

Supercharge Hybrid Work with Teams

Teams best practices for how we actually work. Your 45-minute guide.

2026 Digital Workplace Summit | State of North Carolina

Presented by Heather Masters & Navin Pokhrel
Microsoft

Today's Agenda | 45 Minutes

0:00 – 0:03

Welcome to the Summit — and meet Marcus

0:03 – 0:08

The chat pile and the two-room meeting

0:08 – 0:14

Why Teams is built the way it is

0:14 – 0:20

Chats vs. channels — where work belongs

0:20 – 0:26

Settings that make Teams yours

0:26 – 0:36

Live demo — a day in the life

0:36 – 0:41

Meetings, dos and don'ts, quick wins

0:41 – 0:45

Five takeaways, resources, Q&A



Meet Marcus

Marcus's Tuesday — Sound Familiar?

- Marcus is a program manager in Raleigh. His day starts in 14 unread chats, 3 of them about the same project.

- The decision he needs was made in a group chat he was added to late, so he cannot scroll back to find it.

- Notifications buzz for everything, so he has turned most of them off — and now he misses the ones that matter.

- At 9 a.m. he joins a hybrid meeting from home, types his point into chat, and nobody in the room is watching it.

The desire

"I want work to live somewhere I can find it, and I want to be heard whether I'm in the room or on the screen."

Designed for How People Actually Work

Teams was shaped with behavioral scientists and industrial-organizational psychologists, not just engineers.



Brain-activity research showed back-to-back meetings build measurable stress — so short breaks became a default.



People are poor multitaskers — noise suppression, threads, and quiet hours exist because attention is finite.



Raise hand, chat, and threaded replies exist because quiet voices go unheard when interrupting is the only way in.



Live captions, transcripts, and recordings turn accessibility research into time back for everyone.

Seven Habits of Great Teams Users

What changes when everyone does these

- 1 Work in channels. If the team needs it later, it does not belong in a chat.
- 2 Reply in the thread. One topic, one conversation, easy to follow.
- 3 Tune your notifications. Per channel, not all-or-nothing.
- 4 Pin what you use. Five pins beat forty scrolls.
- 5 Check before you join. The pre-join screen ends 'can you hear me?'
- 6 Include the screen. Watch chat and hands; call remote people by name.
- 7 End the meeting. Decisions in chat, then End — never just Leave.

No new equipment, no permission needed — every habit starts with your next message or meeting.

- Before: the project lives in three group chats. After: one channel, one thread per topic, searchable by anyone.
- Before: notifications buzz for everything or nothing. After: mentions loud, the noisy channel tuned, quiet hours on.
- Before: the meeting ends when people drift off. After: decisions in chat, then End meeting — the room actually closes.



Get Out of Chat, Into Channels

Chat vs. Channel | Where Does This Conversation Belong?

Use a chat	Use a channel
Quick, personal, in the moment	Work the team owns
Private to the people in it	Open to everyone on the team
History leaves when people do	History stays with the team
New joiners see nothing before them	New joiners get the full backstory
Files live in your OneDrive	Files live in the team's library
Good for: "running 5 late"	Good for: decisions, projects, docs

Anatomy of Teams | What Each Rail Is For

Activity

Your inbox for Teams. Start here every morning — mentions and replies first, everything else after.

Chat

Quick and personal. Great for "running 5 late", wrong for decisions the team needs to find later.

Teams & channels

Where the work lives. Posts, replies, files, and tabs the whole team can see and search.

Calendar & meetings

Schedule, join, and end meetings here — including the channel meetings your whole team can see.



Set Up and Work in Teams

Make Teams Yours | Settings Worth Five Minutes

Chats & channels

- Pin the handful of chats and channels you use daily — everything else can live under More.
- Hide or leave the chats you no longer need. A shorter list is a findable list.
- Show a channel in your list if you want it visible; hide the ones you only skim.

Notifications

- Set notifications per channel: all new posts for the two that matter, mentions only for the rest.
- Keep @mentions and replies loud. Turn off likes and reactions — they are not urgent.
- Use quiet hours so Teams respects your evenings and your days off.

The simple test

- Does this need me now? Notification on. Does it need me today? Mentions only.
- Am I muting a channel because it is noisy? Fix the channel, don't go silent.
- Can I find my three most-used spaces in one second? If not, pin them.



Live Demo

Meetings | Join Well, End Well

1. Join a few minutes early and use the pre-join screen to check mic, camera, and background
2. Pick the right audio device — the room system in a conference room, your headset everywhere else
3. Turn your camera on when you can, and mute yourself the moment you stop speaking
4. Share a single window, not your desktop, and say what you're showing before you show it
5. Post the decision, the owner, and the next step in the meeting chat before you wrap
6. End the meeting — do not just leave. Leaving keeps it running without you

S.H.A.R.E. | Five Seconds Before You Join

A quick gut-check you can use before every single meeting

S

Sound check

Right mic, right speaker, muted until you speak.

H

Hand and chat ready

Raise hand to get the floor; chat to leave a record.

A

Amplify the screen

Call remote colleagues by name, early and often.

R

Right window only

Share one window, never your whole desktop.

E

End it properly

Post the decisions, then End meeting — not Leave.

Rule of thumb

If a remote colleague could not follow the last five minutes on their own screen, stop and fix it before you go further.



A Day in the Life | Three Demos

Demo 1 | Setting Teams Up in Five Minutes

What you'll see on screen

- Pinning the chats and channels Marcus uses daily, and hiding the rest.
- Setting per-channel notifications: all posts for one, mentions only for the others.
- Turning on quiet hours so Teams respects evenings and days off.
- Starting the day in Activity instead of scrolling Chat.

Why it matters

The moment: Navin cuts a forty-item chat list down to five pins in under a minute.

The habit: Spend five minutes on settings once, save them every day after.

The payoff: Teams stops shouting, and the things that actually need you get through.

Try it today: Pin your five, then tune the noisiest channel to mentions only.

Demo 2 | Moving Work from Chat into a Channel

What you'll see on screen

- Taking a project conversation out of a group chat and posting it in the team's channel.
- Giving the post a subject line, then replying in the thread instead of starting a new one.
- The Files tab — where everything shared in that channel automatically lives.
- Scheduling a channel meeting the whole team can see, and why a one-on-one never goes here.

Why it matters

The moment: Heather searches the channel and finds a decision from three months ago in two seconds.

The habit: If it matters next month, post it in the channel, not the chat.

The payoff: Someone who joins the team in six months inherits the whole story for free.

Try it today: Move one project out of group chat and into a channel.

Demo 3 | Engaging the Room and Ending Well

Polls, Q&A, captions, and a clean close

What you'll see on screen

- Launching a live poll mid-meeting and showing results to everyone at once.
- Q&A collecting questions from the room and the screen in one queue.
- Turning on live captions, then finding the transcript after the meeting ends.
- Posting decisions in chat, then choosing End meeting instead of Leave.

Why it matters

The rule: A quiet meeting is not an agreeing meeting. Give people a way to respond.

The path: Polls and Q&A let the shy and the remote participate on equal footing.

The check: Captions and transcripts help anyone who missed a word — and everyone who missed the meeting.

The close: End meeting closes the room, finalizes the recording, and stops it running without you.



Habits, Guardrails & Support

North Carolina Guardrails | Same Rules Apply

Your chats and meetings are still state business

- Chat, channel posts, recordings, and transcripts are records — write like they will be read later.
- Do not discuss or display PII, PHI, CJIS, or other regulated data in a chat, channel, or meeting.
- Share the specific window, not your whole desktop — your notifications are not part of the agenda.
- Public records, retention, and eDiscovery apply to Teams just as they do to email.

Dos & Don'ts | The Short List

- DO put decisions, documents, and project talk in a channel where the team can find them.
- DON'T schedule a personal or one-off meeting in a team channel — it invites the whole team.
- DO end the meeting rather than leaving it, so the room closes behind you.
- DON'T turn every notification off. Tune them per channel and keep mentions loud.
- DO reply in the thread instead of starting a new post — it keeps the story in one place.
- DON'T share your whole desktop. Share the one window you mean to show.
- DO use @mentions deliberately — @channel and @team wake up everybody, so earn it.
- DON'T let a decision live only in chat. If it matters next month, it belongs in a channel.

Good habit

If it matters next month, or to anyone not in the thread, it belongs in a channel.

Common Pitfalls

- Two devices unmuted in the same room causes echo. In a conference room, only the room system carries audio.
- A project spread across several group chats has no home — nobody can search it and new joiners see nothing.
- Muting a channel to escape the noise means missing the one post that needed you.
- Recording without saying so puts people on the spot. Announce it, every time.



Recap & Resources

Five Things to Take Back to Your Desk

- 1.** If it matters next month, put it in a channel — chats are hallway conversations.
- 2.** Spend five minutes on settings: pin what you use, tune notifications per channel, set quiet hours.
- 3.** Start your day in Activity, not Chat. Mentions and replies first.
- 4.** Nobody joins as a spectator — check your audio, use raise hand and chat, share one window.
- 5.** End the meeting instead of leaving it, with the decision and owner in chat.

Teams Cheat Sheet | Photograph This Slide

Chats, channels & settings	Meetings
Matters next month? Channel.	Check audio on the pre-join screen
Reply in the thread, not a new post	Camera on when you can
Pin your five, hide the rest	Raise hand and use the chat
Notifications per channel	Share one window, not the desktop
Start your day in Activity	Decisions in chat before you wrap
Never book a personal meeting in a channel	End the meeting, don't just leave

Your next 7 days

- Move one project out of group chat and into a channel.
- Pin your five most-used chats and channels; hide the rest.
- Set per-channel notifications and turn on quiet hours.
- End the next meeting you run instead of leaving it.
- Learn the mute shortcut: Ctrl+Shift+M.

Questions?

Thank you, North Carolina. Enjoy the rest of the Summit.



Heather Masters • Navin Pokhrel | Microsoft