Preparing to participate in groups

4 July With reference to Chapter 7 " Leading Small Groups: Theoretical Perspectives", my advice toa prospective member of a problem-solving or decision-making group would be that once they are designated as a leader for the group, they should work collaboratively with other team members so that each member of the group feels equally responsible to accomplish the goals of the group. There is a tendency for some leaders to " hold the title" and dictate terms to fellow team members. Based on my past experiences of working in groups on course projects, I have realized that when the leader is autocratic, it affects the morale of the entire team and cause them to deliver poor quality reports and delays in submission of the projects. When leaders work collaboratively with other team members making them feel responsible and encouraging them to actively participate, I feel that it would result in the team producing better results and the goals would be accomplished on time. With reference to Chapter 8 " Leading Small Groups: Practical Tips", my advice to a prospective member of a problem-solving or decision-making group would be that when they are in the role of a leader, they ensure that there is effective communication between all the members of the team. Based on my previous experience of working in group projects I have realized that communication is the key to effective working and team building in groups. In one particular group project that I was working on, the topic was divided into smaller sections and each member was to present their findings after a few weeks. Unfortunately, due to lack of proper communication, two members of the group spent a lot of time researching the same topic resulting in a significant waste of time and causing resentment among the team members. Therefore, it is very critical that the leader ensures that every member in the group is kept updated about the

progress of other members in the group so as to avoid such situations. With reference to Chapter 11 " Managing Conflict in the Small Group", my advice to a prospective member of a problem-solving or decision-making group would be that they be open to conflicting opinions of other members in the group and use it as a tool to understand its members and issues better. Based on my previous experience of working in groups, I have found that when a member presents a different way of approaching the problem, group members especially the leader may not wanting to take a look at the ' out of the box' approach which can at times be a creative way of problem solving. This may result in the member disagreeing privately but not saying anything in order to avoid conflict. I believe that when group members are open to conflicting ideas, it will help improve member motivation, produce better decisions, and increase cohesiveness.