

Exercise: Porpoising

Instructions

In this reflection exercise, set a timer for 5 minutes.

Make notes about the ways you currently “porpoise”, diving down to different levels of your organization and engaging in respectful listening, looking for early signs of potential trouble.

What meetings do you attend?

What informal interactions do you have?

When people tell you things, are you acting on the information given?

Are there more opportunities?

And are there opportunities to “porpoise” beyond your own organization?

Circle your top 3 ideas and consider when you can implement them. Where do they fall on your list of priorities?

Example:

In what ways do you currently “porpoise” within your organization. What further opportunities are there?

I could start dropping in as an observer on my team’s staff meetings or the weekly operations review meeting. Need to discuss with my staff members first to make sure they know it’s for positive reasons.

I can walk around and just drop by employees’ desks when they are in the office and have an informal conversation

I can schedule 15 minutes a few times a week to check in with remote employees informally – just ask them if they can jump on a quick Zoom call. Need to let my staff know first that I’m going to do this and why.

Can I ask to join meeting(s) at 2 partner organizations to better understand their concerns and what problems they are facing?

Can we invite them to join one of our meetings? Discuss with my team.

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