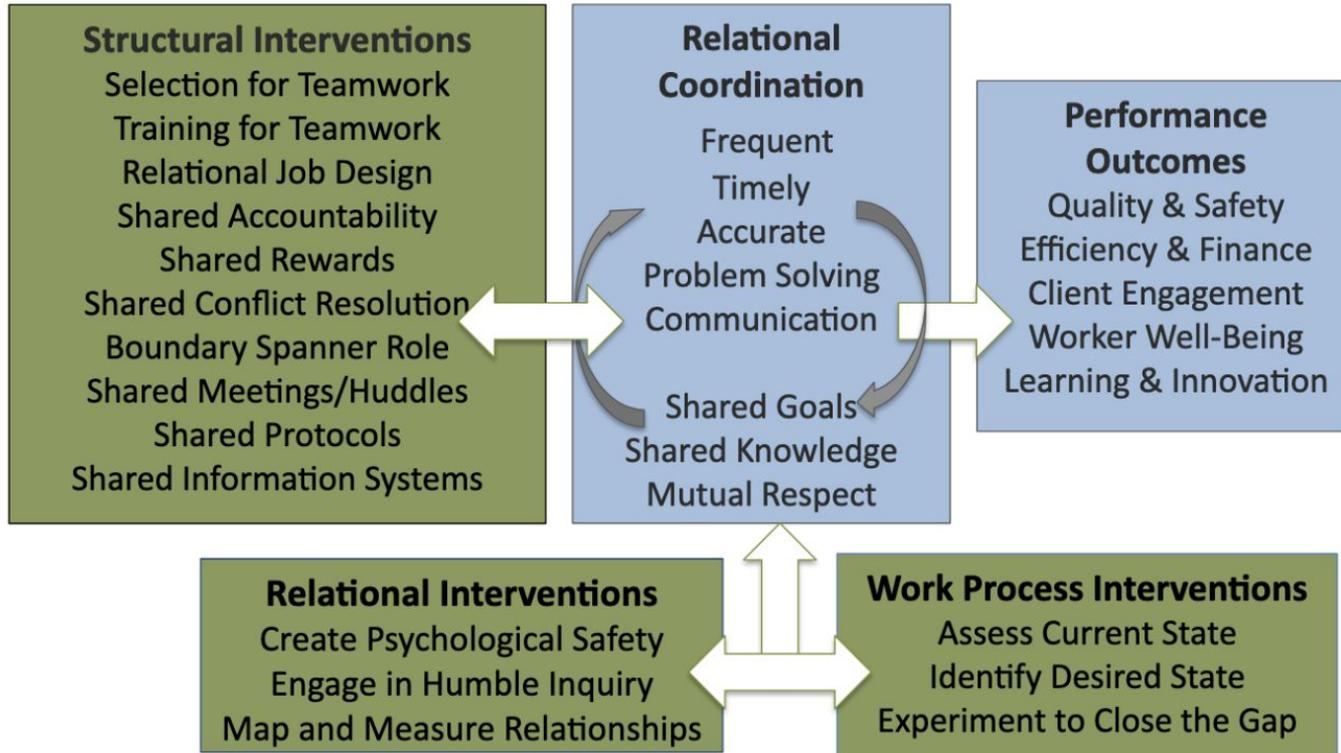


Shared protocols

- **What They Are:** Shared protocols are guidelines and frameworks for carrying out daily work - for example clinical protocols or process maps or care pathways. Shared protocols show where coordination is needed. They provide guidelines for coordinating tasks and for ensuring timely, accurate, and problem-solving communication within and across teams.
- **Why They Matter:** Shared protocols make interdependence visible. They help prevent misunderstandings, reduce delays, and promote accountability, enabling smoother workflows and stronger relationships.
- **How To Do It:** Based on results from the Org Structures Assessment Tool, develop shared protocols that include the roles that need to coordinate. This may require getting different experts to agree on best practices. Then train team members to use these protocols effectively, guided by a boundary spanner whose job is to facilitate coordination (see case study by Judith Merel at the end).

Shared protocols are part of the Relational Model of Change



Other structures in the Relational Model of Change

- Selecting & training for teamwork
- Relational job design
- Shared accountability & rewards
- Shared conflict resolution
- Boundary spanner roles
- Shared meetings & huddles
- Shared protocols
- Shared information systems
- Shared space

A summary of the evidence:
Bolton, R., Logan, C., & Gittell, J. H.
(2021). [Revisiting relational
coordination: A systematic review.](#)
*The Journal of Applied Behavioral
Science*, 57(3), 290-322.

Gittell, J. H. (2016). [Structural interventions](#) in *Transforming relationships for high performance: The power of relational coordination*. Stanford University Press.

Identify needs using the Org Structures Assessment Tool

Structures

	Nurses	Case managers	Physicians	Residents	Physical therapy	Respiratory therapy
Selecting for Teamwork	Strong Support	Strong Support	Weak Support	Weak Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support
Training for Teamwork	Strong Support	Strong Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Strong Support	Strong Support
Relational Job Design	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Weak Support	Weak Support	Strong Support	Strong Support
Shared Accountability	Moderate Support	Weak Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Weak Support
Shared Rewards	Weak Support					
Shared Conflict Resolution	Strong Support	Strong Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Strong Support	Strong Support
Boundary Spanner Role	Strong Support	Weak Support	Weak Support	Weak Support	Moderate Support	Weak Support
Shared Meetings & Huddles	Strong Support	Strong Support	Weak Support	Weak Support	Strong Support	Strong Support
Shared Protocols	Strong Support	Strong Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Strong Support	Strong Support
Shared Info Systems	Strong Support					
Shared Space	Weak Support	Weak Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Moderate Support	Weak Support

 **WEAK SUPPORT**

 **MODERATE SUPPORT**

 **STRONG SUPPORT**

How to use shared protocols facilitated by a boundary spanner role

Merel, J. (2025). [Strengthening relational coordination for better outcomes: Shared huddles, shared protocols and the boundary spanner role](#). *RC Roundtable 2025*, Nov. 8.

Evidence from research

Bolton, R., Logan, C., & Gittell, J. H. (2021). [Revisiting relational coordination: A systematic review](#). *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 57(3), 290-322.