



What High-Performing Teams Do Differently (That Others Miss)

The leadership conditions that determine whether performance holds—or fractures

By Shauna Moran

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Whether You Are...

1

Leading a team through peak season that still fell short

The talent is there. The commitment is real. And yet—performance fell short during an important season.

2

Running a scaling operation where every decision bottlenecks at the top

Your team is capable. But somehow, everything still lands on you.

3

Hitting your numbers but feeling something starting to fray

Revenue is there. On paper, things look fine. But you can feel it — the tension in the team, the conversations that aren't happening, the performance that feels more fragile than it should.



In This Session, We'll Look At...

What Actually Drives Performance

Beneath effort—what is really shaping how
your team shows up.

The Conditions Most Teams Overlook

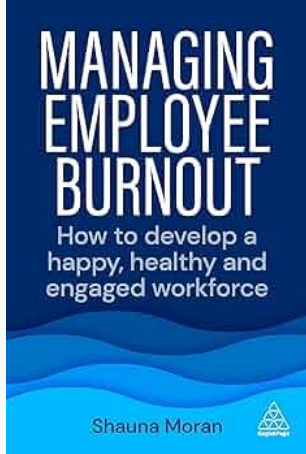
Why strong teams still fracture
—and what they're missing.

Why Performance Breaks Under Pressure

Even in high-capability teams
—what changes and why.

Where to Focus for Sustainable Shift

Where your team may be compensating
—and what to strengthen first.



Shauna Moran

Executive Coach & Leadership Consultant

- Former senior leader at Shopify - understands the pace, pressure, and complexity of high-growth ecommerce from the inside
- Now partners with leadership teams in scaling organizations to build the systems that let businesses grow without burning through their best people
- Combines organizational systems work with individual executive coaching — addressing both the structure and the people inside it
- Author of Managing Employee Burnout · PCC-credentialed coach · 5,000+ leaders coached globally
- Clients see a 50% reduction in leadership overtime, 95% retention rate, and leadership teams that stop escalating everything back to the top

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The Reality

The issue isn't talent. It isn't effort.

**It's that performance is not holding
at the level the team is capable of.**

And that gap doesn't close by pushing harder.

The Misdiagnosis

Most Teams Respond by Pushing Harder

More Urgency

Pressure is intensified in the hope that increased urgency will close the performance gap. In e-commerce: crunch seasons that never quite end.

More Oversight

Monitoring tightens. Control increases. Autonomy quietly erodes. Leaders get pulled back into decisions they already delegated.

More Meetings

Coordination multiplies. Time shrinks. Strategic thinking gets crowded out. The team is busy but momentum slows.

💡 ***But effort cannot fix what conditions are breaking.***

Reframing the Question

Not: How do we get people to do more?

But: What conditions allow
performance to hold –
consistently, and under pressure?

Core Truth

Performance is not driven by effort.

It is shaped by **a small number of leadership and team conditions—**
either consistently present, or quietly absent.



The 4 Conditions

What High-Performing Teams Consistently Have

1 – Clarity

Clear direction, roles, and expectations ensure everyone knows what matters and how to contribute.

2 – Ownership

A shared sense of responsibility where individuals take initiative, follow through and drive outcomes.

3 – Safety

An environment where people feel trusted to speak up, challenge and take risks - fueling innovation and honest collaboration.

4 – Regulation

The ability to manage stress, emotions and pressure that enable clear thinking.
Sustainable performance and resilience.

→ Performance holds when **all four** are present.

The Importance of Clarity In High Performing Teams

Research shows clarity is the most basic employee need - yet most teams don't have it.

Gallup, State of The Global Workplace Report

Clarity is a multiplier- it strengthens not just execution, but how teams evolve and improve.



Condition 1: Clarity

Most Teams Have Stated Clarity. Very Few Have Clarity That Holds.

What Breaks Down Under Pressure

- Priorities blur as urgency overrides direction
- Decisions slow because alignment was surface-level
- Execution fragments when individuals fill gaps differently
- Teams default to what they know rather than what is needed

What Strong Clarity Looks Like

- ✓ Priorities are explicit and consistently reinforced
- ✓ Decision rights are clear before complexity arrives
- ✓ Teams can articulate direction without referencing their leader
- ✓ Everyone understands their responsibilities and what success looks like in their roles and teams explicitly
- ✓ Clarity is tested- not assumed

Condition 2: Ownership

Ownership is what turns clarity into momentum

When Ownership Is Unclear

- Everything escalates to the leader
- Decisions bottleneck at the top
- Accountability diffuses across the team
- Individuals wait rather than act
- Effort is high, but momentum is low

What Clean Ownership Looks Like

- ✓ Roles and outcomes are explicit - not implied
- ✓ Individuals know their levels of autonomy- when they can make a decisions versus a recommendation
- ✓ Accountability is carried, not assigned under pressure
- ✓ Decisions happen at the right level
- ✓ Leaders can step back without performance dropping
- ✓ Ownership is visible and trusted

 **Ownership shifts people from 'task executors' to decision makers and problem solvers**

Condition 3: Psychological Safety

Safety is not comfort.



What Safety Enables

The capacity to tell the truth, challenge directly, and stay in the room when it's uncomfortable



Without It

Teams default to self-protection. Problems stay hidden. Performance erodes quietly.



Make It Explicit

Unspoken Teams Underperform

How We Challenge

Defined norms for raising disagreement directly and constructively

How We Decide

Explicit decision-making processes that reduce ambiguity and delay

How We Repair

Clear expectations for what happens when things strain or break down

Ambiguity creates avoidance. Clarity creates trust.

Condition 4: Regulation Under Pressure

Pressure Doesn't Reveal Performance. It Reshapes Behaviour.

Thinking Narrows

Strategic range shrinks.

Triage replaces judgment.

Decisions become reactive rather than considered.

Reactivity Increases

Emotional bandwidth drops.

Patience and curiosity require more effort.

Leadership feels heavier.

Trust Erodes

Relationships strain under pressure.

Psychological safety quietly collapses where it wasn't deeply built.

If pressure isn't regulated—performance degrades, even in strong teams.

The world has a name for what you're feeling.

Regulation in A BANI World

B

Brittle: Systems that look strong snap without warning — supply chains, platforms, team structures.

A

Anxious : Every decision feels high-stakes. The margin for error feels impossibly thin.

N

Nonlinear: Cause and effect no longer follow a predictable path. Small changes create outsized ripples.

I

Incomprehensible: The pace of change outstrips our ability to make sense of what's happening.



Integration

What Changes When These Four Conditions Are Present

When Conditions Are Weak

- Effort increases to compensate
- Performance fragments under pressure
- Decisions slow and escalate
- Trust quietly erodes
- The team works harder—but not better

When Conditions Are Strong

- ✓ Performance stabilises across pressure points
- ✓ Decisions accelerate at the right level
- ✓ Trust compounds over time
- ✓ The team operates with less leader involvement
- ✓ Capacity grows—not just output

 **These are not soft factors. They are the structural foundation of sustained performance.**



Reflection

Where is your team compensating instead of performing?

*Which one of these four conditions is **weakest** in your team right now?*

Clarity

If you weren't available, would your team know what to decide?

Safety

What do you suspect your team isn't telling you?

Ownership

Where do escalations keep landing on your desk that shouldn't?

Regulation

How does your team perform in the last six weeks of the year?

**High-performing teams are
not built through intensity.**

**They are built through deliberate,
sustained leadership conditions.**

Let's Keep The Conversation Going

If something landed today, or you want to think through where your team is — reach out. I'd love to hear from you.



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