

# Summary of Warren's book "Technically Connected"

## Chapter 5: How Is More Important Than Who

### Rethinking Team Excellence: Why How Matters More Than Who Traditional Wisdom: The Power of "Who"

From childhood games to executive hiring, we've been taught that "who is on the team" determines success. Virtual teams seemed to supercharge this idea—letting us pick top performers regardless of geography. But research shows this view is incomplete.

Jim Collins (in Good to Great) said "first who, then what"—and while helpful, this principle has often been oversimplified. In reality, great teams aren't built just by assembling high performers—they're built by how those people work together.

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### Google's Research: Shifting Focus to How

Google's extensive study on high-performing teams discovered that collaboration quality, not just member credentials, was the key driver of team success.

#### Five Key Traits of High-Performing Teams:

1. Psychological Safety – Members feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable.
2. Dependability – They follow through on time and with excellence.
3. Structure & Clarity – Clear roles, goals, and processes are in place.
4. Meaning – The work is personally important to each member.
5. Impact – Members believe their work makes a difference.

"How a team interacts, structures itself, and values its work is what makes it great."



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## Unique Challenges of Virtual Teams

Virtual teams face added layers of complexity due to distance in:

- Place – Different locations and time zones.
- Process – Tech use, team size, communication ease.
- People – Cultural diversity, cross-org membership, limited social ties.

## Top Six Virtual Team Challenges:

1. Limited face-to-face contact
  2. Inadequate resources
  3. Time zone barriers
  4. Split attention from other teams
  5. Poor information sharing
  6. Lack of training
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## High-Functioning Virtual Teams: What It Takes

### Key Qualities in Virtual Team Members:

- Dependable – Fully present and accountable.
- Clear Communicator – Uses tools effectively for timely updates.
- Collaborator – Engaged, cross-time-zone ready, interdependent.
- Autonomous – Self-motivated and disciplined without direct oversight.

### Essential Team Behaviors (from Patrick Lencioni):

1. Build trust through openness.
2. Embrace healthy conflict around ideas.
3. Commit to decisions together.
4. Hold each other accountable.
5. Stay focused on shared results.

## Practical Tips for Thriving in a Virtual Environment

- Design a Suitable Workspace – One that boosts focus and creativity.
- Find Your Rhythm – Adapt your schedule to fit your energy and responsibilities.
- Prioritize Output over Hours – Focus on work quality, not clock time.



### Practical Tips for Thriving in a Virtual Environment (cont.)

- **Control Distractions** – Focus on one task at a time; avoid multitasking.
- **Set Clear Boundaries** – Visually and mentally separate work from home life.
- **Stay Relationally Engaged** – Combat “out of sight, out of mind.”
- **Reject the Guilt** – Take pride in your flexibility and value your contribution.

## *Final Takeaways*

- **"How" > "Who"** – Structure, collaboration, and mindset matter most.
- **Challenges abound in virtual work**—especially around communication and connection.
- **Intentional team norms lead to clarity, focus, and high performance.**
- **Not everyone thrives virtually**—self-awareness and proactive habits are key.



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