

TEAM LEADERSHIP: CRITICAL STEPS TO GREAT PROJECTS

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In response to the challenge of assigning and conducting group projects, this article lays out a brief context for team projects and puts forth a positive vision of teams and leadership. The authors provide some guiding values, tools, and goals and propose a model that expands the usual conceptualization of the student-team leadership challenge. The authors also share a number of project worksheets that they have developed over the years that have helped increase the learning that occurs through group projects.

Keywords: *team; leadership; group project; experiential learning; appreciative inquiry; management*

For the business school graduate, there is no escaping the reality of teams. Teams have become an essential feature of the successful organizational landscape. The faster that technology changes the speed and efficiency of business, the more organizations need teams to pull together wide-ranging experiences and knowledge to fashion creative responses. Although there are many stunning examples of team success (e.g., Bennis & Biederman, 1997; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993), knowing how to get there has proven problematic for many, if not most, organizations. Implementing the latest technological advances and cost-cutting tactics will always fall short when the team capacity in an organization is lacking.

Knowing how to get there has proven problematic in the educational context as well. When we place students in teams, we are asking far more than we realize. Teams are dynamic, complex realities, and young students have a limited capacity to manage their feelings with others. We expect students to smoothly move from a subordinate role in the hierarchies of home, church, sports teams, and school to an active participant role in a well-functioning, self-managed team. When we listen closely, we find that the results of assigned projects are typically uneven or even negative (e.g., "I had to do all the work," "We couldn't find a time to meet," "I don't remember his name," "We didn't have a leader," "I didn't want to fight," "Others were in a hurry to finish," "Nobody listened to me.").

To the professor, the project seems like a small pond; to the student, it looks like dangerous white water. The natural response to white water is to protect oneself. The student culture responds with efforts to stay afloat. For those not too traumatized, many will develop some rough form of swimming, but without instructions and images or examples of excellence, the individual student is in the position of reinventing the wheel. Like sex education on a playground, new students learn the ropes from others and pick up a variety of questionable behaviors and attitudes on how to run meetings, on the timing of work, on the nature of leadership, and so on. Too often, teams are reduced to one more rational task to be efficiently dispatched versus a place to seriously learn and build leadership skills. In short, the implicit objectives of team projects are undercut by the student culture (Bolton, 1999; Bowen, 1998; Feichtner & Davis, 1985; Fisher, Shaw, & Ryder, 1994; Holmer, 2001; Jalajas & Sutton, 1984; Richardson & Harper, 1985; Verdeber & Serey, 1996). Students become unconsciously skilled in employing defensive routines antithetical to skilled team leadership (Holmer, 2001).

Much remains to be done in bolstering students' competencies and attitudes toward collaborative team arrangements. The intricate challenge in helping teams respond to this complexity is illustrated by the wide range of reported efforts to improve the effectiveness of student teams: attention to composition, size, and grading (Bacon, Stewart, & Silver, 1999; Ettington & Camp, 2002), establishing a positive vision (Holmer, 2001), the cooperative learning focuses of creating positive interdependence and boosting accountability (Johnson & Johnson, 1985; Mello, 1993; Mesch, 1991; Siciliano, 2001), team building (Bowen & Jackson, 1985; Clinebell & Stecher, 2003; Lundberg & Lundberg, 1992; Manning & Schmidt, 1995; Sommers, 1993; Tonn & Milledge, 2002), building skills, particularly in dealing with trouble (De Janasz, 2001; Jalajas & Sutton, 1984; Lerner, 1995), structuring project tasks, norms, and roles (Alie, Beam, & Carey, 1998; Daly & Worrell, 1993; Keleman & Spich, 1985; Lyons, 1991; Verdeber & Serey, 1996), mentoring

and advising (Bolton, 1999; Congram & LaFrangé, 1995), progress reports, reflection, and analysis (Bolton, 1999; Holmer, 2001; Lundberg & Lundberg, 1992; St. Clair & Tschirhart, 2002; Verdeber & Serey, 1996), and designing teamwork to be a constant and integral component of the course structure itself (Michaelsen, Knight, & Fink, 2004).

Over the years, we have tried implementing many of these ideas with only partial success. We have probably made every mistake possible! With reflection, we found that for each fix that worked, other leaks became more apparent. We slowly realized that we had unwittingly underestimated the challenge: A great group is a marvelous human achievement and not the result of a quick fix or two. We needed a deeper, more integrated response. We began to envision a longer path of mastery requiring a continuous learning discipline with multiple focuses.

From Purpose to Vision and Goals

Our conception of a task or topic necessarily informs our pedagogical choices. To deepen our sense of the challenge that students face, we need to go beyond the question of why groups are important to a vision of what a great group would look like. A clear vision serves a base for establishing a set of goals to help move students to the requisite skills of high performance. The following is a positive image of group membership that was developed in class as a result of a future search process (O'Connor, 2001).

You are a member of a very critical, joint venture task force. This group includes people from 2 separate organizations, 4 different regions of the globe, and 8 different functional specialties. You first meet with other task force members the evening of arrival, and easily engage in a variety of conversations. Next morning, as you enter the meeting room, you are aware that you have a variety of concerns and issues to deal with, as do the others. You also experience a sense of tremendous opportunity, and you feel confident that your sheer presence will make a difference. Through the morning, you help move the task along, you care for other people, you uncover stumbling blocks, you bump heads with others, you feel frustrated, you laugh, you follow your curiosity, your creativity is aroused, and you find yourself in the "flow." The group makes progress, but there is much to do. You don't quite understand all that is going on. This is intriguing, an opportunity for learning new things about this group and yourself. You look forward to the next session. You have handled yourself well, and there is much to learn. The group has appreciated your many small acts of leadership.

This is not an image of a graduate from the sink or swim school of group training! This is an image of a strong competent swimmer, a dolphin who is

comfortable and confident in the currents of the vast ocean and in the occasional white water of group life. An image of competent performance can stimulate a deeper curiosity of the goals and values that need to underlie group projects. A coherent set of goals and values can guide us in crafting assignments with multiple layers and outcomes.

We would like to suggest the following goals for group project work.

1. Students have an overall positive experience. We are not suggesting that every moment must be joy and success. We want students to learn that there is hope and opportunity in the group endeavor. The chances for a positive experience are enhanced when the remaining goals are met.
2. Students learn about groups and group dynamics. They begin to build an experiential and conceptual chart to help navigate group waters. The group is a topic for ongoing inquiry (throughout life) and not just a context to do work or meet an assignment.
3. Students learn about themselves and leadership. With feedback and reflection, they can have occasional "aha" experiences. They begin to learn how their habitual behaviors and attitudes affect both others and the overall quality of group performance. They can also learn to identify and analyze their successes as a basis for future action.
4. Students develop interpersonal and group competencies as a foundation for a confident and positive anticipation of future groups and personal leadership.
5. Students learn about the project content. We put this goal last to reverse the usual state of affairs. Projects need serious content, but students (and professors) have a metatask: to reflect while in it and devise actions to move the group forward. From the student culture perspective, the group's output is the only goal, or it greatly overshadows the other more intangible goals. Students seek to finish and get the grade. How the project is accomplished is less tangible and so less important. This is a dangerous communication. What good is an A paper if 5 of 6 students did not learn the content? What benefit is there in learning the content if students develop bad group habits and learn to feel incompetent in working well with others?

Students need to learn about themselves, leadership, and groups in the context of doing serious, quality work. A good assignment will increase the chances of accomplishing all of the above goals together. We ask students to investigate some important course-related content of their choice, provide a report useful to their peers, and finally educate the class about the topic. Such a project requires a variety of skills and coordination and will offer many opportunities for learning about group process and leadership.

Guiding Mind-Sets and Methods

A fundamental assumption underlying our work is that people have the potential and desire to grow, learn, and mature. Most students prefer to be contributing members on a productive, winning team; however, becoming competent in groups is a long journey that never ends. Mastery involves repetition and reflection and runs counter to the quick fix of American pop culture (Leonard, 1992).

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle is a discipline for building mastery and can help us move to the goals stated above. Recently, Zull (2002) notes that Kolb's learning style corresponds to a set of related brain structures involved in learning. Coactivation of these structures deepens and integrates learning. We learn more from experience by reflecting on it, using ideas to grasp its essence, and then experimenting with our tentative conclusions.

Unfortunately, action inevitably falls short of what we hope and intend (unless we have lowered the bar to the ground!). Experiential learning inevitably results in mistakes. Groups go wrong! This gap between vision and reality is painful to experience but provides data from which to learn. It can provide creative tension (Senge, 1990).

A commitment to personal growth is therefore essential for young students to learn from group experience. It helps them to face the temporary pain of failure and fear of rejection. They learn that they can handle some level of discomfort. They learn what does not work and seek to find something that will. They also succeed at times, and this opens a second door: The joy of success will reinforce the path of mastery, and positive results will provide distinct clues as to what works for them.

An appreciative inquiry focus (Yballe & O'Connor, 2000) is another valuable resource for both faculty and students. Students have been part of successful teams (family, church, sports, etc.) and can draw on memories of peak group performance to build positive images for their team and to inform action. Students can also be directed to pay attention to what is actually working in the group as they reflect and analyze. The desire to improve and move toward a positive vision can help make class teams a superb opportunity to test, sharpen, acquire, and align competencies safely and under the guidance of the teacher as expert.

Two additional caveats are important in implementing experiential learning in teams. First, a number of learning cycles is more helpful than one global attempt. Dense uncertainty is better reduced with a larger number of smaller cycles (Weick, 1979). Many undergraduates have little if any outside experience with group projects. Second, we also need to provide some ideas for students to get a handle on their experience. Students have many ques-

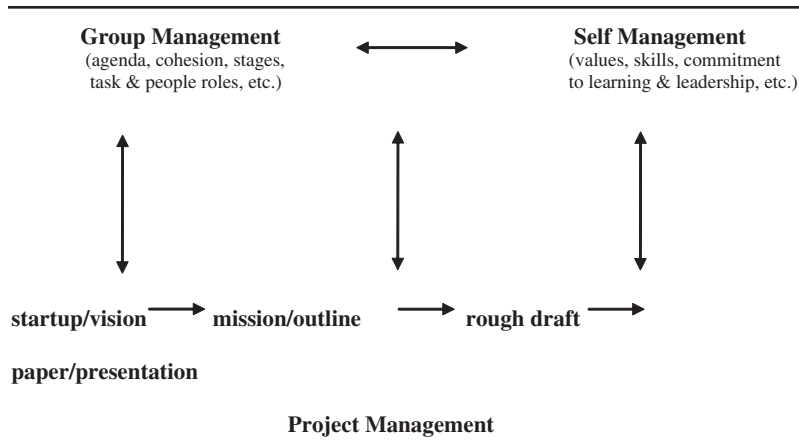


Figure 1: A Model for Building Team Leadership

tions and are open to ideas that bring understanding (e.g., “What is OK to feel and do at the start?” “What are the usual steps in a project?” “Should I take charge?” “How can I help?”). Short readings and just-in-time lectures support the conceptual step in experiential learning, as does being available when such questions arise.

A Model for Building Team Leadership and Group Assignments

We found it useful to organize our thinking about the goals and tasks of a group project by reversing the usual image of the more obvious project steps along the surface (start-up or vision, outline or mission, rough draft, and paper or presentation) and the unseen, intangible group forces and leadership concerns below ground or underwater. We are visualizing the more intangible group and self-management as always intricately interconnected with each other and the project activity but hovering above the surface to compensate for the greater attention getting power of tangible tasks and structure of project management (see Figure 1). Leadership is moored in all the constant interactions and interdependence between the surface project structure and tasks and the less tangible, but equally critical, team and personal elements.

Guided by the methods and goals we have stated, we believe that it is possible to create assignments that (a) engage serious content and (b) move students through a project in a way that builds capacity for future group work

and leadership. We must work particularly hard to bring the intangible elements to conscious attention to manage them well. We will suggest activities for the beginning, middle, and end stages of a project. Each activity requires the group and its members to diverge and generate information and to converge by making choices.

Project Overview and Team Building Start-up

We begin with an overview of the project, the time frame, and the logical steps of project management. We then emphasize our additional focus of leadership through self- and group management. We strongly suggest that both streams in the model require sustained attention, and both will have deliverables to be graded. Our goal is to provide enough structure to reduce both the task and process uncertainties to manageable chunks. We want students to slow down and deal with each step to improve the short-term results and to build sustainable leadership disciplines of visioning, reflection, and action to improve long-term results.

The start-up phase of a project is often misunderstood and rushed. Teams can be formed and tasks assigned in as little as 10 minutes. This seems efficient, but both the selection decisions and the degree of team building make a difference for later project activity and success. The challenge of inclusion is present in every new group or relationship. This is a gripping emotional issue. All groups require individuals to make adjustments to their behavior; we cannot comfortably behave and be ourselves in whatever ways we are used to without some consequences. There is a price of membership and an experience of uncertainty.

To facilitate the group's movement through this first stage, we ask students to share some information about themselves (see Appendices A and B). We use these worksheets to direct students to search for experiences of success and peak performance. The first round of discussion is focused on personal preferences and work styles associated with successful performance. As students begin to share information, they each begin to see that not everyone is exactly alike, and there are different pathways to good performance. They also see that no one is alone either because there is always a shifting set of those who are alike depending on the focus of discussion. Students become very engaged in this activity.

The second set of data is an appreciative inquiry into best teams. Each person is asked to share a story about his or her best group experience, while the others are encouraged to actively listen for the key elements that were critical to success. As group members listen to the various stories, they build a com-

posite list that is later shared with the class at large. In a relatively short time, they collectively piece together a thorough picture of highly effective groups. They feel confident in this picture because it is based in the experiences of those present. Their lists always include some mix of task elements (timeliness, quality, etc.) and people elements (listening, fun, respect, etc.). Groups revisit their lists and add or subtract with an eye toward forming a psychological contract with each other. To help clarify the thinking further, we ask each group to generate a short set of provocative propositions about group functioning and to create a motto that will guide them through the project.

They are not done yet! Each group is about to have its first performance. Each team is asked in turn to take center stage, look over the class, notice how they feel as they stand before their peers, introduce themselves, and share three of their provocative propositions (about teams) and their motto. They are reminded that they will be back on stage for a presentation and that the experience will be far more comfortable and rewarding for a group that achieves its vision, does good work, and can educate the rest of us about their topic. Their notes are compiled on a team data sheet (see Appendix C) which all sign as a contract.

In this first phase of group development, we want to immediately establish norms of sharing ideas, doing something useful, standing together as a team, and thoughtfully reflecting on important experiences. Their reflection papers confirm that this stage generally goes extremely well. The structure helps all to participate and listen. Students feel smart and find that discovering new ideas is fun. They feel good about successfully getting on and off stage.

This experience is followed up with two reflection pages that are due for the next class. It is not enough to tell students to pay attention to the dynamics because the momentum of past experience propels them to deal only with the tangible project tasks. The first reflection page focuses on the team (see Appendix D), and the group is asked to review these reflections together. The second page (see Appendix E) directs the student's attention to his or her feelings, the sense of inclusion, personal behaviors, and leadership. We want students to slow down and tackle these reflection pages with a spirit of inquiry and personal benefit rather than just producing one more report that pushes accountability. The reflection pages at this stage indicate that there is a widespread feeling of inclusion and hope for the group. Both pages conclude with a focus on future actions for leadership and skill building. The learning cycle heightens learning by activating the brain in complex ways. We believe it is necessary to apply the learning cycle to multiple focuses to heighten learning in the complex social reality of teams.

Team members feel good after the first phase, but the initial burst of energy and enthusiasm will quickly dissipate if there are not follow-up activi-

ties. We have laid out a number of steps for the next phase of the project: choosing a topic, declaring a mission, assigning chair people for the key tasks, doing annotated bibliographies, outlining the paper, and setting target dates.

If a project topic is not preassigned, groups need to find and agree on a topic that sufficiently taps their curiosity and personal learning goals. Every important decision must be handled with some care and attention to the input and commitment of all. If the group can slow down and spend a little time exploring and diverging into this uncertain task or opportunity, they may find the spark necessary for creativity and follow through. We ask each individual to brainstorm a list of his or her curiosities, including those related to business and management. The team is asked to compile an inclusive list and notice commonalities and differences. We find that we have to help younger, inexperienced groups. Our role vis-à-vis the team is not only to assign and judge but also to collaborate with them in finding worthwhile topics. We try to influence in an appreciative way; for example, "Why does my supervisor assign boring work" can become an inquiry into what makes a task challenging and exciting. "We want to know about motivation" can become an inquiry into world-class performance. We encourage creative combinations of interests. For example, a recent group found a common interest in cooking and built a project centered on cooking as a metaphor for management.

The handling of each key step affects later work. If one or two students pick a topic because they are extroverted or they know each other or it is deemed easy, while others hesitate, then the possibility for those others to slowly withdraw their efforts and commitments is greatly increased during the life of the project. It becomes easy to step back and let the leaders do the work. "It's their project after all." Students need to discover that this first decision (and most remaining decisions and tasks) is not a race where finishing fast is good! Human interaction is often like fine craft work: We go faster by slowing down, focusing on quality, and attending carefully to each other and to what is important. The best groups find excitement in what they are doing and forget that they are doing a task.

Whether a topic is chosen or assigned, the next task, writing a mission statement, extends the initial vision with concrete particulars. This statement and the team's data sheet are photocopied so that all have the exact same information. This information is particularly important for reflections pages throughout the project and for the final analysis paper.

We follow the completion of a mission statement with an overview of the remaining major tasks: outlining or writing, rough draft, final paper, and presentation. Each group is then asked to find a coordinator for each task. We strongly emphasize that the role of the coordinator is not to do all the work but

to make sure that the group completes that step according to its vision. A number of students now have a leadership opportunity to look forward to, and we give groups some time to discuss both the type and timing of leadership that will be needed. We encourage them to specifically describe what coordinators will need to do for the tasks to go well. Supplemental readings can also help here. We assign "How to Run a Meeting" (Jay, 1976).

The mission statement and plan for shared leadership help to launch the group into its first research task. In our case, this is an annotated bibliography. Each student is asked to find two sources of information from a list of specified journals and to provide written summaries of key points. This is where we inevitably see some initial floundering. The obvious, surface challenge is to gather the necessary research information, but how the group handles the inevitable quality and due date problems of group life is just as critical. Missing or poorly done work is surprising and annoying to the group, but it is also an unprecedented opportunity for the team to progress.

For the team, it is important to face up to the shortcomings in its work when the infractions are small and positive momentum can be regained. We let the teams know that this is not the first or last time in history that someone has fallen short on agreed-on assignments. Too often the initial response is to avoid the confrontation, offer the usual excuses, and pretend that everything is within normal limits and that it will all work out. From the group management point of view, a precedent of avoiding conflict would be set and further reinforced by the student culture. This negative work norm increases the chances that a free rider or slacker mind-set will take root and grow in the group culture. We ask the coordinator of the outline step to help the group openly deal with the uneven results. The group must remind itself of its vision and openly discuss whose work is missing, too brief, or off the mark and what needs to be done and when.

If the group fails to obtain basic information on its topic, it is tough to create a good outline to guide its work. A good outline sharpens everyone's effort and greatly reduces the emotion and work at the rough draft step. Yet, solid topic information creates a new challenge for the group. Sorting through a set of writings to build an outline is tough mental work for a group in an early stage of development. We have often used class time to help groups stay with the task longer than they might if on their own. When they finish, we also complement them for sticking with such a difficult task. After creating an outline, the group is asked to discuss and agree on target dates and logistical details such as paper format (see Appendix F). This second phase (mission or outline) has generally been more sobering than the first, and we follow it with another set of reflection pages.

The third phase requires individuals and pairs to further research the topic and compose a rough draft. The group needs some time for this work, but too much time between tasks will cause less experienced teams to lose focus and energy. We encourage students to check in on each other's progress to minimize the "last minute syndrome." At some point, the toughest task must take place: putting together and evaluating the rough draft. Even if the group navigates the first two phases well, quality and relevance issues inevitably crop up at this juncture. Outlines did not provide full guidance, honest misunderstandings occur, new ideas emerge, and some fall short in their efforts or simply lack the skill for this particular task. The rough draft coordinator's job is to help the group honestly evaluate its work (see Appendix G).

Yes, the group has arrived at another key leadership opportunity! The best response is to deal with the quality issues openly and in a matter-of-fact way. The mission is still to create a quality report, but the group finds itself in the strong currents of emotion tied to criticism and rejection. We encourage the rough draft coordinator to remind the group of its earlier hopes and the impending presentation as a context to evaluate the writing for improvement, not to blame individuals. The team members must find a way to give and receive feedback. They need to see that this work is inevitable, normal, and necessary.

We are asking students to tackle a very difficult task, and we let them know this and why. The recurring truth is that team leadership is difficult, hard work without a guarantee of immediate success. Learning can be guaranteed, however, with the proper attitude and discipline. This phase is also followed with a third set of reflection pages. The professor, as always, has the option to devote class time to debriefing project activity. It is also important to schedule course readings and activities (e.g., task and people roles, a survival exercise) that can highlight critical dimensions of group work as it is happening.

The last phase involves completing the project report and designing and delivering a presentation that actively engages the audience, at the Organizational Behavior Teaching Conference. At this point, many groups are pulling together and feeling alive and invincible but still lack a consistent quality focus. We provide a presentation proposal sheet to help them organize their planning and to get feedback from the professor to help ensure quality (see Appendix H). "The semester begins with the professor in charge. Now the class is in your hands."

After the presentation, teams receive written feedback from the professor and other students, but a critical step still remains. They need to reflect on the final phase of the project and attempt to consolidate their overall learnings from this experience in a final paper. They have course readings and a team data sheet, a mission statement, four reflection pages, course and group topic

readings to draw on as they attempt to analyze the effectiveness of their group. We want an appreciative focus on what really worked and why and an honest look at what fell short. Even a poor experience can be of lasting benefit if it motivates the individual to take a more active role in future group experiences. We want some self-confrontation. Students need to examine their own personal contributions and leadership: "What did I do that worked?" "What did others do that I could try?" "What leadership am I sure to provide in future teams?" The goal of the final paper is to help build sustainable leadership and a confidence in generating future leadership options based on learning from experience.

Conclusion

Not all tasks and skills come in neat, finite packages. Team leadership is an intricate process entailing many real-time, interconnected skills. It involves joining with complex others in a thoughtful, caring way to achieve mutually agreed on, quality results. Any member of a team can help at a crucial moment. Failure is easy—it just takes one critical element to not work. Success is demanding—it takes all the pieces to work together over time.

Becoming a highly effective group member is not a quick fix but rather a long journey of mastery. We believe that students learn more from good group experiences than from bad (Bacon et al., 1999), and we have sought to boost their chances of success. Students in team projects need to slow down and learn about the logical steps in creating and executing a project and to establish the leadership disciplines of reflection and action toward group and self-management. Each tangible project activity affords opportunities to deepen knowledge about group dynamics and personal leadership.

It is important, however, to maintain realistic expectations. Students will not be qualified to be great leaders after one project. Still, as professors, we now see more flashes of creativity and enthusiasm and many fewer disasters. We see and read about deliberate efforts to understand and change teams, and we hear satisfying reports by students who have always hated groups but found this experience productive and rewarding. The combination of structure and extra time has produced short-term results, and we hope it provides a foundation for long-term mastery. We believe that our positive results would be far better if the team leadership process was repeated in other business courses or if an additional course was devoted entirely to team leadership.

The ideas in our model will be useful to any professor with a serious interest in teams and team building; however, teaching team leadership is also a long-term journey of mastery for the professor. We have sought to engage

students in an iterative process that we hope becomes a basis for a personal leadership discipline. We believe that the professor should also be intensely involved in an iterative process of learning from teaching experience. In this regard, we all need to look for new ideas, both big and small. The professor's challenge is ultimately to creatively combine ideas from various team innovations to enhance student team learning in the unique conditions of his or her course.

With team projects, the professor will be challenged to become more competent in understanding the dynamics of teams, to consult with students about their teams, and to take the time to help teams manage their projects well. Our more active role in guiding team projects has been both difficult and satisfying. The continuous involvement with the various tasks has opened a window into student reality that has enriched our experience and made us smarter. Through direct contact and reflection pages, we are exposed to a tremendous amount of feedback that has helped guide our thinking and adjustments. To maximize learning, the professor, like students, needs to view this process as an opportunity for reflection and personal growth, and not something to be finished efficiently.

In summary, by following the guidelines below, professors can continuously improve their effectiveness in facilitating positive student team functioning, learning, and leadership:

1. Make sure you convey in all your actions that learning to be effective in teams is important. Effectiveness entails knowing about teams and yourself. It involves acquiring and sharpening task and people skills and developing a leadership mind-set.
2. Be clear about your rationale for putting students in teams to work on a team project. Make clear statements about your expectations and about the exciting possibilities and outcomes. Verbalize your hopes for excellence, and return often to the positive visions the students have generated. The best assignment has a mix of structure and ambiguity. The high level of ambiguity of the sink or swim method leads to dysfunctional behavior as students seek to stay afloat.
3. Encourage students to actively make sense of what is going on in the team and to focus on their experiences as a source of insights and as a guide to identify skills to improve. Remind them that their learning and leadership is the project.
4. Be aware that teams need time and attention. Set aside time for start-up. A great start goes a long way toward a vigorous team experience. Set aside time for teams to explore their interests and creatively shape a topic. Teamwork does not occur automatically. Have an open door policy and check periodically on how each team is doing by reviewing their reflections and asking for progress reports. Be aware of what is happening with each student in each team. You may have to intervene periodically, either with a single student or with the group. Try to reiterate their visions of excellence and hope. Remember, these are teaching moments.

5. Immerse yourself also in the process of learning about and experimenting with teams and teaching about teams. The path of mastery is the same for both student and teacher. You will fall short and make numerous mistakes. Look outward and inward for help. Draw on others' work to help craft your experiments. Know who the group experts are in your college. They can be great resources for you (planning, interventions, etc.). See yourself on the path of mastery and actively seek opportunities for personal and professional development.

Appendix A Personal Assessment

"To know oneself, one should assert oneself." Albert Camus

We succeed when we use our talents and strengths and create the realities we desire. Take a few minutes now to recall and examine your **experiences of success, your best performances, and your peak moments**. List a few of these:

With these experiences in mind, please answer the following questions.

- How energetic am I? _____
Do I work better slowly or quickly? _____
Do I work best alone or in groups? _____
Do I prefer to lead or follow? _____
Am I a good listener? _____
Do I like to plan or jump in? _____
Do I meet deadlines or begin when work is due? _____
Do I like recognition and acceptance? Being counted on? _____
How do I react to criticism? _____
What are my strengths? What do I contribute to success?

What are my weaknesses? Where do I need to improve?

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Appendix B Appreciative Inquiry: Best Team Exercise

"It is a funny thing about life; if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it." Somerset Maugham

This exercise seeks to draw on your individual experiences of success and help you learn from those as a basis for collectively envisioning the type of team that you would

like to create. Please take a minute and remember back to a successful group or team that you enjoyed being with . . . jot notes on . . .

- Why was this group the best?
- What qualities made this team special?
- What really stands out in your mind about this team?

Strengths/Characteristics of Best Team (Consolidate your memories of your best team experience into a few key success factors. Try to breakdown broad items like communication and leadership. What happened exactly? How was leadership accomplished?)

Appendix C Team Data Sheet

“It’s not what the vision is, it’s what the vision does.” Robert Fritz

Composite List: Characteristics of a Highly Effective Team (from Best Team Exercise)

Provocative Propositions (using the collection of ideas from the Best Team Exercise, complete the sentences below.)

1. The best team is . . .
2. As a team member, I contribute most when . . .
3. As a team, we work best when . . .
4. We will be most creative if . . .
5. The best team project is one that . . .

The undersigned agree to exert our best efforts in order to realize the above vision and make our team a great one.

Signatures:

Team Motto:

Appendix D Reflections on the Team Start-up

We have arrived at our **first** reflection point. Our overall intention in this project is to help you build a learning orientation to leadership and team success. By pausing and reflecting along the way, we hope to remind you of your team's vision as a standard to help identify factors in success and lapses in the team's work. Thoughtful reflection can deepen the benefit of your task experience and heighten the possibilities of success for this team in its next steps and for you in future groups. We hope to help you build the habit of learning from your own experience in a disciplined, step-by-step way.

Please take a few minutes to respond to the following questions. Begin with a few slow, deep breaths. Breathe in slowly, deeply . . . let your diaphragm lower and the sides of your waist expand . . . hold . . . slowly exhale as if gently blowing the flame of a candle 6 inches away . . . 5 breaths in a minute or so can help you establish a calm reflective state to sharpen your memory and allow important information to surface easier

Reflections about the Team and its Work (For your next meeting, your group will review your team data sheet and these reflections before crafting a mission statement for itself.)

1. What were some of the important things that you saw happening as your team formed? What were the **key moments** in your opinion?
 2. What went **well**? Give *specific* examples. Where is your team's vision coming to life?
 3. What did **you** do or say? Or not do? What was the effect on the group and others?
 4. How could you replicate any of the successes that your group had?
 5. What needs to be done next to **insure the success** of this group?
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Appendix E Personal Reflections on the Team Start-up

(Please take a few minutes to reflect on where *you* stand with your group so far.)

1. How am I feeling about our interactions so far? What am I feeling good about?
2. How accepted do I feel by the group? Am I a part of what is going on? How "in" do I feel? Draw a picture of where you stand in relationship to others in the group? What do you make of this?
3. What concerns do I have?
4. What have *I* tried and what have I learned? What will I continue to do?

5. What behaviors or skills can I work on or experiment with as we proceed? What's the 1st step in doing so? **Be specific.** After you complete # 5 . . .

Visualize yourself about to take a small risk as you experiment to gain skill or help your team move forward . . . allow yourself to feel slight nervousness or tension . . . but **know** that you are capable, and acting will bring you to life . . . see yourself performing . . . taking the risk . . . and feel the excitement as it turns out well . . . feel the deep satisfaction for having taken the risk . . . learning risks are opportunities to come alive and feel vibrant . . .

“You really don't know it, if your behavior doesn't show it.”

Appendix F Team Planning Sheet for Writing

“Dal dire al fare, c'è di mezzo il mare.” [Between saying and doing, there lies the ocean.] Italian proverb

1. You have a detailed outline, now we need to do some planning. **Who does what? Who likes to work alone? What pairs can work together?**
 2. What **minimum criteria** do we need to set for this work, e.g. typed or handwritten, RTF or Word, length, format, citations, bibliography included, well written? This discussion will help to minimize painful surprises and misunderstandings later on.
 3. What **dates** do we need to work against (rough drafts, final)? When will we check in with each other? Are we allowing ourselves enough time? Who will perform the following roles: report coordinator? presentation coordinator?
 4. As a group, you will find it useful to bring to memory your knowledge of what constitutes a good paper. Drawing on your experience and on English classes you've had, please brainstorm the **qualities of a well-written paper**. What makes some papers better than others?
-

Appendix G Rough Draft: Quality Check List Form

Take a moment to review your initial vision and hopes for the group. Answer the following set of questions as a team:

According to your outline & your team-planning sheet, what's done? Not done?

- Do we have an overall story? Is it good? What would make this paper great? Do we have something beyond a set of book reports? Did we get beyond reporting information?
- Does each section do what it needs to do? What needs to be added? What needs to be removed?
- Are citations used in each section? Used for *all* parts that are someone else's words?

How is the logical flow of the paper?

- What needs to be said in the intro and overview?
- Are there adequate markings for each section? Are there adequate transitions between sections?
- Are the various sections properly integrated? **Is there needless repetition?** Are the sections "aware" of each other? Do they connect with or reference each other in obvious places?

Have you cited course readings and used course concepts where appropriate? Is there a bibliography?

How's the spelling and grammar? Are there awkward phrases and constructions that need to be revised for clarity sake?

How have you finished the paper?

- Does the introduction state your thesis, and provide an overview for the reader?
- Have you considered individual and organizational implications of your findings?
- Is there a summary?
- Is there a conclusion?

Revision Action Plan: What specific steps do we need to take to revise this paper? Who will do what? When?

Signatures of those present:

Appendix H
Presentation Proposal

"The reward of a thing well done, is to have done it." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Imagine that you are creating a proposal for an Organizational Behavior conference. The semester began with the professor in charge, now the class is in your hands.

Your job is to best educate your peers on some aspect of your important topic. Where could creativity and risk taking come into play? What might be fun to do? What would be GREAT to do?

Presentation/Project Title

Overview and Objectives

Designing the Presentation. You need some set of activities to accomplish your objectives. These usually include some mix of theory input, an interactive activity, and discussion. The most effective order is up to you.

Main Ideas to Cover

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What activity(s) would help us dig deeper into some aspect of your topic? What likely discussion questions does this activity raise?

Activity 1:

Activity 2 (optional):

Time Estimates for Each Step . . . Try to make a realistic estimate of how long each step will take. Give yourself a cushion and please allow some time for discussion. For example, if the total time is 35 minutes,

- 3—introductions and start-up
- 10—theory with PowerPoint
- 15—film clips (stop twice for reactions and discussion)
- 7—overall discussion of topic & other course connections

(or reverse activity and theory steps)

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