



# Working Agreement

Establish the way your team will interact day-to-day on a project.  
Set guidelines on how you will all collaborate and work together.



Takes 2-3 hrs to complete



For teams



Can be worked on at the same time or separately



Can be done remotely or in-person

Welcome to the Working Agreement, this tool deals with the day-to-day way teams interact, collaborate and generally work together. These should be practical and tactical guardrails for effective collaboration, minimising conflict and misunderstanding.

## Getting started

The canvas is designed to be used individually at first, then all team members should come together either in person or remotely via video call to review the answers. The facilitator should set a deadline for team members to complete their individual elements before agreeing a meeting time to come together as a team.

If you're new to Miro you might want to read the beginners guide:

<https://help.miro.com/hc/en-us/categories/360001415214-Getting-Started>

## Individual Brainstorm

1. Each participant chooses a workspace with associated sticky colour and adds their name to claim their space and avoid confusion. **Please ensure each participant always uses the same colour stickies and that no participant uses the same colour as someone else.**
2. Each participant jots down their suggested agreements by providing brief answers to questions below. One per sticky. Participants should formulate **two agreements in response to each question.**
  - 2.1. What working behaviours should we agree to as a team? E.g. What's the preferred way to communicate?
  - 2.2. What expectations should we have of ourselves and each other? E.g. how soon should we respond to communications?
  - 2.3. What good practices used by high performing teams should we adopt? E.g. think about the best team you've worked on or encountered. What did that team do to make it special?
  - 2.4. What should we do to avoid past mistakes from other projects or teams? E.g. think about the worst team you've worked on or encountered. What did that team do that we should avoid?
3. All team members should complete their answers to all questions before the Alignment Meeting.



# Alignment Meeting

1. It's time to post up and group the agreements:
  - 1.1. Each participant moves their stickies to the Brainstorm section.
  - 1.2. Without discussing the merits of each agreement, the team should group together agreements based on similarity. Where possible these should be combined into a single sticky.
  - 1.3. The team considers if anything is obviously missing. If so, participants can propose another agreement.
  - 1.4. Be sure to keep things relatively non-specific eg "Be at the 8am check-in at 8am" is better captured as "Be on time to meetings".
  - 1.5. Anything that feels unrelated, too high-level or overly specific should be moved to the Parking Lot for review later.
2. Once the team has captured all the principles it feels are necessary, it's time to vote! This is how:
  - 2.1. Move each agreement onto the dividing line between the two workspaces
  - 2.2. Ask each participant if they agree to accept the agreement.
    - 2.2.1. If everyone votes 'Yes' - move the agreement to the right-hand workspace. This is now an accepted agreement.
    - 2.2.2. If there are any 'No' votes, stop to discuss what it will take to get to 'Yes' and modify the agreement accordingly. Note: no agreement can be accepted unless there is unanimous agreement. True alignment needs everyone to buy-in.
3. Repeat until each agreement has been voted on.
4. Congratulations! You now have your Working Agreements. These can be included in your Project Playbook.

## Close Out & Reviewing as a team

1. To complete the exercise, run a quick review of the Parking Lot. Are there agreements that could be principles here or vice versa? If so, discuss, refine and then vote as before. If not, you can close out the exercise.
2. Review both Social Contract and Working Agreements periodically during the collaboration – eg during sprint planning or retrospectives - to ensure they are still a) being upheld or b) relevant in light of any changes in context. To do this go through.

