

## The Expedition Team Framework

*A group coaching tool for leaders guiding teams to shared goals*

### Aspiration Experts Ethos

At *Aspiration Experts*, we embrace the **analogy** of an **Expedition Leader** to approach change and transformation and create a culture that establishes lasting organisational change.

An *Expedition Leader* **creates the conditions for progress**, rather than carrying the team to the summit themselves. They **clarify the destination, involve others in choosing the route, pace the journey and respond to changing conditions** along the way.

Through thoughtful facilitation and shared ownership, the leader enables people to **think beyond immediate constraints**, contribute their **strengths** and **move forward together** with **confidence and purpose**. Leadership, in this sense, is not about control or certainty, it is about **direction, trust and sustainable progress**.

### Using the Expedition Analogy

*A practical leadership lens for expanding thinking and freeing teams from current constraints*

The expedition analogy is a deliberate coaching tool. It helps teams step outside day-to-day pressures, broaden perspective and engage in more constructive, forward-focused dialogue. As an *Expedition Leader* we can use this framework as a lens during **group coaching conversations and workshops to unlock thinking and support shared ownership**.

## 1. Leader Coaching Guide – The Expedition Team Framework

### Shaping framework into a Workshop

This framework can be used as a guided workshop of around **60–90 minutes**. Begin with the introduction and Basecamp to set context and ways of working, then move through the sections to step back from day-to-day pressures, explore constraints and perspective, and surface risk, roles and shared ownership.

Close by agreeing clear next steps, ownership and review points. Use timings as a guide rather than a rule, allowing important conversations to breathe while keeping focus on progress and collective clarity.

### Leader Introduction Script

*Opening the guided session\**

*“I would like us to approach this session as an expedition. Picture us as a team preparing to set out towards a summit. That summit represents our shared goal of **[insert goal]**.”*

*Like any expedition, success will not come from rushing straight to the top. We need to understand the conditions, agree how we want to work together and choose a route that uses our collective strengths. My role today is to guide the conversation, rather than provide all the answers.*

*This is an opportunity to step back from day-to-day pressures, think more openly and explore how we move forward together. I encourage honesty, curiosity and challenge, as that is how expeditions make progress.*

*By the end of this session, we should be clearer on where we are heading, how we will get there, what role we will all take and what each of us will carry on the journey.”*

\*This script can be read verbatim or adapted to suit personal style.

## 2. Stepping Back from the Day-to-Day

*(Creating Psychological Distance)*

**Section Purpose:** To help the team step outside day-to-day pressures, hierarchy and inherited ways of working. This stage separates the goal from how things currently operate and creates space for more open, curious and honest thinking before solutions are discussed.

### **Leader introduction line:**

*“Before we talk about solutions, I want us to step back from how things usually work and look at this as an expedition. Let’s create a bit of distance from day-to-day pressures so we can think more openly.”*

### **Coaching questions:**

- *If we treat this as an expedition, what is the true destination we are aiming for together?*
- *What assumptions are we carrying from how things currently work?*
- *Which of those assumptions feel helpful, and which may be limiting us?*
- *What feels easier to say when we step back from our usual roles?*
- *What would progress look like if we were not constrained by habit or precedent?*



### **Leader guidance:**

*Listen for themes rather than answers. Resist the urge to correct or move into action too quickly.*

### 3. Navigating the Terrain

*(Shifting from Constraints to Navigation)*

**Section Purpose:** To acknowledge real constraints while reframing them as conditions to be navigated. This stage moves the team from limitation-based thinking towards possibility, adaptability and practical movement.

**Leader introduction line:**

*“Every expedition involves challenges and constraints; rather than seeing these as blockers, let’s look at what we need to navigate together.”*

**Coaching questions:**

- *What conditions will we need to navigate on this expedition?*
- *Which constraints feel fixed, and which may be more flexible than we assume?*
- *Where have we navigated similar challenges successfully before?*
- *What options open up when we ask how, rather than why not?*
- *What would a workable route forward look like, even if it is not perfect?*



**Leader guidance:**

*Normalise obstacles as part of the journey and redirect “we can’t” language into exploration.*

## **4. Gaining Altitude**

*(Elevating Perspective)*

**Section Purpose:** To lift thinking above immediate detail, urgency and noise. This stage supports better judgement by helping the team focus on what matters most at this point in the journey.

**Leader introduction line:**

*“Let’s gain a bit of altitude and look at this from a higher vantage point; rather than getting pulled into detail too quickly.”*

**Coaching questions:**

- *If we were looking at this from higher up, what would matter most right now?*
- *Which issues are genuinely critical, and which are simply loud or familiar?*
- *What are we at risk of over-focusing on?*
- *What might we see differently with a longer-term view?*
- *What decisions would feel clearer if we increased perspective and reduced detail?*



**Leader guidance:**

*Allow pauses and silence. Invite quieter voices and link insights back to priorities.*

## 5. Talking About Risk and Load

*(Enabling Safer Challenge)*

**Section Purpose:** To create space for honest challenge without blame or defensiveness. This stage enables concerns, risks and tensions to surface in a way that protects trust and psychological safety.

### **Leader introduction line:**

*“On any expedition, it is important to talk openly about risk, uncertainty and how the load is being carried. This is a space for honest conversation.”*

### **Coaching questions:**

- *Where does this route feel uncertain or risky?*
- *What concerns are present that we have not yet named?*
- *Where might the load feel uneven across the team?*
- *What would help us speak more openly at this stage of the expedition?*
- *What needs to be said now to avoid bigger issues later?*



### **Leader guidance:**

*Acknowledge challenge openly and thank contributors for raising difficult points.*

## 6. Sharing the Load

*(Releasing Fixed Roles and Identities)*

**Section Purpose:** To unlock contribution beyond job titles and formal roles. This stage encourages flexibility, strengths-led contribution and shared leadership based on capability, experience and changing conditions.

**Leader introduction line:**

*“Expeditions work best when people step forward based on strengths and conditions, rather than job titles. Let’s explore how we share the load.”*

**Coaching questions:**

- *What strengths exist in this team that we are not fully using?*
- *Where might roles need to flex as conditions change?*
- *Who is best placed to lead at different stages of the expedition?*
- *What would shared ownership look like in practice?*
- *How can we support one another to step forward when needed?*



**Leader guidance:**

*Watch for hierarchy-driven assumptions and reinforce collective responsibility.*

## 7. Committing to the Next Stage

*(Bringing the Expedition Together)*

**Section Purpose:** To convert insight into aligned commitment and forward movement. This stage ensures the session ends with clarity, ownership and momentum; rather than loose discussion.

### **Leader introduction line:**

*“Before we close, let’s bring this together and be clear about what we are taking forward as an expedition team.”*

### **Coaching questions:**

- *What feels clearer now than at the start of the session?*
- *What agreements do we want to carry forward as an expedition team?*
- *What is the next meaningful step we will take together?*
- *Who will take ownership of each agreed action?*
- *When and how will we review progress and adjust the route?*



### **Leader guidance:**

*Summarise in the team’s language, confirm ownership and agree review points.*

### Want to Explore This More Deeply?

Group coaching conversations often surface something important. They can reveal patterns in how leaders show up, assumptions that shape decision-making, or moments where progress feels possible and challenging at the same time.

If this framework has left you feeling curious, stretched or uncertain about what comes next, that is a natural part of the expedition.

At *Aspiration Experts*, we support leaders to:

- Unpack the patterns shaping their leadership identity
- Reframe the stories and habits that limit confidence or progress
- Gain practical tools to reset, refocus and reconnect with meaningful summit goals

This support can be explored through **1:1 coaching conversations**, by using our **self-coaching resources**, or by **securing our services to facilitate group coaching sessions** using approaches such as *The Expedition Team Framework*.

Facilitated sessions provide structured space, skilled guidance and an external perspective to help teams deepen insight, strengthen alignment and accelerate progress towards their summit.

If you would like to continue the journey, we invite you to get in touch. We offer a complimentary fireside chat to help you explore what support might be most useful at this stage.

**Get in touch:** [www.aspirationexperts.com](http://www.aspirationexperts.com).