



Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs



## Strengthening Virtual Teams

...

**Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs**

Awarded Best Hybrid Learning, 2022 Working with your organization to create Communication BreakThroughs in Conflict, on Teams and in Presentations.

[+ Follow](#)

Published May 22, 2020

Our new virtual reality has produced a unique set of challenges for teams. When meetings go online, issues abound: How do I get into a virtual conversation? How do I know when it's my turn? Is my input worthy? Will I be sanctioned for talking over a teammate, or, worse, someone I report to? These questions unfold daily in our current online environment. But we have been researching them for 40 years.



Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs



program for reticent communicators who were anxious about speaking up. Now, four decades later, what we learned teaching in that program has informed our work in this new virtual age, where even extraverts have had to figure out the new virtual meeting landscape.

In our recent Webinar, *Communication in a Time of Social Distancing: Strengthening Virtual Teams*, we shared 8 research-based strategies to boost the inner fabric of a team and ensure that everyone in a meeting speaks, everyone feels heard and understood, and everyone is committed to the solutions that come forward.

**1. Find a meaningful question central to your team's work.** Turn on your team's creative instincts and bring meaning to their work with questions like: "How can we create more inclusive community engagement?" or "What virtual solutions can we offer our clients?" A productive, engaged team does more than complete basic tasks.

**2. Honor the power of silence before sharing ideas.** Reticence to participate is magnified when people experience online video conferencing. Two minutes of silence before you ask team members to speak allows them to collect their thoughts and brings quieter people into the discussion.

**3. Create a queue of names to guide orderly discussion.** Inviting each person in turn wipes out awkward silences and ensures that everyone participates. If people don't speak during the meeting, that's when there are "meetings after the meeting" where agreements can become unraveled. (But do let people know that it's okay to say, "Pass, for now," and contribute later.)

**4. Create a virtual group memory.** Assign a recorder to use Zoom White Board or screen share Microsoft Word to list all ideas as they are contributed. This creates



Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs



**5. Use P-R-E-S to energize discussions.** Aim for 45 seconds to make a Point; give a Reason; share an Example; offer a Summary: “I believe our customer service reps should be able to send customers video links showing how to perform simple repairs at home (Point). This will cut down on service calls and create grateful customers (Reason). Recently, the pilot light went out on my gas fireplace and a YouTube video showed me what to do (Example). So, video links can cut back our service calls while improving our customer service (Summary).” Remember: The power of a personal example is immense.

**6. Invite quieter people into the conversation.** When you use our suggestions there will be fewer silent members, but it’s important to let everyone know their voice matters.

**7. Harvest group agreements.** Ask: “What do we agree to already?” rather than squandering time focusing on smaller areas of disagreement. Remember: What you look for is what you find.

**8. End with a final process check.** Each participant gets 20 seconds to say, “This is what I’m feeling and thinking from our meeting.”

If all team members are involved in important, meaningful, creative decisions where all voices are heard, the results are increased trust, respect, engagement and productivity. And once in-person meetings resume, these best practices will continue to serve your organization well.

©2020 Glaser & Associates, Inc. All rights reserved

8 · 8 Comments

---

Like

Comment

Share



Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs



Cool that you have been able to share the power of the final process check. Amazing how much can be accomplished in less than 2 minutes!

Like Reply | 1 Like

**Simon Rowell**

3y

I love the "process check" at the end. We used this in (in person) EO Forum meetings, and it worked well

Like Reply | 1 Like

**Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs**

3y

Agreed Jan...Many great conversations ahead!

Like Reply | 1 Like

**Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs**

3y

Thanks for your reflections Jan. You identified the power of silence that we first learned about in graduate school, working with clinically shy communicators. Yes...we include this brief reflection time in on-site as well as virtual meetings. Given your professional focus we think you will enjoy this companion piece:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/deepen-connections-home-work-peter-susan-glaser>

Like Reply | 1 Like

**Dr. Jan Hoistad, Career and Business Coach, Author**

3y

Definitely! Thanks and glad to be in your company. Stay well.

Jeanine Blackwell Bing Oliver Whitney Emanuel, CRPC® Geraldine Harlan

Like Reply | 1 Like

**Dr. Jan Hoistad, Career and Business Coach, Author**

3y

Great suggestions. Seldom do we see moments of silence to collect thoughts, to become fully "present" bookended with a 20 second individual reflection to wrap any meeting. Love this! Should be universal—virtual or in person. Peter & Susan Glaser

Like Reply | 1 Like

**Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs**

3y

Thanks Meegan...We are inspired by the magnificent achievements of teams who are using this very difficult time to ignite their cohesion and productivity. #remoteteams

Like Reply

**Meegan Prince**

3y



Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs

[See more comments](#)To view or add a comment, [sign in](#)

## More articles by this author

### Crafting Presentations That Persuade

Dec 3, 2020

### Deepen Connections at Home and at Work

May 22, 2020

## Explore topics

[Workplace](#)[Job Search](#)[Careers](#)[Interviewing](#)[Salary and Compensation](#)[Internships](#)[Employee Benefits](#)[See All](#)



Peter and Susan Glaser, PhDs



Brand Policy

Guest Controls

Community Guidelines

Language