

4 team habits holding you back (and what to try instead)

Teams often get stuck in the status quo – doing things on autopilot that we'd never design from scratch. Over time, bad habits can creep in: roles repeat, meetings multiply, one-to-ones aren't working, and communication becomes unclear.

Pausing to critically reflect together can help teams spot what's not working and try small experiments to make it better. A good starting point is to ask yourselves: *what have we got used to that's getting in our way?*

Ideas for action



1. Got used to: roles on repeat

What's not useful: The same people taking the same role can leave others without a voice or chance to practice new skills.

What to try instead:

- ☞ Intentionally rotate meeting and project roles e.g. leading meeting, taking notes.
- ☞ Use AI as a "role randomiser" and agree in advance so no one's put on the spot.
- ☞ Run a meeting in reverse order to bring fresh energy.

2. Got used to: recurring meetings

What's not useful: meetings that happen by default rather than as a decision

What to try instead:

- ☞ Pause recurring meetings for 1-2 weeks and only bringing back the ones people really miss.
- ☞ Stress test each one: do we keep it, half the length, or change the frequency?
- ☞ Swap some meetings for quick alternatives like voice notes.

3. Got used to: 121 conversations

What's not useful: conversations that don't create clarity or move priorities forward.

What to try instead:

- ☞ Replace with less frequent, more meaningful conversations that play to people's strengths.
- ☞ Match the need to the right person (clarity creating, idea generating, empathy).
- ☞ Ask: "What's most useful for you?" before booking time.

3. Got used to: communication overload

What's not useful: over time good intentions slip – late-night texts, long unclear emails, or too many messages mean things get missed or repeated.

What to try instead:

- ☞ Every 6 months review & reset as a team: when/where/how are we communicating? Is it working?
- ☞ Use data from tools (e.g. Viva) to compare habits and drive a discussion.
- ☞ Create simple team guidelines. e.g. if it's more than 3 bullet points, pick up the phone

Coach yourself questions

What has our team got used to that isn't useful anymore?



What small experiment could we try to make working together better?



Recommended resources



Claude

Experiment with AI like [Claude](#) to build on your ideas for team experiments. Share your initial thoughts and ask 'what have I missed that might be useful?'



Sarah and Helen explore how small, intentional changes can help you create space for growth, protect your future self, and build habits that last in episode [#495](#).