

The background of the entire page is a textured, crumpled paper effect in various shades of purple, ranging from light lavender to deep violet. The folds and creases of the paper create a dynamic, organic pattern.

How to build awesome teams

A guide by people at Singula

How to build awesome teams

Without software in your product, you will eventually not have a product anymore.

Everything that can become part of the digital world will become part of the digital world. That is why Embedded Software is everywhere. Software is in everything from your toothbrush to your car.

This is an incredibly complex situation to be in, not only because your software must never fail, it is also the key driver for your whole business.

A factor that has proven crucial for companies that want to succeed in this environment is the ability to build awesome teams. In this guide, you will find out why and you get a step-by-step guide on how to make your teams awesome.



Digitalizing embedded systems development by transforming business models, culture, processes and products together.



Why do you need teams?

Traditionally, embedded software is built by product developing organizations. This means that the operation is focused on manufacturing products instead of delivering software.

More and more of the features that your clients require and pay for however, are realized by software rather than hardware.

The effects thus of having a process focused on manufacturing hardware becomes apparent. Effects like slow feedback from customers or software releases not fitting into the production windows.

As the requirements to deliver new features are increasing, you have to be able to ship releases faster and get feedback faster.

This means a completely new way of working and that is why you need teams.

To be able to act on feedback you need autonomous teams to make sense of it all. A team will learn more and most importantly, know more than each individual. This means that the team will have a broader perspective of your product and your business than any individual will. Therefore, a team is better suited to handle the increasing speed you need to meet your clients demands.

How to build awesome teams

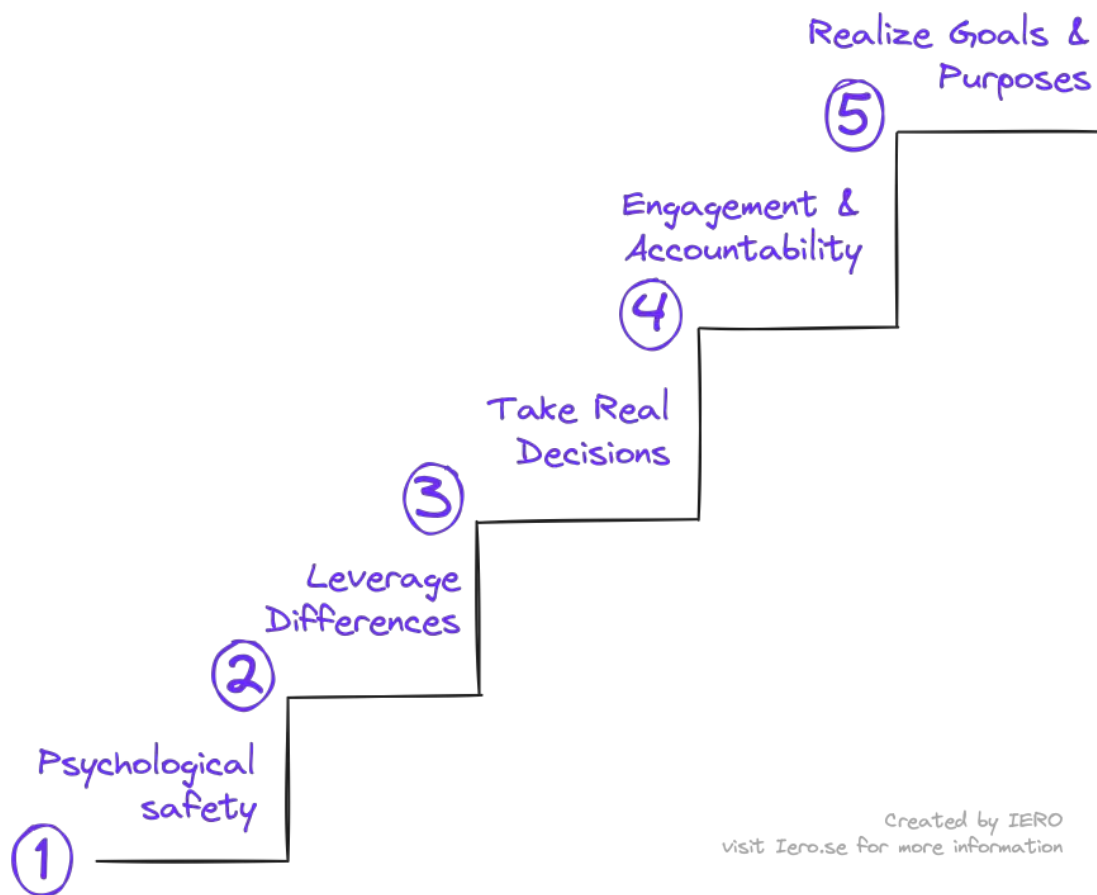
The first step in building an awesome team is to analyze whether or not you have a team today or just a pseudo team. Start by answering these questions

If you answer yes to all of these questions, then great! You have a team and you can start making it awesome.

- ✓ Do you identify as a team?
- ✓ Do you have a clear purpose and a common goal?
- ✓ Do you need to collaborate to realize the purpose and common goal?

If you answer no to one or more of the questions then you have what we call a pseudo team, and you have a bit more work to do in order to make your team autonomous.

In case you answer No to the third question then there is no reason to invest in building a team at all. However, if you work for a product company in a complex environment, you might need to think again. Collaboration may be the only way forward if you want to be able to tackle the competition.



5 steps to create awesome teams

In a complex environment, the most critical success factor is the ability to make decisions, and to make them fast. The problem with a more classical way of working with development is that we forget the framework needed to make these decisions and handle the outcomes.

Here's a model by iero ledarutveckling [2] on how to create awesome teams and how I use it. It starts from building a foundation of trust and purpose to allow the team to handle complexity and a changing environment.

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[2] Visit [iero](http://iero.se) site for more info on upcoming programs and events.

Psychological
safety

1

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety is the fundamental component that every team needs to have. You probably recognize the feeling in a team, where you build each other up instead of tear each other down. A team that accepts you for who you are and how you contribute means safety. Psychological safety is a measure of how much risk we, as individuals, are willing to take when we are working together.

In teams where there is a high level of psychological safety, voicing an opinion or raising an idea is no problem. Because, it will not be shot down. Good teams have an abundance of psychological safety and continue to work on it all the time.

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When we are able to leverage the knowledge we will have a better chance of making decisions that is good for our team.

Leverage Differences

When you have a team where it is ok to have suggestions and discuss ideas, then you have created a team that is able to take advantage of the different skills of each member. Like their previous experiences from working in teams, with other products and with different systems.

When you are able to leverage this knowledge, you will be better suited to make decisions that is good for your business.

Leverage
Differences

2

Take real decisions

When you have created a team that is comfortable in sharing ideas and knowledge, they may make use of their different experiences to validate the ideas.

Now you have to set the stage for how they operate. Set clear boundaries so that team members are free to work and do their best within those boundaries. Then you will get a team that will use all their resources. Because the team knows the limits, it knows what it is the team is allowed to do.

Take Real
Decisions

3

Engagement & Accountability

4

Engagement & accountability

The next step in building an awesome team is engagement and accountability. This comes largely from allowing team members to make their own decisions. When people can make their own decisions, they will feel responsible for them. This will make your team engaged and accountable for the actions they take

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This is what I dream about in my teams. I always want them to be highly engaged!

Realize Goals & Purposes

⑤

Realize goals & purpose

This is the easy part now. You would normally have a goal when you created the team. The steps 1 - 4 in the model is the way you get your team to deliver on this goal. Since they own the decisions, they will make those that they feel best gets them closer to the goal.

That is it! The five steps to create an awesome team.

Note that each step builds on the step before. However saying something like “Now we have psychological safety in our team” is not how it works. Even if each step builds on the previous ones, you still need to make sure that all steps of the model is realized all the time.

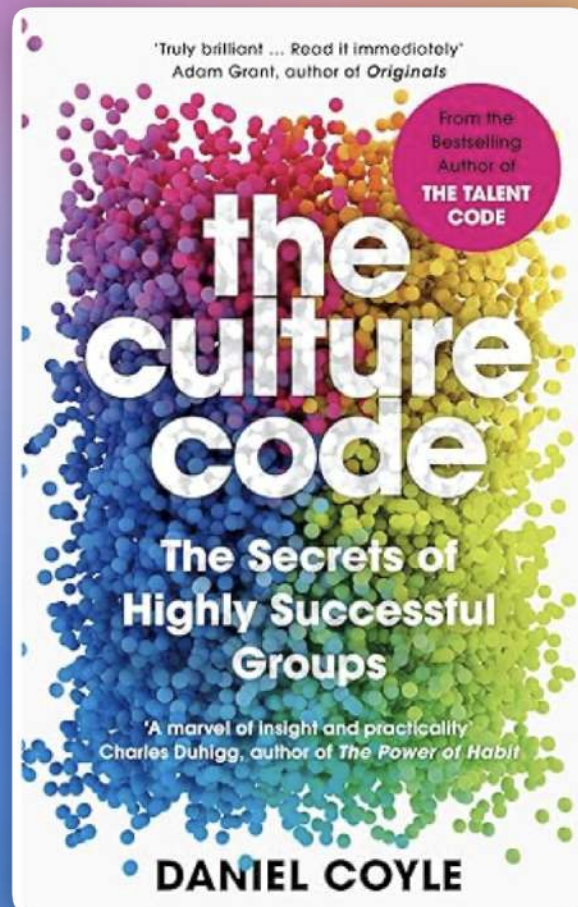
What to get started with

All this might seem a bit daunting. I can certainly respect that, and it was for me too. It took me a couple of years before I started working with this systematically.

Psychological safety is the foundation of the model and therefore we will cover this step in more detail. It will give you a good stepping stone for building awesome teams. Here are four tips to get started [3].

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[3] These ideas are inspired by Daniel Coyle and the book *The Culture Code*.



Get ready, Set, Go!

- ✓ **Practice empathic listening**

Otto Scharmer [4] defines this as listening with your heart. It is to practice the ability to listen to someone else and seeing things from their perspective. It is a great way to understand differences of opinion in your team. It is also great for figuring out requirements that come from outside your team.

- ✓ **Practice vulnerability**

No one knows everything and has all the answers. Certainly not me. I have created bugs that cost a lot of money to fix. I have made people disappointed and I have forgotten birthdays. Most of us have. It is what makes us human. The key here is to include other people in your tasks, even if it is your area of expertise.

- ✓ **Practice reflection**

To reflect over what happened and why is as important as making it happen. Most leaders can figure out why something went wrong. Great leaders can figure out why something works.

- ✓ **Measure decision against a strategic framework**

Most companies have a Vision and a Mission. Most have core values. However, not all have evolved these into an integral part of their decision-making process. Have your teams reflected on what the core values means to them and their goals?

Many companies want to be more agile. Agile requires teams that are awesome, and this is a great way to move a little closer to that being the truth.

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Agile requires teams that are awesome, and this is a great way to move a little closer to that being the truth.

[4] Otto Scharmer is the creator of TheoryU that involves empathic listening.

We hope that this guide has given you new insights and ideas on how to build awesome teams in your organization.

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This guide is created by people at Singula.

Organizing through TEAL means that our consultants constantly practice leadership, collaboration, reflection and innovation. That's just how we work, and we think that these skills are priceless additions to every role that we offer across the tech landscape.

Find out how Singula consultants blend TEAL values to bring unmatched value to your projects. Be your best. Be you. At Singula, we share everything. Successes, setbacks, visions. No one leads alone; we all shape the future.

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Some call it anarchistic, but it's just TEAL. A subtle revolution in the industry, where a soft culture based on trust and transparency creates solid values together with the customers.

Visit singula.se for more information and contact information.



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