Understanding Team Roles

Playbook

Facilitating a profound exploration of team member roles with the ultimate goal of enhancing overall team effectiveness.

Purpose

Teams evolve over time, and so do their needs. As teams undergo transitions, problems such as role nausea, where members grow weary of stagnant roles, or role confusion, stemming from unclear expectations, may emerge. This playbook addresses these challenges by providing a space to untangle role-related issues, offering tools to navigate transitions, and ultimately fostering a team environment where roles adapt to evolving needs, ensuring sustained effectiveness and cohesion.

This workshop draws its foundation from Organisation and Relationship Systems Coaching (ORSC) [1], incorporating proven methodologies that delve into the intricate dynamics of team relationships. It guides participants through a structured process of understanding and appreciating Outer Roles, Inner Roles, Secret Roles, and Ghost Roles, emphasizing the interconnectedness of team members.

This playbook is tailored for teams undergoing transitions, such as those expanding in size or adapting to organizational shifts, where understanding evolving roles is paramount. Teams grappling with issues like role nausea, confusion, or those in need of strategic realignment will find significant value in this workshop. Whether in corporate settings, non-profit organizations, or community groups, any team seeking to enhance collaboration, communication, and overall effectiveness by delving into the intricacies of their inner roles will benefit profoundly from this transformative experience.

With the steps in this guide, you can run this workshop independently. But if you need help, do not hesitate to contact me at **christian@hofstetter-coaching.com** or reach out to me on **LinkedIn**.

Let me know how it went!

Christian Hofstetter

Flow

Total duration	🕐 95 min

| 1	**Hello Round**	🕐 15 min
2	**Setting the Stage**	🕐 15 min
3	**Identifying Our Inner Roles**	🕐 20 min
4	**Making Sense of Our Inner Roles**	🕐 15 min
5	**Now What?**	🕐 15 min
6	**Debrief & Closing**	🕐 15 min

Before the Workshop

Group Size

This workflow is suited for teams of 2 up to 15 people. With some minor modifications, you can scale it beyond that number.

Intended Audience

This workshop is ideal for teams facing transitions, expanding in size, or adapting to organizational shifts. Whether dealing with role-related challenges like nausea or confusion, or seeking strategic realignment, teams in corporate, non-profit, or community settings will benefit significantly by enhancing collaboration, communication, and overall effectiveness through a focused exploration of their inner roles.
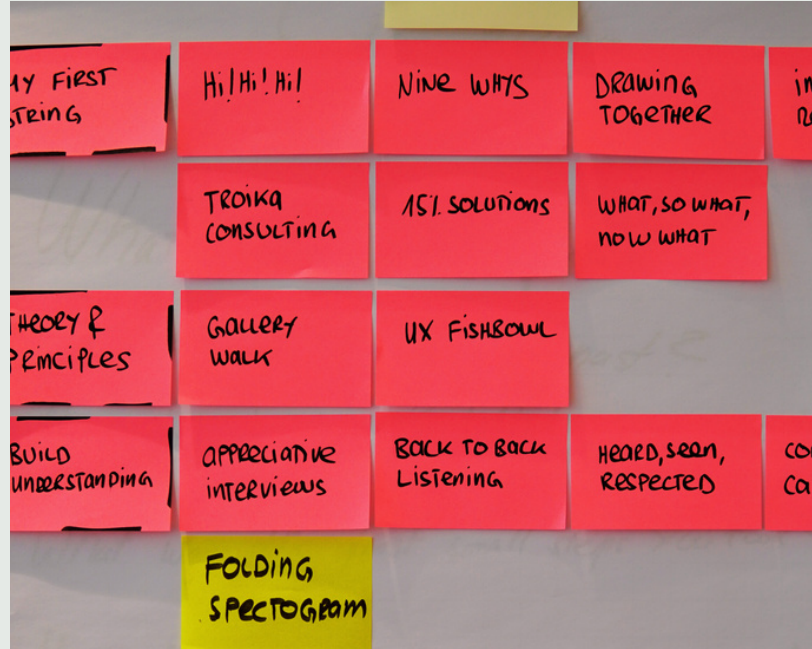
Online Delivery

This workshop is equally effective when conducted in an online setting. To facilitate online delivery, it's essential to have access to a video conferencing platform that supports breakout sessions. Zoom [2] is highly recommended for this purpose, but you can find similar features in tools like Teams. Additionally, the inclusion of a virtual whiteboard is imperative, as it enables participants to interact by placing sticky notes on the map. For this function, platforms like Mural, Miro, and Google Slides [3][4][5] prove to be suitable choices.

Material

- Pen and paper for participants to write on
- Stickies in different colors and sizes
- A roll of masking tape or blue tape
- Place chairs in a circle. Put tables aside.

Making Sense of Our Inner Roles

This step prompts reflection on roles, assessing adjustments for enhanced team effectiveness. By collectively exploring role optimizations, the team addresses challenges, aligns roles with goals, and fosters commitment.

Invitation

"What do we do now? Are there any roles we want to populate differently or handled more skillfully to be even more successful?"

Steps

1. Invite everyone to gather around the stickies on the floor.
2. **4min** Individually, reflect on the invitation.
3. **10min** Let everyone speak and share. Pick up the stickies that contain the Inner Roles where tension arises and put them on a whiteboard or a wall. Let the person currently holding the Inner Role share where the tension lies. If needed, use the opportunity to educate the team members on reasons for the need for role changes.

Need for Role Change

- **Role Nausea**: Arises when individuals grow weary of extended roles, like a member feeling burdened by constantly having to bring up difficult issues, so the system begins to rely on her to do that. But initiating conflict is a role that the system needs to be populated, but not only by a specific person.
- **Role Confusion**: This manifests when individuals are uncertain about their designated roles, which is typical in organizations with unclear job expectations. Coaching involves untangling and clarifying responsibilities to ensure a smoother workflow.
- **Need for New Roles**: Emerges during developmental changes, such as a team or organization expansion. As a team coach, you are normalizing these changes and facilitating the development of new roles to accommodate evolving needs.
- **Poorly Occupied Roles**: Arises when individuals struggle to fulfill their assigned roles, like a project lead struggling to organize meetings. By emphasizing that roles are functions, coaches assist in optimizing role occupancy addressing issues of incompetence or outdated responsibilities.

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About me

Christian Hofstetter

Co-Active Coach, Organisation &
Relationship Systems Coach, Certified
Leadership Circle Profile Coach

in /in/hofstetterchristian

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I create space for curious leaders and teams who want to develop. I stand for connection, purpose, and sustainability.

My focus is on providing teams and organizations with tools and structures so they can drive change from within and act independently.