My Team Is High Performing... But Everyone Hates Us

@stephenjanaway
I want to tell you about a short period of my life....
The image shows the interface of a fashion app named theNETSET. The app displays different styles of denim dresses, along with social interaction features such as comments and likes.

The app also includes a section for Double Denim, highlighting the membership and style matches. There is a quote by Yves Saint Laurent: 'I have often said that I wish I had invented the blue jeans. They have expression, modesty, sex appeal, and simplicity.'
What was great about the best team that you’ve ever worked in?
What did we love?

- We were sponsored by the company founder
- We had a clear deadline and focus
- No dependencies or debt
- We had a great, safe, team spirit
- We shared, supported and self organised
One small, entrepreneurial, team against the world
Woke up at 5.15am. Launched a social network 😄
The NET SET Story So Far...

Has Net-a-Porter found the holy grail of 21st-century fashion?

A particularly exciting feature is the image-recognition function, which allows users to upload a photo of a product or an inspiring outfit and be “matched” with a similar item for sale on the site.

Net-A-Porter launch app that combines social media with shopping

The NET SET is a cracking social app, that uses technology in an entirely appropriate, helpful way and I would say that it gives Instagram a run for its money in terms of discovery and engagement.

The NET SET [... will clearly appeal to Millennials who are glued to social media. The future of shopping.

NET-A-PORTER's New Social Shopping App Might Be Fashion's Smartest Data Play

The NET SET is one small step for shopping apps, one giant leap for your shopping addiction.

NET-A-PORTER is making another big move, entering the social media sphere with The NET SET.
Thank you
So What Happened?

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So What Happened?

- The company founder left
- Other teams were jealous. We had siloed ourselves
- Maintaining entrepreneurial spirit was a challenge
- Six months after the thrill of launch people get bored or don’t fit so well
Yoox Net-a-Porter axes Net Set social networking app

By Becky Waller-Davies

Yoox Net-a-Porter has axed its Net Set social network and influencer app, which it launched with great fanfare just two years ago, it has emerged.
The Net Set

4.9 ★★★★★ 30 Google reviews

Tennis store in Utah

Address: 2021 3300 S, Salt Lake City, UT 84109, United States

Hours: Closed · Opens 10AM Tue

Phone: +1 801-484-5852
What could we have done differently?
In times of failure resist that urge to just look at the negative.
- There was room for people to grow
- We set clear shared expectations
- We recognised a team is greater than the sum of its parts
- The team was hard to join
- It was diverse
- We measured health regularly and course corrected

We were high performing – how?
Steve’s Playbook for Happy People In Happy Teams

- Set Clear Expectations
- Make Hiring and Joining Great
- Make Your Own Tech Choices
- Share Learning
- Measure Health
- Check In Regularly

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### Set Clear Shared Expectations - Team Charters

**3 steps to setting the rules of the game**

**Step 1**
**Collaborate**
- Make it together

**Step 2**
**Make making it fun**
- A reversal workshop for example

**Step 3**
**Share and iterate**
- Make it visible
- Revisit it as the team grows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>We make progress and get stuff done</th>
<th>Where there is a defined process then we follow it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We are empowered to question the status quo</td>
<td>We respect each other's opinions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We turn up on time</td>
<td>We take ownership for quality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be nice and talk to each other</td>
<td>We are aware of the bigger picture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://medium.com/code-wild/creating-a-team-charter-bo98fb50a450

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Making Hiring and Joining Great

3 steps to new people

Step 1
Spread the net wide
- Don’t discriminate
- Use the team
- Raise your brand first

Step 2
Realise that you are selling your team
- Shout about how good your team is
- Talk about company culture

Step 3
Make joining easy and delightful
- The onboarding board
- Cross team onboarding buddies
- Charters
Make Your Own Technology Choices

We ♥️ Greenfield

Step 1
No Technical or Organisational Debt
- A totally fresh start
- A totally fresh team

Step 2
Developer Agency
- Tool, framework and language choice
- Processes
- Helps hiring and retention

Step 3
Support a Golden Path
- One supported direction
- You choose if you follow it
- Teams own production

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Shared Learning Helps Your Team and Others

3 steps to learning

Step 1
Share what you want to learn

Step 2
Provide a space to learn
  ● Tech & Share
  ● Tech book club
  ● Non enforced pairing

Step 3
Encourage teaching of what you’ve learnt
  ● Tech & Share
  ● Communities of Practice
  ● Meetups and conferences
Measure Health

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3 steps to better team health

Step 1
Ask how things are
- An adapted version of the Spotify model
- Be clear what it is and isn’t

Step 2
Work out what’s important
- We use top two, bottom two, middle one

Step 3
Actually get some actions
- Defining actions is a team thing
- Actually do the actions...
- Use them everywhere
We are a totally gelled super-team with awesome collaboration!

vs.

We are a bunch of individuals that neither know nor care what others on the team are doing

---

Team work: 1 11 2

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Check In Regularly
Measure Individuals’ Health
A Typical Review Timeline

What happens here? | What’s the impact?

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A Typical Review Timeline

- Objectives and goals get forgotten
- Lots of disruption for team members and managers
- Anxiety
- De-motivation
- Is a factor in people leaving
Feedback is better when it's timely
121’s are better when everyone prepares for them

yay!

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What we did (with a lot of inspiration from Atlassian)

- Monthly, aligned, themed check-in sessions between team member and their manager
- Shorter term personal goals
- Team members tell us how they think they are doing before the session

Timely, bite sized, chunks of performance feedback

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Questions

- “What barriers have you encountered to your work over the past few months?”
- “What have you loved over the past few months?”
- “Where do you want to head towards in your career? Has anything changed since the last session?”
- “What’s your feedback on the last month?”
Our Timeline

Jan  
Career Long Term  
Focus Areas  
Love & Loathe  
Checkin  
360 Perspective  
Removing Barriers  
Career Long Term  
Focus Areas  
Checkin  
Love & Loathe  
360 Perspective  
Checkin  

June  July  

This can help engage your team

https://medium.com/@stephenjanaway/improving-performance-reviews-f0662756587f
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Above All – Keep It Fun

https://stephenjanaway.co.uk/stephenjanaway/experiences/a-christmas-retro/

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Steve’s Playbook for Happy People In Happy Teams

Set Clear Expectations

Make Hiring and Joining Great

Make Your Own Tech Choices

Share Learning

Measure Health

Check In Regularly

And Keep It Fun

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Don’t forget about the good things, especially in times of failure
What were we?

- Sponsored by the company founder
- No dependencies or debt
- A great team spirit and an entrepreneurial attitude inside a large company
- One small team against the world
So What Happened?

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Recognise That There Will Be Change

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Denial

Shock

Anger

Bargaining

Depression

Acceptance

Commitment

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As Your Product Ages, So Your Team Changes
“If one new person joins or leaves then it’s a new team”

Heidi Helfand
Please Eat me
Trust

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Watch For the Signs

- Frustration
- Indifference
- Not invented here
- “Well of course you can do it like that...”
“The race to be first has to be reconciled (in science) with the need and the norm of sharing”

Ruth Katz

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Trust = ( Credibility + Reliability + Intimacy )

The Trust Equation: [https://trustedadvisor.com/articles/the-trust-equation-a-primer](https://trustedadvisor.com/articles/the-trust-equation-a-primer)
Trust = (Credibility + Reliability + Intimacy)

Apparent Self-Interest

Trust = ( + + )
Trust = (Credibility + Reliability + Intimacy)

Apparent Self-Interest

Trust = (   Med   +   Low   +   Low   )

High = Low
Focus Out, Focus In

- Open up the API
- Open up the team
- Help others to discover and engage
- Align and don’t ignore
- Engender trust not jealousy
Trust = \((\text{Credibility} + \text{Reliability} + \text{Intimacy})\)

Apparent Self-Interest

Build Credibility, Reliability and Intimacy

Reduce apparent self interest

Increase Trust

woohoo!
And If All Else Fails

Keep Building High Performing Teams Anyway

- Don’t give up
- Focus them inwards
- Ensure alignment yourself
- Find everyone an external network
- Leave
And so?
If I Could Do This All Again...

“Keep Doing the Good Stuff”
- Building teams
- Measuring health
- Learning and adapting
- Hiring carefully

“Recognise Change”
- It won’t last forever
- Be open
- Teams age
- Reboot them regularly

“Watch For the Signs”
- Frustration
- Ignorance
- Not invented here
- Other teams engagement

“Focus Out, Focus In”
- Open up both technology and teams
- Align don’t ignore
- Trust not jealousy

“If All Else Fails, Do It Anyway”
- Don’t give up
- Shift focus
- External networks
- Or elsewhere

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Thanks!

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Use code “steve” for 15% off

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