

# Teamwork Part I: Creating An Effective Team

## Workshop Objectives

By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

- Identify the five group socialization phases
- Identify the outcomes of socialization
- Discuss the importance of group consensus and how groupthink can affect decision-making in groups
- Discuss the importance of cohesion in workgroups
- Explain the importance of effective decision-making in your team
- Explain the problem-solving technique “The Five Whys”
- Identify your personal effectiveness as a team member
- Identify your workgroup’s levels of performance
- Differentiate between formal and informal leadership roles

## Introduction

“People have formed work groups in order to accomplish goals and tasks since the beginning of human history. The group whose members work collaboratively for their mutual benefit or survival, is the oldest form of social organization. Groups have played a major role in both the survival of human beings and the development of human culture. Some would argue that our ability to work together was, and is, the key to human survival and advancement. Work groups have a long and remarkable track record of success. From the beginning of human history, people have used work groups to generate new ideas, get things done, and nurture individuals.”

Susan Wheelan



## ***What Do I Bring To My Group?***

Complete the following statements.

Five positive things (i.e., traits, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors) I bring to the group:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Five negative things (i.e., traits, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors) I bring to the group:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Five things I like or dislike about group work:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Five things I would like our group to accomplish:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

<b>Effective Member Checklist</b>
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**Instructions:** Please read the statements below. Write the number that most accurately describes your response to the statement. Use the key below to respond to each statement.

Disagree Strongly <b>1</b>	Disagree To Some Extent <b>2</b>	Agree To Some Extent <b>3</b>	Agree Strongly <b>4</b>
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*Section I*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I avoid blaming others for group problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I assume that every group member is trying to do a good job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I treat people as individuals and do not make assumptions about them based on my preconceived notions about people like them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I do not get bogged down in interpersonal issues or personality conflicts.

<u>Section I Score:</u>
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*Section II*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I encourage the process of goal, role, and task clarification.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I encourage the use of effective problem-solving and decision-making procedures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I encourage the group to outline, in advance, the strategies that will be used to solve problems and make decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I work to ensure that decisions and solutions are implemented and evaluated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I encourage norms that support productivity, innovation, and freedom of expression.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I encourage the use of effective conflict management strategies.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. I support the division of labor necessary to accomplish goals.

Section II Score:

*Section III*

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. I work to ensure that the input and feedback of every member are heard.

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. I work to ensure that we all have a chance to demonstrate our competence and skills in the group.

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. I discourage any group tendency to adopt excessive or unnecessary norms.

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. I am, and encourage others to be, cooperative.

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. In conflict situations, I communicate my views clearly and explicitly.

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. I respond cooperatively to others who are behaving competitively.

Section III Score:

*Section IV*

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. I act, and encourage others to act, in the best interests of the group.

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. When members contribute good ideas, I express my appreciation.

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. I encourage and work to achieve mutually agreeable solutions to conflict.

\_\_\_\_\_ 21. I support the leader's efforts to coordinate and facilitate group goal achievement.

\_\_\_\_\_ 22. I offer advice to the leader when I think the advice will be helpful.

Section IV Score:

*Section V*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I have negotiated, or would be willing to negotiate, with other groups and individuals to help my group obtain needed resources.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. I share information and impressions I have about other parts of the organization with the group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I encourage the group not to overwhelm itself with too much external information or demands.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I talk positively about my group to outsiders.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. I keep other members of the organization informed about what my group is doing.

Section V Score:

*Section VI*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. When members stray off the task, I diplomatically try to bring the discussion back to the task.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I go along with the norms that promote group effectiveness and productivity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I encourage high performance standards.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. I expect the group to be successful and productive.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. I encourage innovative ideas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I use what I have learned about group development and productivity to help my group become effective.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I encourage the group to frequently assess and alter its functioning, if necessary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. I volunteer to perform tasks that need to be done.

Section VI Score:

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Add all of the scores for each section together and write the total in the shaded box.

<u>Section I Score:</u> <input type="text"/>	+	<u>Section II Score:</u> <input type="text"/>	+	<u>Section III Score:</u> <input type="text"/>	+	<u>Section IV Score:</u> <input type="text"/>	+
<u>Section V Score:</u> <input type="text"/>	+	<u>Section V Score:</u> <input type="text"/>	=	<u>TOTAL Score:</u> <input type="text"/>			

## ***A Mental Questionnaire***

Let's turn those traits of a good follower into a questionnaire of your characteristics as a follower. Remember, all of us are followers at times. Be honest to yourself.

Do you cooperate with others to achieve the desired goal?

Are you willing to accept others' ideas?

Are you a team player? Or do you prefer to work by yourself?

Are you willing to give the leader and others credit and public recognition?

Are you loyal to the group?

Are you flexible? Or does it have to be done YOUR way? My way or the highway?

Are you rational or dogmatic?

Are you dedicated to the group's goals?

Are you dependable? Can others count on you to do your part?

Can you provide constructive feedback without being negative?

There is no passing, perfect or final score for these questions. Our answers will change for different groups, different situations and different times. All of us can improve on all of these attributes, all of the time. Keep these questions in your mind, both when you are a leader and when you are a follower. They will help you succeed at both.

## ***LET'S GET SOCIAL***

There are several definitions for group socialization:

- “when newcomers feel they have become part of the group’s pattern of activities;”
- “when group members create shared meaning about who will do what and how the group will operate;”
- “when individuals learn enough to be skillful and competent contributing members of the group.”

From a communication perspective, socialization is viewed as a two-way process of influence and change whereby group members use verbal and nonverbal messages to create a new and unique group culture.

Five phases were identified as part of this communication process:

- Antecedent phase
- Anticipatory phase
- Encounter phase
- Assimilation phase
- Exit phase

## ***SOCIALIZATION OUTCOMES***

- Consensus
- Cohesion
- Communication satisfaction
- Loneliness





# Either Or

List of Questions:

1. Only child or Siblings?
2. Were you born In-state or Out-of-state?
3. Facebook or Twitter?
4. Chicken or Beef?
5. Summer or Winter?
6. Democrat, Republican, or Independent?
7. Fast food or home cooking?
8. Football or Basketball?
9. Spiderman or Batman?
10. Movies or Television?

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## Groupthink Checkup

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### Directions:

For each question answer yes or no.

### Questions:

- Yes    No   My group examines only a few alternatives rather than thinking broadly.
- Yes    No   My group seems reluctant to seek expert opinion from the instructor or other knowledgeable persons.
- Yes    No   My group seems highly selective and biased in gathering information.
- Yes    No   My group exhibits extreme optimism and willingness to take excessive risks.
- Yes    No   My group feels that it is always right and others are always wrong.
- Yes    No   My group rationalizes poor decisions rather than accepting when decisions are made.
- Yes    No   My group places pressure on members to conform and not “make waves.”
- Yes    No   My group avoids conflict, even when differences of opinion exist.
- Yes    No   My group has self-appointed members who protect the group from information that might shatter its illusion that everything is “okay.”
- Yes    No   My group has members who are reluctant to express their opinion for fear of being embarrassed, ridiculed, or ignored.

### Scoring:

- If you have 0-2 yes answers, groupthink is not operating in your group.
- If you have 3-5 yes answers, groupthink is beginning to emerge in your group.
- If you have 6-10 yes answers, groupthink is operating in your group.

### References:

DuFrene, D.D., & Lehman, C.M. (2005). Building high-performance teams (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), Mason, OH: Thompson

## Team Performance Checklist

Please read the statement below. Write the number that most accurately describes your response to the statement.

Disagree Strongly <b>1</b>	Disagree To Some Extent <b>2</b>	Agree To Some Extent <b>3</b>	Agree Strongly <b>4</b>
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- \_\_\_ 1. Members are clear about group goals.
- \_\_\_ 2. Members agree with group goals.
- \_\_\_ 3. Group tasks require us to work together.
- \_\_\_ 4. Members are clear about their roles.
- \_\_\_ 5. Members accept their roles.
- \_\_\_ 6. Members' assignments match their abilities.
- \_\_\_ 7. The group leader's style changes when necessary to meet emerging group needs.
- \_\_\_ 8. The group has an open communication structure that allows all members to participate.
- \_\_\_ 9. The group gets regular feedback about its productivity.
- \_\_\_ 10. Members give each other constructive feedback.
- \_\_\_ 11. The group uses feedback about its effectiveness to make improvements in how it is functioning.
- \_\_\_ 12. The group spends time defining and discussing problems it must solve.
- \_\_\_ 13. Members spend time planning how they will solve problems and make decisions.
- \_\_\_ 14. The group uses effective decision-making strategies.
- \_\_\_ 15. The group implements its solutions and decisions.
- \_\_\_ 16. The group develops methods to evaluate its solutions and decisions.
- \_\_\_ 17. The group accepts members who behave differently as long as their behavior is perceived as helpful to task accomplishments.
- \_\_\_ 18. Group norms encourage high performance, quality, and success.
- \_\_\_ 19. Group norms encourage innovative solutions.
- \_\_\_ 20. Subgroups are accepted and integrated into the group as a whole.

- \_\_\_\_21. The group contains the smallest numbers of members necessary to accomplish its goals.
- \_\_\_\_22. I have little respect for the values and customs of other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_23. The group is highly cohesive and cooperative.
- \_\_\_\_24. Periods of conflict are frequent but brief.
- \_\_\_\_25. The group uses effective conflict management strategies.

Add each number that you wrote for statements 1 through 25 below.

<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
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### Team Performance Checklist – Interpretation Guide

Minimum Score: 25

Maximum Score: 100

Your group's average score: \_\_\_\_\_

What Is Your Group's Stage of Development?

Total Score	Group's State
85+	4
70-84	3
<70	1* or 2**

\* The group is in Stage 1 if members are tentative, polite, and somewhat passive.

\*\* The group is in Stage 2 if members are disagreeing with each other or the leader.

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## ***CHARACTERISTICS OF A HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAM***

- Members are clear about and agree on the team's goals.
- Tasks are appropriate to team rather than individual solutions.
- Members are clear about and accept their roles.
- Role assignments match members' abilities.
- The leadership style matches the team's development level.
- An open communication structure allows all members to participate.
- The team gets, gives, and uses feedback about its effectiveness and productivity.
- The team spends time defining and discussing problems it must solve or decision it must make.
- Members also spend time planning how they will solve problems and make decisions.
- The team uses effective decision-making strategies.
- The team implements and evaluates its solutions and decisions.
- Task-related deviance is tolerated.
- Team norms encourage high performance, quality, success, and innovation.
- Subgroups are integrated into the team as a whole.
- The team contains the smallest number of members necessary to accomplish its goals.
- Team members have sufficient time together to develop a mature working unit and to accomplish the team's goals.
- The team is highly cohesive and cooperative.
- Periods of conflict are frequent but brief, and the group has effective conflict management techniques.

## ***STAGES OF A TEAM'S GROWTH***

Stage 1: Dependency and Inclusion

Stage 2: Counter-dependency and Fighting

Stage 3: Trust and Structure

Stage 4: Work

### **Some tips on surviving team growth:**

- Be patient
- Expect things to be murky at the beginning of a group
- Expect conflict and treat it as a positive sign of progress
- Help your group limit conflict to those about tasks, roles, structures. Don't get involved in personal feuds or personality conflicts.
- Compromise on issues when possible and help others resolve differences.
- Don't sit on the sidelines; take responsibility for what is going on, even if it doesn't involve you directly.
- Be supportive of other members and your leader.
- \complete your tasks in a timely fashion.
- Don't be upset when subgroups emerge or coalitions emerge. Encourage your group to regularly asses how it is functioning.
- Show up.

## ***EVERYONE CAN BE A LEADER***

### **FORMAL ROLES**

- Leader
- Recorder
- Critical Advisor

### **INFORMAL ROLES**

- Task leader
- Socio-emotional leader
- Information provider
- Central negative
- Tension releaser

### **DEVIANT ROLES**

- Airhead
- Aggressor
- Blocker
- Clown
- Dominator
- Egghead
- Recognition seeker
- Self-confessor
- Special pleader
- Whiner

Any of these look familiar? What effect do these group members' behaviors have on the group?

### **Some other leadership roles are:**

- Compromiser
- Elaborator
- Encourager
- Energizer
- Follower
- Harmonizer
- Information seeker
- Initiator
- Interpreter
- Opinion giver
- Opinion seeker
- Orientor

## ***Preliminary Principles of Peons***

The Principle of Survival: CYA

The Principle of Power: To become a supervisor, you must prove to be a good subordinate.

The Principle of Tenure: Old boys (girls) are bigger than big boys (girls).

The Principle of Decision-Making: Never make a decision today that can be postponed until tomorrow.

The Principle of Modesty: Never appear better than your boss.

The Principle of Self-Importance: The organization got along quite well before you were hired; it can get along quite well if you are fired.

The Principle of Acceptance: If you want to be accepted, you must be acceptable.



## REFERENCES

Wheelan, Susan (2010). *Creating Effective Teams*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications, Inc.

McCroskey, J.C., McCroskey, L.L. and Richmond V.P. (2005). *Organizational Communication for Survival: Making Work, Work*. Boston, MA. Pearson Education, Inc.

Anderson, C.M. and Myers, S.A. (2006). *The Basics of Small Group Communication*. Mason, OH. Thomson Custom Solutions.

University of Missouri <http://web.missouri.edu/~campbellr/Leadership/chapter5.htm>