INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE | SUGGESTED RESPONSES

Back in the regular team

A guide to the case about returning to a team with useful experience from another team.

Central idea

People may be listened to more in one team than in another. Maya became an important voice in Helix. Back in Atlas, she returns to her old role and works with colleagues who know the local process.

Sam can make the return easier by giving Maya and Ruben a small problem to solve together. Maya brings a new idea. Ruben brings detailed knowledge of Atlas. The team can then judge the result of their work.

Recommended answer

CHOOSE OPTION C

Ask Maya and Ruben to adapt one idea and test it together. Atlas already needs to solve the handover problem. Maya knows another method and Ruben knows the local process. Their joint test gives the team a clear result to judge.

Why the other choices are weaker

Option A. Maya receives recognition, but Atlas still cannot judge her idea.

Option B. Maya can use her idea, but Ruben’s local knowledge is left out.

Option D. Atlas avoids the disagreement but keeps its handover problem.

Suggested wording for Sam

A WORKABLE OPENING

“Maya, you saw a different handover method in Helix. Ruben, you know our current process. Please choose one small change together that could help us catch late order updates. Adapt it to this shift and test it for one week. Then tell us what happened and whether we should continue.”

This wording gives each person a clear contribution. Maya brings the new idea and Ruben brings local knowledge. The team judges their result.

Suggested responses

1. Whose views carry more weight?

Maya is a respected team member in Atlas, but senior colleagues usually make the decisions. In Helix, people often asked for her opinion and used her work. Her views therefore carried more weight in Helix than in Atlas.

2. Why might Helix’s visibility matter?

Senior managers followed Helix because it worked on an important company problem. Maya and her colleagues may therefore give more weight to what she did there. The research also found a stronger pattern when the other team had higher public standing.

3. What could explain Ruben’s reaction?

Ruben may feel that Maya is criticising a process he designed. He may also have real doubts about whether the Helix method fits Atlas. Students do not have enough information to know his exact reason.

4. Why is Option C preferable?

It gives Maya and Ruben a shared task. Maya can show whether her new idea helps Atlas. Ruben can make the idea fit the local work. A small test also limits the cost if the method does not work.

5. What should Sam say?

A good answer explains why Maya and Ruben are both needed. It names the problem, keeps the test small, and gives them shared responsibility for the result.

6. What should the test contain?

Maya explains how the Helix method records late changes. Ruben checks whether it fits the timing, staffing, and layout at Atlas. Together they make a simple handover board. One shift uses it for a week. They record how many late changes were received and missed. They also ask users whether the board caused extra work or confusion. Maya and Ruben present the result together.

Teaching plan

A 30- to 40-minute discussion works well.

1. Allow five minutes for individual reading and a private vote.
2. Ask pairs to map Maya’s two team positions and evaluate the four choices.
3. Take a second vote and ask students to defend their choice.
4. Develop Sam’s exact wording and the one-week test as a group.
5. End by separating the practical recommendation from the limits of the evidence.

Useful extensions

Ask whether the advice would change if Helix were a little-known temporary group. The paper suggests that the comparison carries less weight when the outside team has lower public standing, although it does not show that the issue disappears.

Then reverse the situation: Maya holds high standing in Atlas but had low standing in Helix. The study found no reliable difference between the two directions of the status gap. Students can discuss why the same joint-work response may still be useful.

Evidence note for instructors

The paper analyses 692 returns by 364 outfield players in the 2017/18 men's Big Five European football leagues. Greater differences between focal-team and referent-team status were associated with more chances created for teammates after returning. The relationship became stronger as the external status of the referent team increased. The pattern did not appear for returners' own shots or total recorded activity. When chance creation was summed across returners in the same match, it was positively associated with team performance.

EVIDENCE BOUNDARY

The study is observational. It does not establish that status differences cause teammate-enabling behaviour, that teammate-enabling behaviour causes performance, or that the intervention proposed in this case will work in every workplace. The intervention is a grounded teaching application that managers can test on a small scale.

RESEARCH BASIS

Further information about Joost van de Brake's research on multiple team membership is available on his research page.

Current research by Joost van de Brake on status differences across team memberships.

https://joostvandebrake.com/#research

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