WISER COMMUNICATION

FOR SMARTER TEAMS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

focuswise

that one thing we don't talk about

The new reality of constant connectivity means our offices no longer have any barriers. We live in a world without walls, where the communication never stops.

Today, the typical professional sends and receives **a hundred and twenty-one emails every twenty-four hours**. We are constantly tending to alerts from devices we can't seem to set down. Researchers say we now engage our phones once every six minutes.

is your tech serving you, or are you serving it?

The result? Our technological addiction affects every part of our lives. Work takes longer. Quality suffers. We feel increasingly distant from a sense of purpose — and decreasingly capable of focusing for more than a few minutes.

Let's boil it down: **digital changed the game. If you and your team want to succeed, you'll need a new game plan.**

To start, your team must have the one conversation it isn't already having—the one about conversation itself. *That's where this discussion guide comes in.*

With its help, your team can set new ground rules for building a healthy communication environment. By asking critical questions, it encourages you to define specific parameters and set clear expectations so you can **better overcome distractions, increase your focus, and maximize your productivity — as a team and as individuals.**

are we focuswise?

Your ultimate goal is to create **The Communication Compact** — an official, binding agreement among team members that addresses how you will navigate the intricacies and challenges of digital communication moving forward.

if you don't intentionally discuss your communication
you'll default to the lowest common communicator

The following questions provide a framework for a discussion on wiser communication. First, answer each question individually. Then, as a group, discuss your answers to identify potential solutions for the challenges posed in each question.

1. What are the biggest communication challenges between team members in the organization?

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2. What are the internal expectations for response times to email? Are they necessary for success or contributing to distracted work? What are ideal, acceptable, and unacceptable response times for the various types of internal correspondence you use?

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3. What are current expectations of responding during 'off' hours (vacation, evenings)? What are realistic and fair boundaries for when the team is allowed to be off?

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4. Does email contribute to unhealthy conflict? How can we adjust our communication to reduce conflict and improve the quality of dialogue?

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5. What policies should govern phone use during meetings? If people are on their phones during meetings, how can you adjust the scope and attendance so that everyone is expected to be fully engaged?

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6. Do you currently have any 'cave' time* scheduled into your day? When can you schedule it so team members don't expect to reach you during this time (save for emergencies)?

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7. Based on this discussion, what is one action this team can focus on to improve communication efficiency and quality this week?

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*THE CAVE:
An unreachable, stationary, solitary location; where you focus for a limited period of time on your most important tasks.

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