

*guide to your inner landscape*

**Case study: Changing team leaders**



QED GROUP

## Case study: Changing team leaders

### Introduction

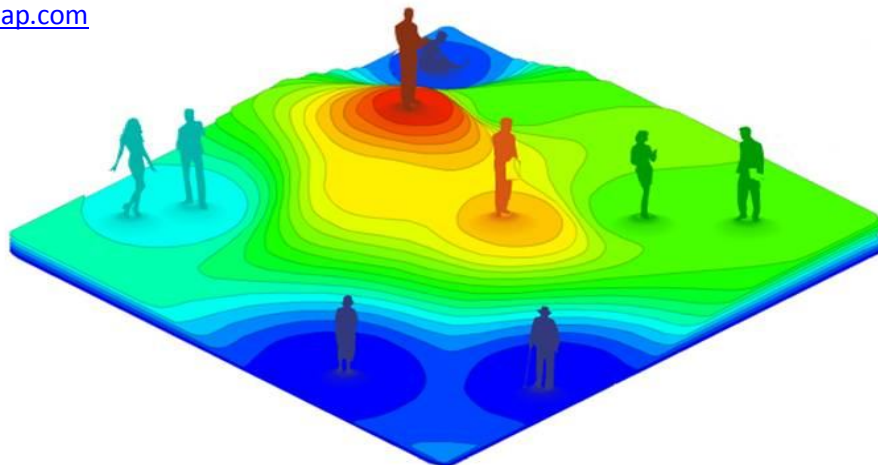
Team Sociomapping has been widely used by our clients to resolve teamwork-related issues, improve performance, and track and support changes. This case study shows how Team Sociomapping can be leveraged to prepare teams for **team leaders leaving and to prepare them for a new phase of leadership**.

**Change in leadership** is quite common for most teams and departments. Generally, only family operated companies tend to have stable and long-term managers, thus teams have to always be prepared for the possibility of a change in leadership. These situations can pose many risks and dangers. Team need to be thoroughly prepared for this scenario and all **communication channels** in which the team leader was engaged should be delegated to his or her successor or another team member. This process requires great effort, which is often underestimated, and therefore chaos can easily ensue once the team leader is gone. Another risk is that even if team members have prior knowledge of a change in leadership, they often continue to work and communicate in the same ways as before and they **don't acknowledge and properly react** to the new situation. Communication chaos sets in after the team leader leaves and then much time and energy are wasted on basic communication needs and responsibilities instead of on effective outputs. It is essential for the team to come to terms with the reality of the situation, to establish new communication channels, and to develop a culture that allows for an easy transition for a new leader.

#### ABOUT TEAM SOCIOMAPPING

Team Sociomapping is a toolkit comprised of 1) a **visualization method**, which builds on the metaphor of a landscape to show a team's interactions in an easy-to-read way and 2) a **team coaching approach**, integrating 360°-like feedback for both training and team-building. Through visualizing data in the form of a sociomap, it provides a new data-driven way to constructively address and facilitate team development.

Visit [team.sociomap.com](http://team.sociomap.com)



## Case example



### Client context and team description

The client is an international human resources company. Sociomapping was performed on the team, which consisted of 4 departments: Sales and Marketing; Customer, Development and Project support; HR; and Web development. The team was comprised of 15 members. The team's head was leaving in the near future. It was planned that his position was to be taken over by one of the current team members.



### Main issues and approach

The main problem that had to be solved was **the departure of the current team leader**. The team had to be prepared for the situation and to establish effective communication channels that would work when the leader was gone. One solution that can be used in these situations is to put forth effort to establish effective principles of communication and knowledge transfer within the department, which are then accepted by all team members. However, it doesn't need to be overly simple because team members can be used to former communication channels and knowledge transfer and it can be difficult for them to adopt innovations.

Therefore, Team Sociomapping of communication was performed on the team with a focus on two primary areas of interest: 1) **frequency** of communication, actual as well as optimal; and 2) **importance** of communication. The combination of these two elements provided team members with an image of the team's preparedness for the departure of the current leader and where the team had communication gaps. Another necessary part of Team Sociomapping has been a development workshop, where results are presented to the team and action plans for preparation for the forthcoming situation are adopted.



### Results

Sociomaps of current and optimal (own desire) frequency of communication show that compared to the current situation, the team's head, Jakob, would like to optimally cut back his position in frequency of communication within the team, which corresponds to his plan to leave the team. Also essential to note is the current lack of frequency of communication from Sara, who will take over Jakob's position. However, Sara wants her communication to be optimal.

#### Sociomaps show 2 main types of information:



**Height (elevation):** expressed mainly through the color scale (blue to red). Here, it shows on average how actively each team-member communicates.



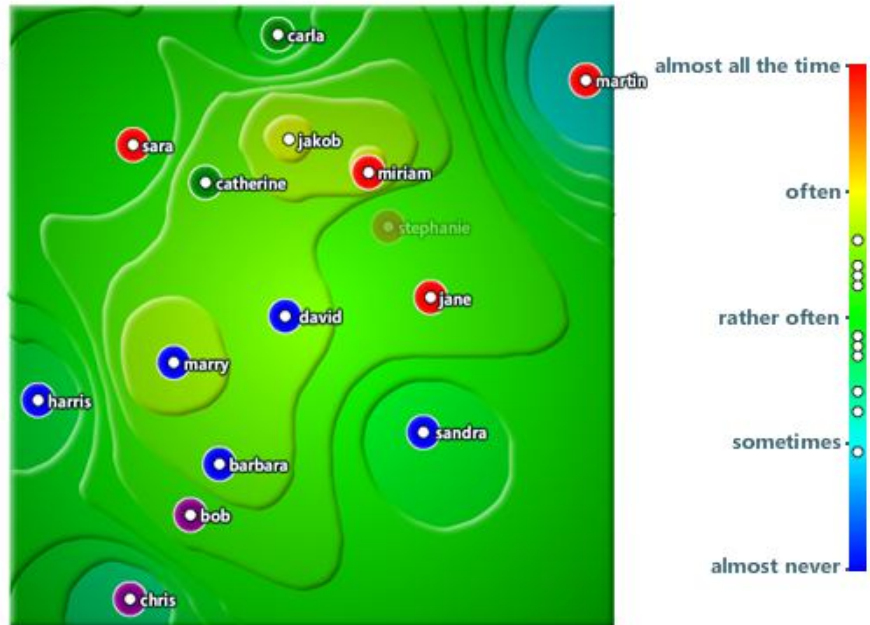
**Distance:** Distance between individuals illustrates the intensity of mutual communication.

### CURRENT FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATION

 Average frequency of current work-related communication

 Current frequency of work-related communication

- Sales & Marketing
- Customer, Development, Project support
- Web development
- HR

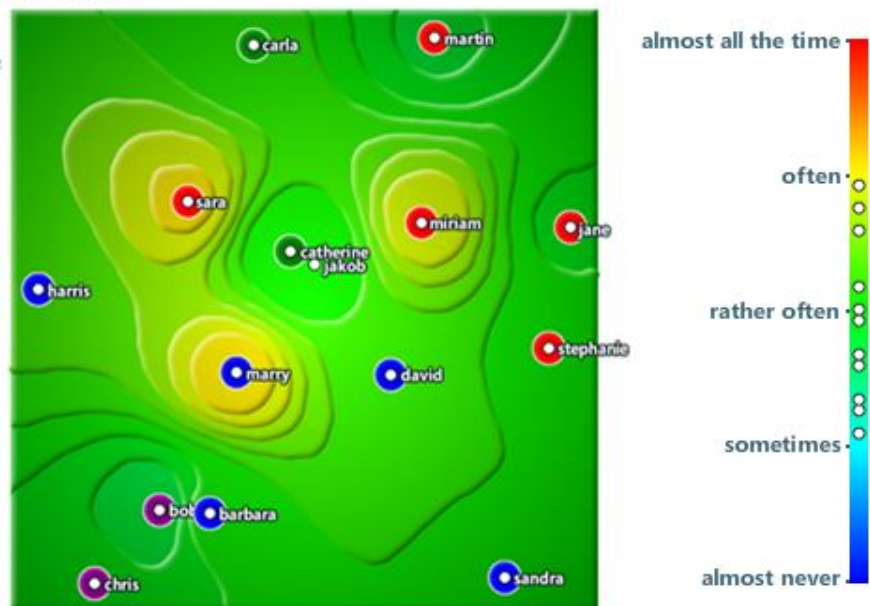


### OPTIMAL FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATION - AS DESIRED BY ONESELF

 Optimal frequency of communication (as desired by oneself)

 Optimal frequency of communication

- Sales & Marketing
- Customer, Development, Project support
- Web development
- HR



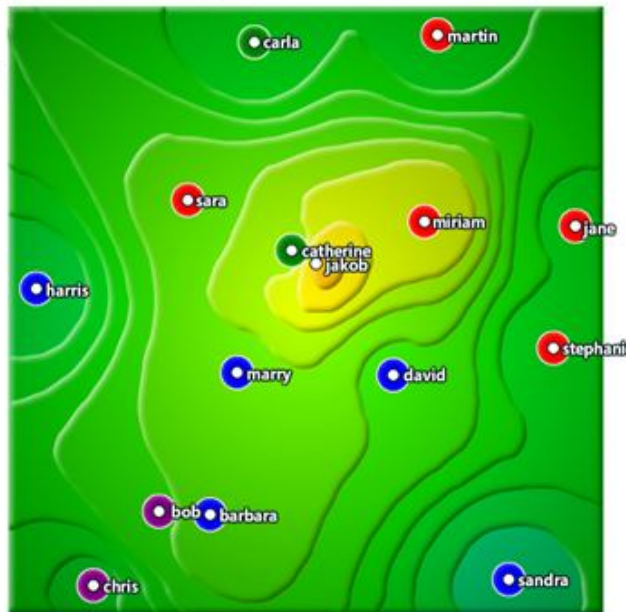
Sociomaps of optimal frequency of communication (as desired by others) and importance of communication show that the team was not prepared enough for Jakob's departure. Compared to the situation shown on previous sociomaps, team members would like to communicate with Jakob even more frequently and consider communication with him to be most important. Sara's position is again rather average.

### OPTIMAL FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATION - AS DESIRED BY OTHERS

 Average frequency of optimal work-related communication (as desired by others)

 Frequency of optimal work-related communication

- Sales & Marketing
- Customer, Development, Project support
- Web development
- HR

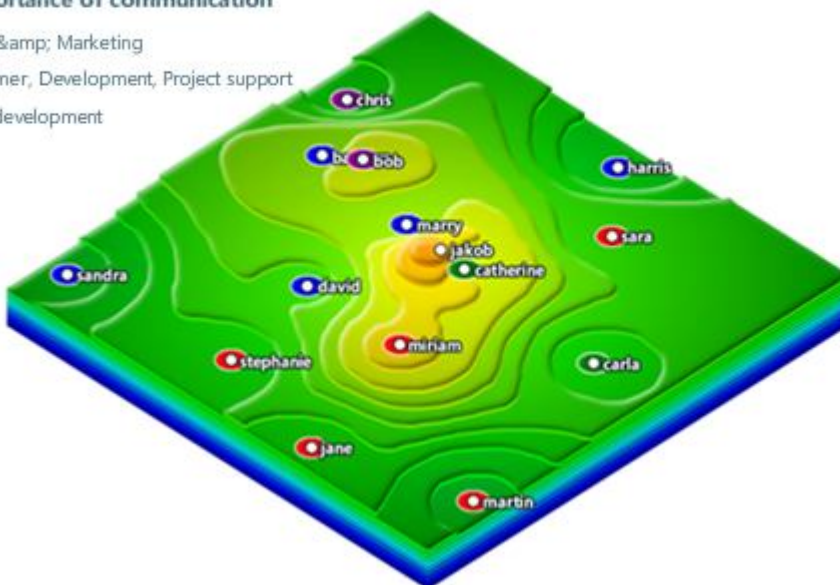


### IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

 Average importance of communication

 Importance of communication

- Sales & Marketing
- Customer, Development, Project support
- Web development
- HR



Sociomapping analysis showed that the department wasn't prepared for Jakob's departure. Jakob wants to cut back his participation on the team, but at the same time, other team members, even about the one's who are aware of his leaving, would like to continue communicating with him even more and they assess the importance of communicating with him as the highest priority. The communication situation within the team doesn't allow for Jakob to have a trouble-free departure. His successor, Sara, doesn't hold a strong enough position within the team to satisfy team members' communication needs. Even if she would like to communicate with others more frequently, others don't share her desire and communication with her is considered to be unimportant.

A visual image of the situation in the team using sociomaps provided team members with a clear image of the communication situation within the team, helped in the understanding of the situation, and provided an awareness of the necessity to modify communication channels within the team. Action plans were adopted, which helped establish channels of communication within the team in regards to Jakob's departure and Sara's promotion. Steps were also adopted that lead to an improvement in communication among the new leader and team members, as well as in a mutual sharing of knowledge, processes, and tasks.

Sociomapping analysis clearly identified the abovementioned communication problems within the team and thus helped team members to understand the problems and to adopt solutions necessary for improving the current situation. A unique feature of Team Sociomapping is the ability to display results in a clear and understandable visual form, which helps individual team members to personally identify with the results.

To learn more visit [team.sociomap.com](http://team.sociomap.com) or contact us at [team-sociomapping@qedgroup.eu](mailto:team-sociomapping@qedgroup.eu)



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**Team Sociomapping**

- How does it work?
- Who is it for?
- When to use it?
- Why to use it?

**Team Sociomapping®**

Sociomapping® is a new toolkit for **team development** and **team coaching**. It transforms figures and numbers into image called sociomap. As implied by its name, the method uses the **metaphor of a landscape** to illustrate and clearly visualize data.

Sociomapping monitors **important aspects of relationships among individuals**, such as the stability of these relationships (frequency of internal conflicts and disputes), communication flows, or weaknesses in the social system structure.

**Sociomap of Optimal Communication**

**News:**

**SOCIOMAPPING IN SPACE RESEARCH**

Sociomapping is used in the international experiment MARS-500 which main part began on the 3th June in Moscow. This experiment is focused on simulation of manned flight to Mars. For more information visit the project website [www.mars500.cz/en/](http://www.mars500.cz/en/)

**FIRST PROJECTS IN NETHERLANDS**

New Service Providers in [Netherlands](#) and [Austria](#) and first Team Sociomapping projects in Netherlands were successfully executed