Technology companies encourage their employees to work together because studies show the teams tend to innovate faster, achieve higher productivity, see mistakes more quickly and find better solutions to problems. Yet not every team is successful. So, how do you build a highly effective team that is capable of delivering expected results?

A study run by Google will shed some light on this question and help us identify trades that all successful Google teams shared.

Several years ago, Google launch an internal project Aristotle which was a huge data study focused on the teamwork. The tech giant spent millions of dollars tracking 180 separate teams for three years. The goal of the project was simple yet ambitious- to find out what are the traits of the highest performing teams. In other words, the company wanted to know why some teams stumbled while others sort initially the researcher’s. Hypothesis was that maybe best teams had members who liked each other a lot or there was a healthy mix of personality types or the team members were friends outside of work. Yet none of these seemed to matter. The researchers could not find any meaningful patterns in the data. Basically, there was no evidence that a mix of specific personality types or skills or backgrounds made any difference. The whole part of the equation(ɪˈkweɪʒn̩) didn't seem to matter. As the researchers continued to study the group's they noticed two behaviors that all of the best teams shared. First is that the team members spoke in roughly the same proportion. A phenomenon the researchers call **inequality in distribution of conversational turn-taking**. On some teams everyone spoke during each task while on others leadership shifted among teammates from assignment to assignment. But in each case at the end of the day everyone had spoken roughly the same amount. In other words, as long as everyone got a chance to talk the team did well. But if only one person or a small group spoke all the time the collective intelligence declined.

Second.

The good teams all had high average social sensitivity. A fancy way of saying they were skilled at reading how others felt based on their tone of voice, their expressions in other nonverbal cues. One of the easiest way to determine social sensitivity is to show someone photos of a person's eyes and ask to describe what that person is feeling. An exam known as reading the mind in the eyes. People on successful teams scored about average on this test. They seemed to know when someone was feeling upset or left out.

People on less effective teams in contrast scored below average. They seemed to be less sensitive towards their colleagues. By the end of the project researchers came to conclusion that it didn't matter who was on the team. What mattered was how team members treated each other. Teams were everybody talked and everybody showed respect by listening and paying attention created psychologically safe atmosphere inside the team. And psychological safety of each member in the group had a positive effect on the team's ability to succeed.