

 ATHLETE

Guide to

**Athletic Development**

## Athletic Development.

Demonstration of excellence by teams that deliver premium output only.

This is achieved by upholding a simple, but strict routine, self empowerment, high standards, great spirit, and continuous improvement.

The format is simple, but strict:

- 7 principles.
- 4 recurring events: Prep, check-in, check-out, recap.
- 4 roles: Athlete, coach, captain, spectator.
- Collaboration takes place from one location: The Arena.
- Progress is organised in: Tracks ▶ Sprints ▶ Steps.

This guide contains an easy to follow, step by step checklist, on how to follow the routine. Contents:

1. Cheat Sheet
2. Principles
3. Forming an Athletic Coalition
4. Setting up the Arena
5. Prep
6. Check-in
7. Check-out
8. Recap

## Pillars

<b>Harmony</b>		Continuously align
<b>Agility</b>		Continuously adapt
<b>Excellence</b>		Continuously improve

## Principles

We work together.  
We align continuously.  
We serve and involve.  
We take the time to make it right.  
We commit.  
We represent the team, no one else.  
We give credit where credit is due.

## Roles

<b>Athlete</b>		Performs
<b>Captain</b>		Represents
<b>Coach</b>		Facilitates
<b>Spectator</b>		Inspects

## Events

<b>Prep</b>		Weekly		30m
<b>Check-in</b>		Daily		10m
<b>Check-out</b>		Daily		30m
<b>Recap</b>		Weekly		30m

## Terminology

### Coalition

A co-located, multidisciplinary, self-organizing team with collective ownership towards achieving common goals.

### Arena

A central location where athletic coalitions perform.

### Track

Series of 'Sprints' in which progress is made towards achieving goals.

### Sprint

A one week routine in which the coalition takes steps towards achieving goals.

### Step

A 'Step' is a definition of collective effort to achieve common goals in a 'Track'.

### Points

Relative unit of estimated complexity.

### Commit

A minimum amount of 'Points' the coalition expects to deliver in a 'Sprint'.

### Score

Completed number of 'Points' in a 'Sprint'.

### Captains Log

A record of notable events in a Sprint.

# We work TOGETHER

The value of a colocated team is greater than the effort to colocate.

No one works on anything alone.  
We don't divide and assign tasks by skillset.

We **continuously** invest in developing our skills through collective practice.

We build together, we learn together.  
We help each other along the way.

When challenged, we recover fast together.

This is how we  
continuously improve  
reduce dependencies,  
increase transparency,  
and guarantee quality.

# We ALIGN CONTINUOUSLY

Our plan changes daily.

We continuously collect new insights  
and update planning.

We demonstrate results daily  
and process feedback instantly.

This way we are always aligned  
and **up to speed**.

# We SERVE and INVOLVE

We serve qualitative output early and often.

Daily we collect **insights** on what we serve from whom it is served to.

We involve anyone who can provide valuable insights and work with them continuously to **improve** the output.

We avoid proxies between us, the value creator, and those whom we service (the value consumer).

# We take the time to make it RIGHT!

We deliver premium output only.  
We learn to do this at speed.

What we deliver, is a representation of us.  
We don't make concessions.

We make it work, the way it should work.

For time spent developing something new,  
equal time is spent improving something existing.

We estimate complexity not time.  
Our estimations are not deadlines.  
It is done, when it is done.

We don't track time, **we earn trust.**

If time is a constraint, we will align on what can be done  
without compromising quality or value. If neither can be  
assured, the outcome would not be valuable nor viable.

# We COMMIT.

We dare to make commitments and motivate each other to deliver sustainable value.

We are honest about our abilities.

We dare to say "no" to request that are not valuable or viable.

We'll take the time to learn, so we can do more tomorrow than we can today.

We always strive to **exceed expectations**.

This is how we earn trust.



# We represent THE TEAM no one else.

We abandon our previous titles and roles.

The whole team takes **collective ownership** over all the steps that it decides to take. Although we keep our skills and talent, we are in it together.

Every member represents the team and reports to the team!  
The team is a **coalition** which reports only to itself.

- There can be no hierarchy within the coalition.
- There can be no sub-teams.
- There can be no client/vendor relationship within a coalition.

These should be made obsolete during its formation.

Everyone shares a responsibility in getting the best result.

# We give credit where credit is due.

No one is to personally take credit for achievements, or be blamed for mistakes; it would be disrespectful to do so.

We value mistakes. We learn from them.

We celebrate success together.

We **respect** open feedback and input;  
and value effort above results.

# Forming an Athletic Coalition.

An Athletic Coalition works at a pace in which it delivers premium output only. They take the time to make it right, but learn to do this at speed.

An Athletic team may be formed by specialists from various departments and organisations. Once formed, the team departs from any pre-existing roles, titles, hierarchies and relationships, including its processes and tools.

It takes collective ownership over all the steps that it decides to take. Now there are no more clients, designers, managers, product owners, marketers, editors etc.

Although we keep our skills and talent, we are in it together. So we commit to do what needs to be done! regardless of expertise and background; we help each other along the way.

There can be no client/vendor relationship within a coalition; this is made obsolete after the formation. One can become an active team member, such as a 'coach', or be involved daily as a 'spectator'.

Athletic Coalitions don't require training, certification or professional coaching to start; it's all integrated into the exercise; teams will gain experience by practising. Practises are meant to be easy to follow and master.

The routine is tactical, planning is done **continuously** and is always aimed at delivering premium quality and value. Everyday the teams are focused on what is most valuable that day.

Athletic Coalitions are hard to form, they are rare and extreme, or else they wouldn't be athletic. It requires a can-do mindset from the get-go.

So get together, work together, stay together.

All candidates check-in at the start of the formation event.

All candidates are introduced to the principles and routine of Athletic Development.

Candidates align on their understanding of Athletic Development.

The main mission of the Athletic Coalition is stated and may be clarified.

Candidates may 'check-out' of the coalition if they choose not to participate.

All members who 'checked-out' will exit the event.

Candidates that remain checked-in, will discuss how they can still commit to the stated mission.

**Formation ends when no more candidates check-out. This is a succesful formation.**

**If all candidates checked-out, the formation is unsuccessful. Formations may be reattempted.**

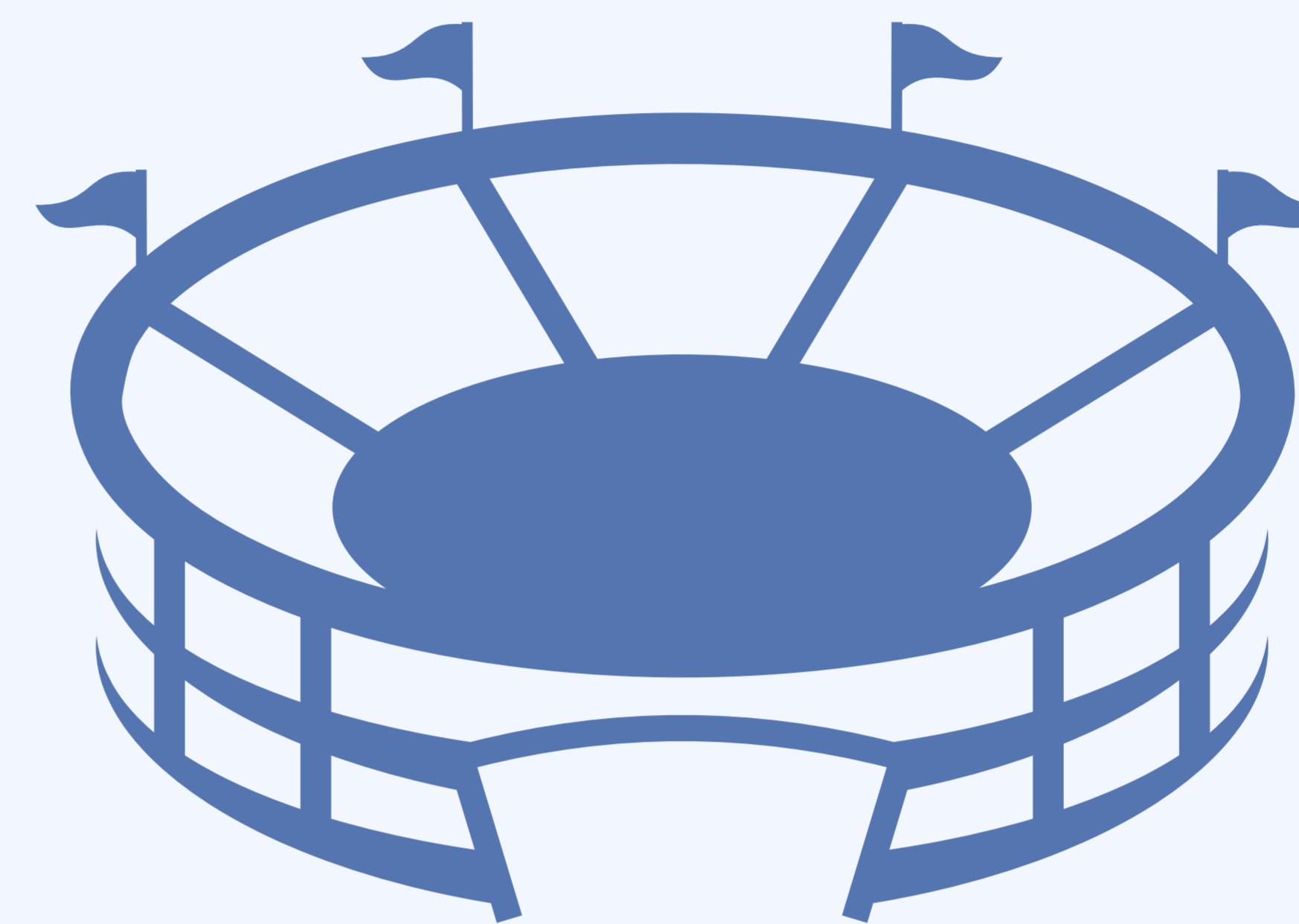
## Setup the Arena.

**The value of a colocated team is greater than the effort to colocate.**

If the commitment to achieve a goal is there, you can get a team to work as a team: from one location. All players need to be on the same field. This location is called an 'Arena'.

So get your team together so they can work together.

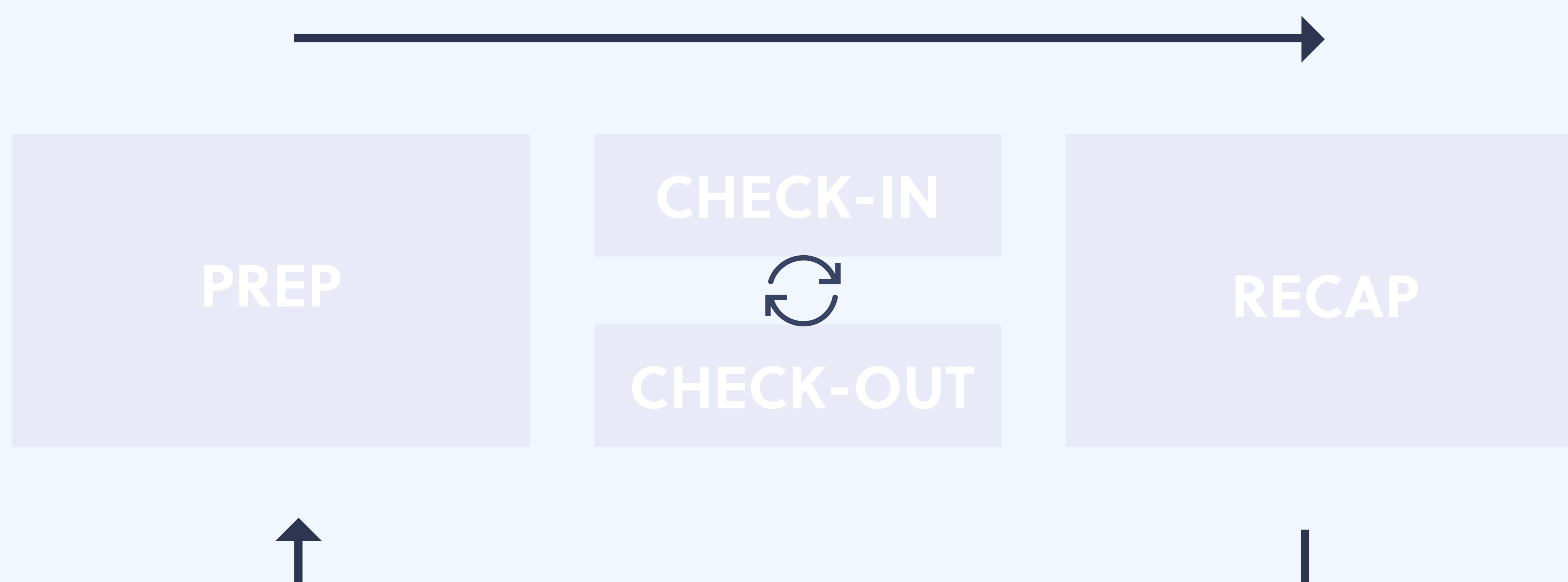
- What is needed to get the team together?  
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- What is needed for the team to work together?  
\_\_\_\_\_



**"We are what we repeatedly do; excellence therefore, is not an act, but a habit"** - Aristotle.

Great teams have a strict routine. Establish the following routine:

- Schedule **weekly** Prep sessions (30 minutes).  
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- Schedule **daily** Check-ins and Check-outs (10 and 30 minutes).  
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- Schedule **weekly** Recap sessions (30 minutes).  
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- That's all you need, cancel everything else!  
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# Stay on track!


Weekly  
max 30 minutes




A week in which the team works towards achieving collective goals by following a strict routine is called a **'Sprint'**. a **'Track'** is a series of Sprints.

## Align.

 The initiator for the track is the **'Coach'** and provides direction, motivation and support for the team. The coach is always an active member of the team! The coach reports to the team, not the other way around.

 The team **'Captain'** is a representative to the team and makes sure the team stays focussed. Each sprint the captain is selected through an anonymous vote! The captain also reports to the team.

 **'Spectators'** are 'value consumers' such as stakeholders and users who will review outcomes and provide the team with valuable insights and feedback.

  Vote for a team captain.  
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The captain facilitates and administers the Prep session.

A team needs clear and common **'Goals'** to which the whole team commits to for that week.


The team collectively determines goals, including the coach.

Define clear common goals for the sprint.  
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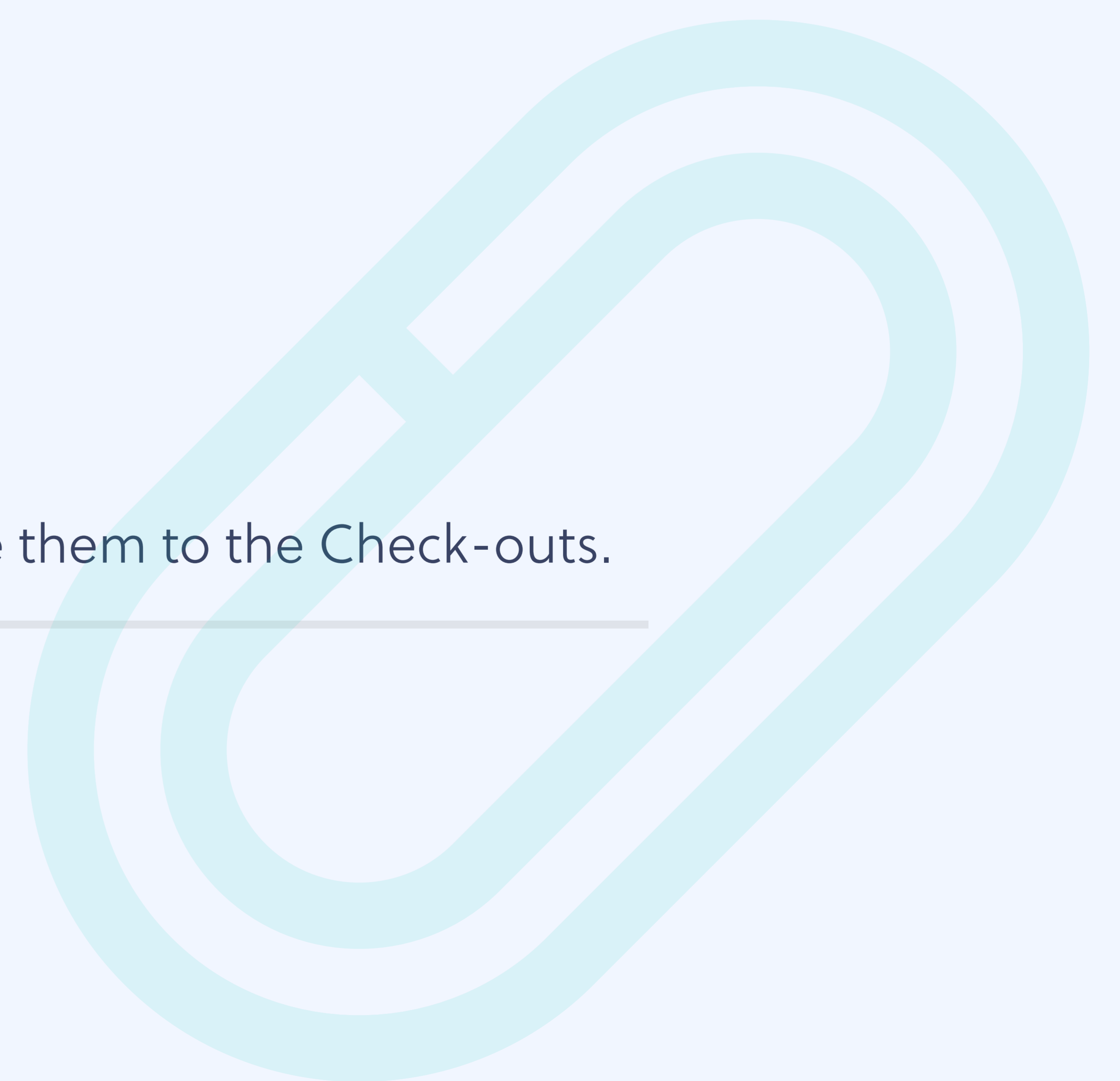
Discuss how the goals can be achieved (define steps).  
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Make sure the whole team is able to commit to them.  
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Determine who can best inspect the output (spectators) and invite them to the Check-outs.  
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  Deliver an epic pre-match speech!  
\_\_\_\_\_

  Coördinate a pre-match Haka!  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Check-in

### Up to speed !

Daily  
max 10 minutes



Daily the whole team needs to know where it stands towards achieving the goals. All team members must share openly and honestly where they stand and what they ran into in relation to achieving the goals. Secondly the team will instantly react to any new input and insights gained to ensure fast feedbackloops, response- and cycletimes.

At the end of a check-in, the team is up to speed and knows what it needs to focus on.



- As a team captain, make sure everyone prepares their input for the check-ins!

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#### Align. max 10 minutes.

- What steps will the team take today?

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- What might the team run into today?

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- What does the team need today?

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During the day the coach and captain stay on top of the situation:

#### Inspect.



- Make sure the team is working together, rather than individually!

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- Be aware of challenges the team faces; and try to remove any obstacles.

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- Keep notes on observations (in the 'captains log').

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- Do at least one thing that motivates a member of the team.

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- Answer any questions the team might have.

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- Manage expectations of spectators.

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- Involve those who can provide insights on the teams output.

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- Collect data and insights and prepare these for the next check-out.

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## Check-out

## Check this out!

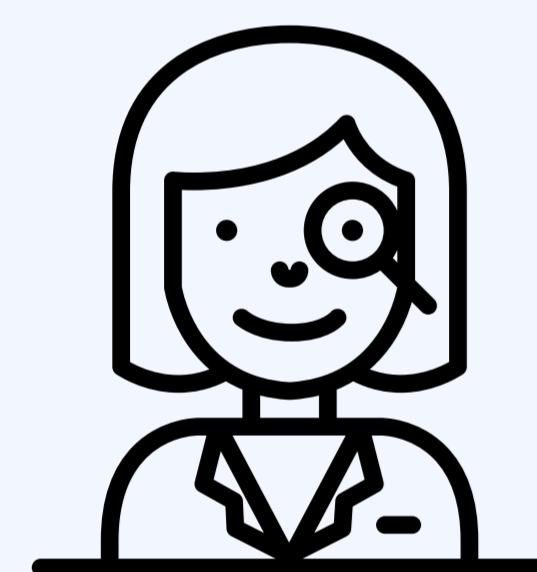
Daily  
max 30 minutes

In order for the team to learn, improve and stay motivated, it needs to be part of the inspection of the delivered results. The check-out is a daily review where teams reflect, inspect and adapt.

- As a captain, make sure everyone prepares their input for the check-out!
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**Reflect.** max 10 minutes.

- The captain, supported by the team, proudly presents the outcome of that day to the spectators.
  - The captain describes the steps taken and challenges overcome.
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**Inspect.** max 10 minutes.

- The spectators review the outcome.
  - The team answers any questions the spectators might have.
  - The team updates the track with the feedback inspectors provided.
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**Adapt.** max 10 minutes.

- The coach demonstrates potential updates to the track based on input and insights collected that day
  - The coach answers any questions the teammembers might have.
  - The team administers and estimates the complexity of newly collected input.
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## Recap!

Weekly  
max 30 minutes

## Give credit, where credit is due.

To conclude a sprint, the team reflects and adapts; for this session we urge teams to make it fun and rewarding and to uphold their values by being **open, honest and respectful**.

Don't assign blame. Don't be Captain Hindsight. It's okay to disagree!

There are numerous way to hold a recap, for example in the form of a retrospective; so be creative and experiment with new ways to learn how to become even better as a team!



The coach and captain prepare a fun and valuable recap. be creative!

Tip: inspect and share the 'captains log' for preparation.

### Reflect.

max 15 minutes.



Each member may present what didn't go so well; and why.



Each member may present what went well; and why.

### Adapt.

max 15 minutes.



Register potential improvements as goals or steps for the next sprint.

Remember, we value our effort above result and this is how we rate a sprint.  
In the end, this is how teams will learn to exceeding expectations.

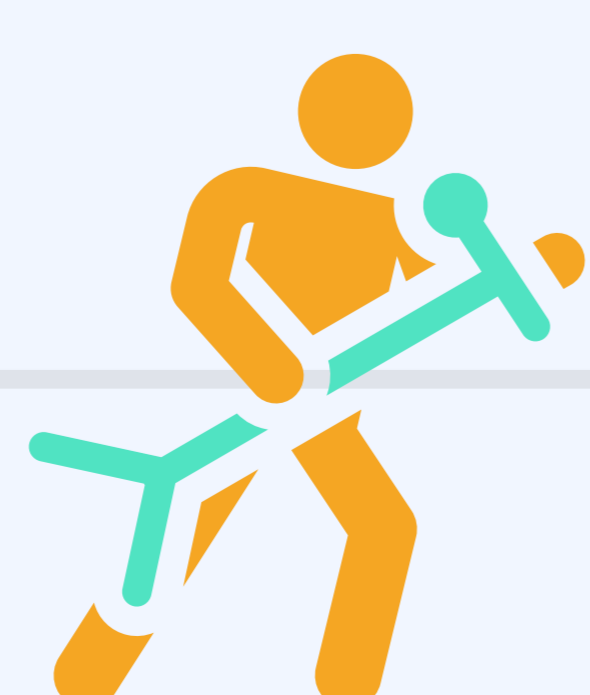


Each member (including coach, captain and inspectors) rates the sprint.

Regardless of results, you became a better team; now celebrate!



Karaoke?





 ATHLETE  
The logo features a stylized white icon of a winged figure or a set of horizontal lines to the left of the word "ATHLETE". The word "ATHLETE" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif, all-caps font.

[athleticcoalition.com](http://athleticcoalition.com)