

Teams sprawl AND COLLABORATION RULES

A clearer way to stop Microsoft Teams becoming noisy, duplicated, and harder to trust.

Teams usually becomes messy when growth outpaces structure. New spaces get created quickly, ownership is vague, and people default to whatever feels fastest.

What sprawl looks like

- Duplicate Teams for the same department, client or project
- Channels used inconsistently, or not at all
- Files trapped in chat threads instead of shared workspaces
- No clear Team owner to maintain order or achieve old spaces
- Decisions buried in messages, making handover difficult
- People create new spaces because they don't trust the old ones

Sprawl

When digital spaces grow without enough structure, ownership, or clean-up

The rules

Name an Owner

Every Team should have someone responsible for structure, membership, and clean-up over time

Use a new channel before a new Team

Don't create fresh Teams for every piece of work. New Teams should be the exception, not the default

Channels for shared work; chat for temporary talk

If the work matters to more than one person over time, it should live in a channel, not a private chat.

Store final files in channels

Shared documents should live where the team can find, co-author, and trust them - not in message attachments.

Keep naming simple and consistent

A clean naming approach makes it easier to search, onboard, and decide where something belongs.

Archive what is finished

Old Teams create noise. If a project is complete, archive the space so active work is easier to navigate.

Why this matters

Teams sprawl isn't just untidy. It slows onboarding, weakens search, encourages duplication, and makes shared information harder to trust.

Your takeaway...

Teams work best when the rules are clear enough that people don't need to guess where work belongs.