



6. Teamwork

6.1 What is Teamwork?

According to BusinessDictionary.com, teamwork is “The process of working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve a goal. Teamwork is often an important part of a business, as it is often necessary for colleagues to work well together, trying their best in any circumstance. Teamwork means that people will try to cooperate, using their individual skills and providing constructive feedback, despite any personal conflict between individuals.”

Teamwork is selfless. It concentrates on the end goal. Teamwork runs on the concept that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It’s the classic “one plus one equals three” idea. Personalities and skillsets differ which can create personal conflict. When the entire team focuses on doing great work, however, the team members’ differences turn into strengths and goals are met and even exceeded.

6.1.1 What is teamwork built on?

When people collaborate, they work together to achieve a common goal. Thus, the foundation for teamwork is a common goal. If each team member has a different agenda, collaboration will be difficult, and it will become much harder to produce exceptional work and achieve goals. Ensure your team is set up to work together and collaborate effectively by clearly defining goals on a regular basis. Have frequent meetings with each individual team member to ensure that they understand and are in line with the goals of your team. If any member of the team struggles to align themselves with your team’s goals, figure out why. Do your best to resolve conflicts of interest and determine differing goals. If a particular employee continually struggles to work toward the common goal of the team, it may be time to part ways.

6.1.2 Individual and task factors

Teams are more likely to be effective if their members show commitment toward both the team and the task (Hirowaka et al. 2003). Academics have used different variables to refer to the commitment of individuals to their teams, including teamwork orientation (Williams et al. 2003), propensity to trust (Chen et al. 2008) and cooperativeness (Pfaff and Huddleston 2003). In this study, we use cooperativeness and collaborative behaviour because they are the basis of the cooperative and collaborative learning styles (e.g. Pfaff and Huddleston 2003; Williams et al. 2006; Fransen et al. 2011). The tendency of individuals to cooperate is one of the main determinants of team cohesiveness. In a professional setting, Al-Rawi (2008) found that teamwork cohesiveness is more related to participation propensity and cooperative behaviours than other personality traits such as intelligence or leadership skills. Team members should cooperate rather than compete among themselves in order to develop synergies (Sweeney and Lee 1999). The predisposition to work in teams has been directly related to the attitude toward teamwork (Pfaff and Huddleston 2003), team trust (Chen et al. 2008), and group cohesiveness (Williams et al. 2006).



6.1.3 Team cohesiveness and team effectiveness

The last stage in the proposed model deals with the relationship between team cohesiveness and team effectiveness. Team effectiveness can be analysed in many different ways. It is difficult to develop a common specification of team effectiveness across different studies as it varies depending on the type of team

Teamwork effectiveness is measured in terms of perceived learning, satisfaction with teamwork, and expected quality.

Perceived learning is a retrospective evaluation of the learning experience and can be defined in terms of the feelings one has about the learning that has occurred (Caspi and Blau 2008)

Team cohesiveness is important for understanding the performance of groups (Huang 2009). Most empirical research has found a positive relationship between team cohesiveness and performance (Dailey 1978; Evans and Dion 1991; Mullen and Cooper 1994). Teams can achieve better performance by strengthening their cohesion (Levin and Moreland 1990). In academic settings, group cohesiveness is positively associated with students' learning (Williams et al. 2006). Previous studies have also empirically explored the relationship between perceived learning and satisfaction, demonstrating that students who perceive higher levels of learning tend to be more satisfied with their courses (So and Brush 2008).