

Boundary Building for Teams

Before we can communicate our boundaries to others, it's important we identify what's important to us and what boundaries we might want to put in place for ourselves.

Individual Boundary Brainstorm

Types of boundaries		
Time	Relationship	Digital
Workload	Values	Physical
Role & responsibility	Energy	Rest & recovery
Communication	Emotional	Growth

What boundaries do I need?

Examples: no phones in the bedroom for better sleep, blocking out a lunch break on your calendar, asking to meet in person rather than discuss over email, making time for interests and hobbies



Boundary Setting in our Team

Let’s consider the boundaries we have WITHIN our team that help us work best.

Boundary areas		What could this look like in our team?
Time		• Respecting start and finish times • Agreeing response and turn-around times • Not overloading each other with meetings • Setting realistic timeframe expectations
Energy		• Doing “capacity checks” before assigning or accepting tasks • Learning about wellbeing and the signs of burnout • Avoiding emotional dumping and excess negativity
Priorities		• Agreeing what our shared priorities are • Having regular team catch ups to ensure alignment and offer support if needed
How does our team respect each other’s time, energy & priorities?		

Boundary Setting with other Teams

Think about the boundaries we can set as a group to help us achieve our best work together.

Activity	Considerations
Boundary Mapping	Your team has plenty of work to do, and will often work with other kaimahi or other teams. Consider all of the work on your plate, and work your team is often asked to pick up. Ask: • What mahi belongs to us? • What mahi is shared? • What mahi is the responsibility of others?
Walls & Bridges	Some of your work will be shared – but how do we share effectively? When working with others, your team will decide where to build: • walls that protect your time, energy, priorities, and • bridges to share your information, support, resources.

What mahi is truly shared? What walls and bridges do we need?

You may want to consider what you expect from others, and what they expect from your team. For example, what is a reasonable turn-around time for requests? Can they expect to hear from your team within a week? Two days? When do you expect to hear back from them?



How We Communicate Our Boundaries

We need to respectfully communicate our boundaries – as individuals, as a team, and when our team is partnering with others. Try the tips below to communicate your boundaries effectively.

Tip	How might this sound?
Be specific	Avoid: vague statements like “we value work-life balance” Try: “we don’t respond to emails outside of working hours”
Be consistent	Avoid: losing credibility when boundaries are not respected by everyone in the same way Try: using reminders to reinforce consistent boundaries, and revisiting boundaries to ensure they’re still fit for purpose
Be assertive	Avoid: being “wishy washy” and people pleasing Try: using respectful, clear language like “to meet deadlines, we schedule our project work in the mornings”
Be flexible	Avoid: being so rigid you become challenging – life happens! Try: decide which boundaries are “soft” and which are “hard”

How can we communicate our boundaries in ways that are specific, consistent, assertive, and flexible?