Creating a Culture for Effective Groups

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TEACHING TOOLKIT

Session Goals

1. Review the principles of effective group work
2. Experiment with activities designed to develop an effective group culture
3. Discuss potential options for establishing effective groups in your teaching context

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Criteria for team effectiveness

1. Accomplish tasks
2. Enhance team performance
3. Satisfy member needs

Individuals → Clients → Team → (cycle)

(Hackman 2002)

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Getting started

Purpose:

1. To start getting to know the other members in your team better
2. To bring to mind some of your experiences working in teams as a basis for establishing an effective team presentation group

Activity:

1. Complete one of the Team Members forms with your preferred name and a little known fact about yourself
2. Write down your thoughts in response to the following question:

   What do you believe has helped and hindered the effectiveness of teams in which you have worked?

Helped	Hindered

Factors required for effective team performance

Supportive organisational context

Individual members → Cohesive team / Compelling direction / Enabling structure → Effective team

Expert coaching

(Institute for Healthcare Communication 2007)

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Team presentation task

› 20% of final mark for course
› Requirements detailed on pp. 7-8 of Handout
› Final mark based on average of staff and other teams in audience (plus internal evaluation of your own team if using Option 2)
› Each team will provide detailed qualitative feedback on the performance of one other team

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Skills inventory

1. **Purpose:** To identify the diverse abilities and knowledge that team members have to offer the group
2. **Activity:** Complete one of the Skills Inventory forms with the skills, perspectives and talents you have to offer the team
3. Start thinking about how you might harness these for the success of your group

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Stages of group development

Performing

Adjourning

Forming

Norming

Storming

(adapted from Tuckman 1965)

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Team norms

› Attendance
› Productive discussion
› Confidentiality
› Analytic approach
› Constructive confrontation
› Effective contributions
› Respect for values and personality differences

(Katzenbach & Smith 2005)

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Team norms

1. **Purpose:** To agree on performance expectations for your team
2. **Activity:** Complete one of the Team Norms forms with at least four agreed performance expectations for your team
3. Ask all team members to write their name on the form to signify their agreement to upholding the team norms, and provide their email address so that the documents from today can be emailed around to the group. Choose a group member to do this.

SMART goals

› SMART goals are performance objectives that are:
- Specific
- Measurable
- Action oriented
- Realistic
- Time limited

(Jevring-Bäck & Bäck 2007)

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SMART goals

1. **Purpose:** To agree on SMART goals for completion of the team presentation assessment task and receive feedback on their effectiveness
2. **Activity:**
   1. Complete one of the SMART Goals forms with 3-4 SMART goals that will help your team prepare effectively for the team presentation assessment task
   2. Swap your team's SMART Goals form with a nearby team
   3. Evaluate the goals listed on the sheet you're holding against the criteria for effective SMART goals and write constructive feedback about this
   4. Swap your forms back, review the feedback you have received and adjust your team's SMART goals accordingly
   5. Ask all team members to write their names on the SMART goals form to signify their agreement with achieving these goals

References

Hackman JR 2002, *Leading teams: Setting the stage for great performances*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

Institute for Healthcare Communication 2007, 'Creating teams that work: Making magic in small groups', *Bayer Animal Health Communication Project*, Institute for Healthcare Communication, New Haven, CT.

Jevring-Bäck, C & Bäck, E 2007, *Managing a veterinary practice*, 2nd edn, Elsevier Saunders, Edinburgh.

Katzenbach JR & Smith DK 2005, 'The discipline of teams', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 83, no. 7/8, ppl. 162-171.

Tuckman BW 1965, 'Developmental sequence in small groups', *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 63, no. 6, pp. 384-399.