10 Characteristics of Effective Teams

1. **Clear Mission/Purpose**
   a. Provides direction and helps maintain focus
   b. All members contribute to the development of the mission
   c. Each member commits to working toward achieving the mission

2. **Well Defined Goals**
   a. Concrete, measurable milestones against which to measure the team’s progress
   b. Outlines what is to be accomplished and the direction for achieving the desired outcomes(s)
   c. All members contribute to the development of the team’s goals

3. **Diversity of Skill and Perspective**
   a. Drives creativity and innovation
   b. Provides a mix of complementary skills
   c. Enhances team competence and performance

4. **Group Norms, Roles, and Responsibilities**
   a. Clear, mutually-agreed upon rules by which the team operates
   b. Provides structure and clarity
   c. Promotes team discipline

5. **Balanced Participation**
   a. All members are fully involved in the teaming process
   b. Equal participation in discussions and task completion
   c. On-time completion of agreed upon tasks or activities

6. **Open, Collaborative Communication**
   a. Sets the foundation for group cohesion and trust
   b. Provides a sense of unity and ‘oneness’
   c. All ideas, input, and opinions are sought out, valued and supported

7. **Positive Atmosphere and Managed Conflict**
   a. All members feel safe and comfortable sharing and taking risks
   b. Disagreement and alternative opinions are encouraged and discussed
   c. Issues/disagreements are openly addressed and resolved within the team

8. **Trusting and Cooperative Relationships**
   a. Work together for the good of the team (‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’)
   b. Members feel free to express their feelings and ideas without the threat of recourse
   c. Mutual assistance occurs and ensures successful completion of the team’s goals

9. **Effective Decision Making**
   a. Use data to problem solve around areas of concern
   b. Brainstorm resources and barriers
   c. Select strategy and gain consensus on implementation

10. **Participative Leadership**
    a. Leadership is shared among all team members and shifts from time to time
    b. Creates shared responsibility for all aspects of team functioning
    c. Contributes to shared success and risk of failure