new questions might they have? Ask how you can support them during this stage of their task or project. A good coach connects on a personal level on and off the field. Find ways to strengthen your relationship. You can ask them for advice in an area you are unfamiliar with. For example, if they are an expert in cooking, ask them for their favorite recipe. Then, cook the recipe and share the result with them. We all benefit from personal connections. Sharing is caring, and we all want to help one another. If your teammate knows your concern is genuine and not just work-related, you will develop a stronger relationship and a more productive and positive work atmosphere.

Every interaction with your teammate is an opportunity to take the hill, mindfully connect, and show that you are a fan. Remember, it's a shared journey with ups and downs. Some days you will win, and others you may not, but knowing you are on the same team and dedicated supporters of each other will pave the way for greater successes.

Let's continue to cheer each other on, share those victories, and ensure that everyone feels valued within your organization. Together, we can continue to create a culture of appreciation that empowers each individual to thrive.

To learn about the nine principles we use as best practices and how to handle team challenges, visit <https://www.actualizeconsulting.com/cultureinfusion.html> or contact me directly.

For ideas on how to encourage team connection, listen to [Actualizing Success Episode 53](#)