

# ONE WORD

Change is possible, but attention is required! Rather than trying to “boil the ocean” and focus on too many changes at the same time, teams can keep things simple. By prioritizing clarity and sustained focus over time, teams can increase their chances for successful change.

The goal of this exercise is to choose one word to be your team’s focus, and to keep the team’s attention focused on their word and the change they want to achieve. Just one word to focus and inspire the team!



60 minutes



Minimum of 2



- 5mm coloured adhesive dots
- Flipchart paper
- Markers/pens
- Post-it notes

Source: Adapted from *One Word 365; My One Word*

## DEBRIEF (*following the activity*)

- What was it like to focus your team’s attention this way?
- How do you think it will work to have a single word to help sustain focus?
- How could you use this word in your day-to-day operations?
- How could you leverage it to help you?
- How could you use this activity in the work that you do?

## WHAT TO DO



1. Provide the team with flipchart paper, markers/pens, and dots for voting (four dots per team member).
2. Invite the team to discuss one of the things they want to achieve as a team.
3. After 15 minutes, ask the team to make a list of words that summarizes their description of what they want to achieve. Do this by inviting each team member to write each word on individual post-it notes and placing these words on the shared flipchart paper.
4. After 15 minutes, identify a moderator to review the list of words with the group.
5. Have the team narrow down their list of words by inviting each team member to place a dot on their top three choices.
6. After voting, the moderator removes any words from the flipchart paper that did not receive a dot vote.
7. Invite the team to review the list of remaining words and discuss the choices in light of their goal discussed in step 2.
8. After 10 minutes, invite each team member to place a dot on their top word choice.
9. Again, after voting, the moderator removes any words from the flipchart paper that did not receive a vote.
10. Invite the team to review the list of remaining words and come to consensus on the word that will guide them. Note: this word should really resonate with the group and speak to each member.
11. Have the team commit to using the word to guide them, identifying how and when it will be used to help maintain their sustained focus.
12. Debrief with the team.