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# How to Build a High-Performing Team in Event Technology

Jen Bray  
Event Tech Team Lead at FIRST

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# Summary

The session on building a high-performing team in event technology, led by Jen Bray, offered insights into leadership, team dynamics, recruitment, and dealing with mistakes. Bray emphasised the importance of leadership at all levels, encouraging individuals to lead regardless of their official position. She highlighted Simon Sinek's perspective on leadership as an 'awesome responsibility to see those around you rise.' Collaboration, growth mindset, and transparent communication are pivotal in her approach to team building. Bray believes in empowering team members to make decisions, fostering a safe environment for them to take ownership and learn from their experiences. She also shared anecdotes about handling mistakes positively, transforming them into opportunities for learning and building trust within the team.

Bray stressed the significance of transparency and empowerment in her leadership style. She avoids micromanagement, preferring to trust her team to make decisions and feel safe in their roles. She believes that errors are part of the growth process and encourages her team to learn from mistakes without fear of repercussions. This approach promotes innovation and psychological safety, essential for a healthy team environment. Bray's focus on collaboration and standardised processes allows team members to support each other, fostering resilience and continuous learning.

Recruitment strategies were a major topic, with Bray advocating for hiring based on personality and potential rather than just technical skills. She looks for individuals who are tenacious, proactive, and willing to take ownership of tasks. Her recruitment process involves getting to know candidates personally, understanding their strengths and weaknesses, and assessing their fit within the team. Bray values individuality and aims to build a team that is diverse in skills and perspectives, promoting from within to encourage growth and development.





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Team dynamics and collaboration are crucial in Bray's approach. She shared how she expanded her team to prevent siloed working and overburdening individuals. Standardising processes like reporting and website building ensures that everyone can contribute and support each other. Bray emphasises the importance of cross-functional support, where team members with different expertise collaborate to achieve common goals. This approach not only builds resilience but also fosters a supportive environment where learning and growth are continuous.

Bray also discussed dealing with mistakes, sharing examples from her experience. She believes that progression and innovation require taking measured risks. When mistakes happen, it's vital to address them openly and learn from them. Bray shared stories of how her team handled errors, turning potentially negative situations into positive outcomes. This openness builds trust and encourages team members to take ownership of their actions, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Finally, Bray highlighted the importance of celebrating successes and personal growth. She believes in acknowledging hard work and achievements to maintain team morale and motivation. She shared resources for personal development, recommending books like 'How Women Rise,' 'What Got You Here Won't Get You There,' and 'Multipliers.' Bray's approach to leadership is centred around trust, transparency, and continuous learning, aiming to build a high-performing team that supports and grows together.

# Takeaways

### Leadership at all levels

Jen Bray emphasised that leadership is not confined to formal positions. She encourages everyone to lead in their roles, citing Simon Sinek's view that leadership is about seeing those around you rise. This approach fosters a culture of collaboration and empowerment, where team members feel valued and motivated to contribute to the team's success.

### Transparency and empowerment

Bray's leadership style focuses on transparent communication and empowering team members to make decisions. She avoids micromanagement, preferring to trust her team and create a safe environment for them to take ownership of their tasks. This approach promotes innovation and psychological safety, essential for a healthy and high-performing team.

### Handling mistakes positively

Bray believes that mistakes are part of the growth process and encourages her team to learn from them without fear of repercussions. She shared anecdotes about turning mistakes into learning opportunities, building trust and resilience within the team. This openness fosters a culture of continuous improvement and encourages team members to take measured risks.



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