# Unifying teams for success

Practical strategies for modern teamwork in the age of AI

Organizations are under constant pressure to innovate, execute, and deliver at high speeds. The key to meeting these demands lies in the effectiveness of teams that power businesses. However, despite increasing investments in digital tools and work platforms, many companies struggle with inefficient collaboration, misalignment, and knowledge silos.
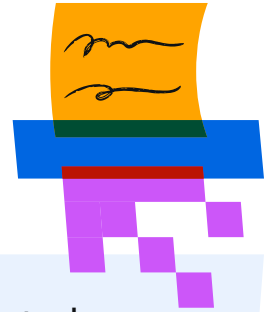
> Recent research from the Atlassian Teamwork Lab highlights a stark reality: Fortune 500 companies are wasting 2.4 billion hours each year searching for information.

Challenges like tool sprawl, decentralized knowledge, and ineffective communication continue to hinder productivity and business outcomes. As organizations adopt AI-driven work models and digital transformation strategies, the need to unify teams and streamline workflows has never been greater.

By adopting a system of work, organizations can create more seamless, high-performing work environments.

> Top companies set clear goals that ladder up to company objectives, establish clear processes for getting work done, and ensure the outcomes and learnings happen within a collaborative, connected space.

We'll explore the modern challenges of teamwork, their impact on businesses, and best practices for breaking down silos, clarifying goals, and fostering effective collaboration without relying on excessive meetings.

Challenges with ways of working today

Despite advancements in digital tools and AI, many teams still struggle with fragmented systems, scattered information, and inefficient communication. Employees waste valuable time searching for information instead of executing tasks, while inconsistent processes lead to duplicated efforts and misalignment.

In an attempt to stay connected, teams often default to meetings, but without clear structure or purpose, these can further drain time and focus. To work more effectively, organizations must address these challenges by consolidating tools, improving knowledge accessibility, and adopting better communication practices.

1. Tool sprawl and disparity

As businesses scale, the number of tools used for collaboration often grows uncontrollably. This leads to:

- **Context switching**: Employees frequently shift between platforms, reducing focus and efficiency.
- **Limited visibility**: Disconnected tools make tracking progress and aligning with company goals difficult.
- **Tool maintenance burden**: Managing access, data privacy, and security across multiple platforms becomes increasingly complex.
- **High costs**: Redundant and disparate tools add unnecessary administrative and financial overhead.

93%
of Fortune 500 executives say software and technology are more critical to their organization's success than ever before.*

2. Decentralized knowledge and insights

Siloed information prevents teams from making informed decisions efficiently. The consequences include:

- **Multiple sources of truth**: Employees struggle to determine where to find accurate and up-to-date information.
- **Wasted time searching for knowledge**: Employees spend a significant portion of their workweek locating relevant resources.
- **Unclear priorities**: Without a unified system for managing knowledge, teams struggle aligning their work with business objectives.
- **Security and compliance risks**: Shadow IT and fragmented systems can pose threats to data integrity.

Executives and teams alike spend
a quarter
of the workweek searching for information.*

3. Ineffective communication practices

Miscommunication and excessive meetings create bottlenecks that slow progress. Common issues include:

- **Meeting overload**: Employees are often tied up in unproductive meetings that lack clear agendas or follow-ups.
- **Calendar conflicts**: Decision-making slows down when teams struggle to find common meeting times across timezones.
- **Knowledge silos in meetings**: Important decisions and context are often lost, leaving other teams uninformed.
- **Inconsistent work processes**: Teams across departments operate with different standards, leading to inefficiencies.

56%
of workers say they often find that the only ways to get the information they need is to ask someone or schedule a meeting.*

The business impact of collaboration challenges

Collaboration inefficiencies take a measurable toll on business performance. Poor alignment, siloed workflows, and ineffective communication lead to missed opportunities, delays, and wasted resources.

Without a structured approach to teamwork, businesses face slower decision-making, reduced cross-functional productivity, and increased burnout. To drive success, companies must address these challenges by fostering alignment, streamlining collaboration, and minimizing unnecessary meetings.

1. Misalignment and lack of visibility to org-wide goals

Without clear alignment, teams struggle to see how their work contributes to the broader company strategy. This lack of visibility results in disengagement, inefficiencies, and missed revenue targets. Organizations experiencing high collaboration drag are 37% less likely to achieve their revenue goals.

2. Hindered cross-functional productivity

Disconnected workflows delay project execution due to reduced efficiencies shifting focus between tasks. Research shows that employees lose 40% of their productive time due to context switching.
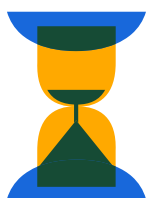
3. Wasted time and resources, employee burnout

Employees often waste time navigating disjointed systems instead of focusing on meaningful work. A staggering 86% of organizations use more than six collaboration tools, leading to redundancy and confusion. Additionally, 80% of employees believe they'd be more productive if they spent less time in meetings.

The solution: A modern approach to improve collaboration

To overcome collaboration challenges, organizations need a structured, scalable approach to work. High-performing teams don't just rely on more meetings or additional tools - they create clear goals, streamline workflows, and make knowledge easily accessible. Companies that adopt these best practices see higher productivity, faster decision-making, and improved alignment across teams.

A modern collaboration strategy focuses on four key areas: aligning work to goals, planning and tracking progress, making knowledge more accessible, and leveraging AI to enhance efficiency. By implementing these principles, teams can work smarter, reduce friction, and drive better business outcomes.

1. Align work to goals: Unify objectives to enable team progress

When tasks and projects are disconnected from overarching business objectives, progress slows, visibility decreases, and employees waste time on less impactful work. To operate efficiently, businesses must create a culture of clarity and focus to help teams prioritize accordingly.

- Establish clear quarterly OKRs for alignment, reviewing and evolving them as needed.
- Use standardized frameworks like setting SMART goals to help make milestones attainable within a defined timespan.
- Foster transparency by documenting goals in a centralized platform across teams to encourage collective accountability.
- Share regular progress updates with key stakeholders to collect fast feedback and promptly clear any blockers.

When teams align work to goals, they are:

6.4x
more likely to **produce high-quality work**

2.2x
more likely **to focus their team on the work that matters most**

4.9x
more likely **to meet deadlines***

How Atlassian can help

Teams can focus on work that matters by tracking progress in Jira, centralizing team knowledge in Confluence, and communicating priorities asynchronously with Loom.

*Source: The State of Teams, 2025, Atlassian

2. Plan and track work, together: Have a clear view of tasks, owners, impact, and current state

Successful teams thrive when they enable cross-functional visibility through seamless collaboration across all stages of work. Shared views and integrated tools helps teams plan and track work collaboratively throughout the entire work lifecycle, from ideation to planning milestones and documenting progress.

- Use a centralized, accessible platform to ensure teams have a shared understanding of how work progresses across all stages, with clear links between goals, projects, and tasks.

- Establish hierarchy, roles, and responsibilities at the start of every project to reduce confusion, avoid duplicative work, and help teams move faster.

- Break down projects into clear tasks, mapping dependencies and identifying potential risks to help teams prioritize, adapt plans, and deliver work efficiently.

- Foster continuous improvement by incorporating reflection points and feedback loops, enabling teams to adapt and stay aligned as work evolves.

When teams plan and track together, they are:

5.3x
more likely to **produce high-quality work**

2.4x
more likely **to focus their team on the work that matters most**

4.1x
more likely **to meet deadlines***

How Atlassian can help

Enable teams to collaborate without losing context and staying in their work flow by viewing Confluence and Jira side-by-side, bringing knowledge and work together.

3. Unleash collective knowledge: Make information accessible for better visibility and higher quality decision-making

A structured system for organizing and sharing knowledge ensures that teams can work efficiently, make informed decisions, and stay aligned on priorities. By adopting asynchronous information sharing, prioritizing content quality over quantity, and utilizing AI for knowledge management, companies can create a centralized, accessible, and efficient knowledge base. Empowering teams with this self-sufficiency enhances productivity and progress.

- Focus on creating high-quality, clear, and concise content that meets the team and stakeholder needs, reducing information overload.

- Collaborate, brainstorm, and visualize work with tools like digital whiteboards to share and capture ideas across distributed teams.

- Prioritize asynchronous updates over meetings when possible to help teams free up time for high-value work.

- Use AI to quickly summarize and surface information from a breadth of sources, enabling individuals to learn and take action on tasks more efficiently.

- Document key decisions and rationales in shared spaces accessible to contributors and stakeholders to keep teams aligned and create a point of reference for future planning.

When teams unleash collective knowledge, they are:
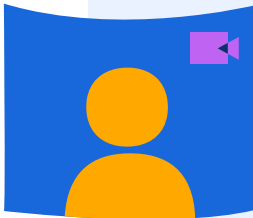
5.4x
more likely to **produce high-quality work**

2.3x
more likely **to focus their team on the work that matters most**

4.6x
more likely **to meet deadlines***

How Atlassian can help

Transform meetings into shared knowledge by capturing meeting recordings, notes, and action items with Loom, creating assigned tasks in Jira, then consolidating learnings in Confluence.

Source: The State of Teams, 2025, Atlassian

4. Make AI part of the team: Accelerate work and decision-making

Instead of spending time sifting through data or manually compiling reports, teams can rely on AI to surface key trends, summarize discussions, and take action on recommended next steps. By embracing AI-driven decision-making, organizations free up employees to focus on innovation and strategic work.

- Integrate AI early on into team's routines to create a habit of confidently leaning on tools to accelerate repetitive, menial tasks and preserving bandwidth for creative and strategic work.

- Empower teams to quickly surface relevant insights and make informed decisions by relying on AI-powered search and chat tools for personalized knowledge.

- Break down meeting silos by using AI to create meeting notes within your knowledge base so all context and decisions are centrally searchable

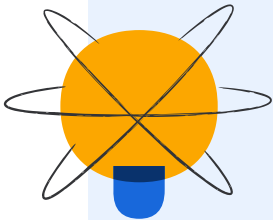- Use customizable, agentic workflows to create tailored experiences for teams with specific needs or business goals.

Atlassian Intelligence users save

45 minutes
a week, on average

77%
say the **AI-powered search saves them time**

How Atlassian can help

Connected by rich data across all apps through the Teamwork Graph, Rovo helps teams make better decisions - not just faster ones.

Bringing it all together

The challenges of tool sprawl, decentralized information and ineffective meetings are interconnected. When left unaddressed, they result in inefficiencies, misalignment, and employee burnout. By embracing modern collaboration strategies - aligning work to goals, planning and tracking work together, unleashing knowledge, and leveraging AI to connect learnings - teams are empowered to work more effectively together.

Atlassian's Teamwork Collection brings together Jira, Confluence, Loom, and Rovo to form the common language of teamwork – from ideation to delivery.

Learn more about how to unlock seamless collaboration and elevate your team's productivity.