



# Building foundations of trust and psychological safety

How the Team Management Profile (TMP) helped Ngala's new leadership team build foundations of trust and psychological safety, without impacting on their busy schedules or consuming their valuable time.



## Executive Summary

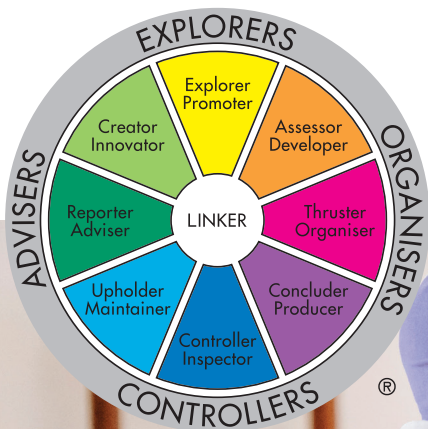
Ngala Family Services is an exceptional charitable organisation dedicated to assisting parents, families, and communities in promoting the growth and well-being of children and young people. Eager to establish a high-performance culture from the outset, Ngala's newly-assembled leadership team faced the challenge of balancing conflicting priorities and demanding schedules. They sought a solution to help them achieve their ambitious goals without sacrificing the organisation's core mission.

Through the Happiness Project, TMS donated Team Management Profiles (TMPs) to the Ngala leadership team. This provided them with invaluable insights into their individual and collective communication styles and work preferences. As a result, they forged a solid team alliance and established a foundation of trust. In just a one-day workshop, they also devised strategies and an action plan to ensure continued progress and alignment with their goals.

## Challenges

Based in Perth, Australia, Ngala is a universal charity provider dedicated to improving the lives of children, families, and their communities. Their mission is to promote positive child development, enhance parenting experiences, and foster the well-being and growth of children and young people.

Like many in the not-for-profit charity sector, the passionate individuals on the Ngala team are extremely committed to their cause, often managing demanding workloads. Nevertheless, the newly-formed leadership team was keen to set themselves up for success right from the start. Practically, this meant kicking off their first team get-together with an exercise to build collective self-awareness and trust. Because of their tight schedules and competing priorities, they needed an intervention that would not take up a lot of their time, but still get the results they were after.



## Background

When teams are newly formed or experiencing change, the Team Management Profile (TMP) offers familiar models and an easy-to-understand language for work. This simplifies the process of adapting to new colleagues, roles, challenges, and goals. Navigating change demands self-awareness, intellectual flexibility, and agility, which are essential components of effective personal development. The TMP accelerates this process while simultaneously building efficient teams.

Effective leaders understand the unique role that each team member plays and know how to utilise individuals according to their strengths. The TMP helps leaders develop these abilities and the models provide a robust framework for a collaborative and developmental approach to leadership. It assists with communication strategies to strengthen the team and provides a range of tools for leadership coaching purposes, team effectiveness strategies and project resource allocation.

According to Patrick Lencioni, a crucial step toward building trust is helping teams develop a stronger sense of self-awareness so they can avoid making false attributions about behaviours and intentions. The TMP is not a 'personality test' or a 'skills test'; instead, it focuses on work preferences. It enables participants to openly discuss their results and integrate a common language of teamwork into their daily lives. This heightened sense of self-awareness bolsters psychological safety, a key ingredient in successful teams. It also allows for higher levels of innovation, better decision making and higher levels of trust.

### Teams that trust each other:

- Feel comfortable showing vulnerability.
- Acknowledge mistakes readily.
- Communicate openly and without reservations.
- Engage in passionate discussions about important topics.
- Embrace disagreements to achieve the best outcomes.
- Hold one another accountable.
- Prioritize and concentrate on results.

## Solution

Supported by TMPs donated through The Happiness Project, Blyde Nesor, founder of Professional Coaching Solutions, designed a workshop for the Ngala leadership team.



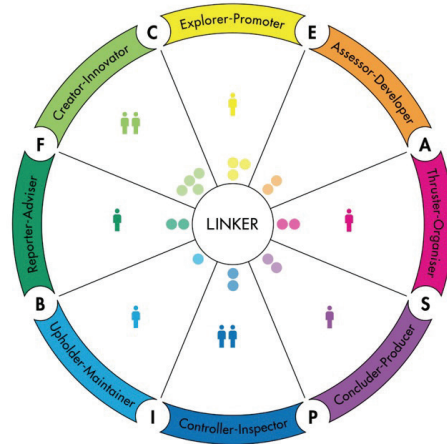
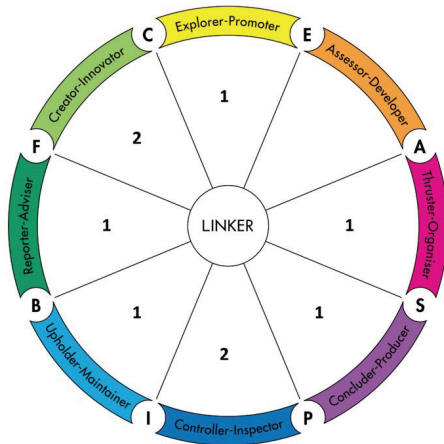
**Blyde Nesor**  
Founder of Professional Coaching Solutions

The primary goal of this workshop was to help participants develop a deeper understanding of their own and their colleagues' work preferences and communication styles, establishing the initial foundations for trust and psychological safety. This would enable them to reap the benefits of a collaborative and developmental approach to leadership, heightened self-awareness, and functioning within a high-trust team environment.



## The Team's distribution

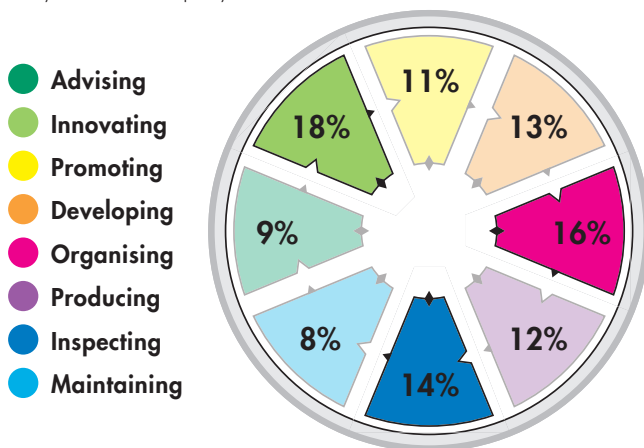
An **Advanced Report** (team role overview) revealed that the team's distribution of major role preferences around the Team Management Wheel was fairly balanced, with a gap only in the **Assessor-Developer** role. Upon further examination, accounting for the team's related role preferences, it became evident that the team effectively covered the entire wheel.



The team was pleased to discover their strong diversity and began developing a better understanding of why communication styles and work preferences varied so significantly among team members.

A diverse team offers numerous benefits; however, people on opposite sides of the wheel can collaborate more effectively if they understand each other's preferences. This is particularly relevant during high-pressure situations when our preferences may become more pronounced, potentially causing friction with those whose work preferences lie on the opposite side of the wheel.

The TMPs allowed the team to grasp the dynamics that may come into play in their interactions with each other.



Upon examining the average percentage distribution of work preferences across the Ngala team, it became evident that team members were less inclined towards Advising and Maintaining functions, both crucial components of team success. Instead, they gravitated more toward **Innovating, Organising, and Inspecting** functions.

### Questions that may remain unasked when a team has low preferences for Advising include:

- What information do we need?
- Who is going to get it?
- When do we need it?
- Where do we source it? (Internet, clients, specialists etc.)
- What is best practice?
- What tools are available?
- Who are our clients?
- What are our competitors doing?
- What is the scope of this project? (budget, etc.)
- What are our strengths and weaknesses?
- Who will be affected by this project?
- What will be consistent with our culture/values?

The **Upholder-Maintainer** role in a team is invaluable, providing guidance and help on issues that need to be well thought through in terms of principles rather than economics.

### Questions that may remain unasked when a team has low preferences for Maintaining include:

- How well are we going? (macro and micro)
- How did we go with our last project/quarter/etc.?
- What can we learn from our mistakes?
- How can we start doing things better?
- What is motivation/satisfaction like?
- Are people safe, treated with fairness/equity?
- Do we walk the talk in terms of values etc.?

## Approach

With a better understanding of their own and each other's work preferences, the team was prepared to develop practical solutions. The first step involved drafting a Team Alliance, a collaborative document outlining clear agreements for working together, shared commitments to values, and the team's promise to uphold these agreements.

The Team Alliance leverages the team's diversity as a strength while remaining true to their values and purpose.

- It necessitates openness regarding what works and what doesn't, and reassures the team that respectful feedback will be accepted without hard feelings.
- It provides opportunities for everyone to have a voice.
- It reminds team members that divergent views will be considered, and both sides will be explored.
- It emphasises listening with an open mind and employing deep listening techniques.

After finalising the Team Alliance, the next step was to identify strategies that would help the team stay mindful of potential blind spots and ensure that the right questions were asked during collaboration. Blyde facilitated the discussion, and the team, invigorated by their stronger alliance, devised an action plan to move from their current position to their desired state.

The TMP's effectiveness allowed for the achievement of these outcomes in a one-day workshop. As a result, the Ngala leadership team reached a productive outcome without consuming a significant amount of their valuable time, enabling them to resume purposeful work the following day.

## References:

- Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team – A field Guide, Lencioni, P., (2005), Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, California.
- Team Management Profile Questionnaire, Margerison, C.J. and McCann, D.J, (1994), Team Management Systems, Brisbane, Australia.

“ My expectation for today was to learn more about the Team Management Profile. I learned so much more, about my team, about other people but – more importantly – about myself. I can't thank you and Team Management Systems enough for this opportunity. ”

– Participant

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**Want more? Contact Team Management Systems:**

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