

DIAGNOSING THE PROBLEM: A CHECKLIST

Here are some signs that your team may be struggling with one or more of the four types of undiscussables.

1. DO TEAM MEMBERS THINK THINGS THEY DARE NOT SAY?

Do they agree publicly during meetings but disagree (and vent) privately?

Do they often use sarcasm, silence, or nonverbal gestures to signal disagreement?

Do they focus on managing up in meetings?

2. DO THEY SAY THEY SHARE CERTAIN VALUES BUT FAIL TO PRACTICE THEM?

Are team meetings too undemanding and unrealistically upbeat?

Do people cling to an image of cohesiveness, frowning on any criticism of the team as a sign of disloyalty?

Do they always seem to adopt similar perspectives on problems?

3. DO THEY HAVE NEGATIVE FEELINGS THEY CAN'T NAME?

Do meetings feel antagonistic (tempers fray; disagreements become personal)?

Are people reluctant to comment on issues outside their direct responsibilities?

Do team members organize themselves into rigid factions?

4. ARE THEY UNWITTINGLY ENGAGING IN UNPRODUCTIVE BEHAVIORS?

Does the team have trouble identifying root causes for its ineffectiveness?

Does it spin its wheels on minor issues?

Do important items often get postponed or fall between the cracks?