

Group working positivity essay



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Group Work Participating in Group Work Participating in group work is an important skill to develop as it is something you will do in your student life and in your working career. Job advertisements often highlight 'good team worker' as a crucial skill for potential recruits. These may involve a group presentation or a group report followed by a reflective piece of writing and/or an individual assignment. Take notes or record your lecturer's assignment briefing. Module Handbooks usually includes the assessment criteria (see Appendix 1) so it is important that you work well together to achieve success.

It will be quite obvious to your lecturer whether you have worked well as a team and whether you prepared your assignment as a group. Groups formed by students to discuss case studies or discuss an assignment can help improve your grades and make the task more manageable. Keep a journal and record your progress, hindrances, issues and successes, plus any pitfalls to avoid next time! Working in a TEAM? Together Everyone Achieves More Successful group work will involve:

- Clear, shared goals.
- Good communication amongst members of the group.
- Agreed ways of working towards the group goals. Support and cooperation, rather than competitiveness.
- Listening to one another.
- Autonomous team working.
- Arrangements for monitoring progress and taking corrective action, if necessary.
- Keep to deadlines - it is unfair to let others down who are depending on you, in order for the whole group to succeed.
- High levels of motivation.
- Plan - do - review.

Why work in groups? Team building is vital to any organisation and by working in groups you can:

- Share resources.
- Share ideas and information.
- Share abilities.
- Learn from and help each

other. Stimulate creativity and innovation. • Increase motivation. • Solve complex problems. • Can help you get better grades. You will need to identify your strengths, which you can contribute to the group. You will also identify your weaknesses, and ideally the group will support and help you work on turning these weaknesses into strengths. I have some useful DVDs on group work that may be helpful to watch (Assert yourself: learning to be assertive; Building the perfect team: Belbin's team-role theory in action; Does the team work? Improving effectiveness through teamwork; It's a deal! Win-win negotiation deals; Team leading: how to become an effective team leader; The great communicator: communication skills for all). Getting started • It is up to the members of the group to make the first contact with one another. Exchange telephone numbers and email addresses so the group can meet. • An icebreaker task is a good way to make each member feel comfortable with others that s/he does not know (see Appendix 2). • Ensure you understand the instructions in the assignment. Each group member should have read the assignment brief and prepare to discuss it at the first meeting. Break the assignment into practicable chunks. Agree deadlines to complete each part. • The group needs to compile and agree set ground rules (see Appendix 3). These rules can be reviewed and renegotiated from time to time – keeping useful rules in practice, amending or creating new ones as solutions to unanticipated problems that arise. • Set realistic aims and targets within a given timeframe that all members understand and agree with. • Negotiate roles and tasks: Who will be the leader? Who will do what? When? With what resources?

Allocate tasks according to the experience, expertise or strength of each member. However, task allocation can also be allocated to build on a student's inexperience and areas of weakness.

- Establish a regular programme of meetings to review task progress and group process. The group should keep in regular contact so plan where you will meet. Will it be at the University, will you alternate between group members' homes, will you set up a site in 'Your Groups' in StudyNet or a group in Facebook or any other social networking site?
- Agree to keep good records (Group Log of meetings etc. see Appendix 4). You might also want to keep a blog, for self reflection of group work. It is compulsory at Level 5 and Level 6 to keep records of group work. Each member of the group needs good personal management skills and good time management skills to complete their part of the task, including taking corrective action. This means being honest with the rest of the group - let them know if there is a problem, seek help from the group, share information with others. The group needs to make a contract based on the above points and stick to it so ground rules are obeyed.

Establish Group Roles In order for the group to function successfully to achieve their goal and to maximise the group's time in meetings, roles have to be taken on by each member of the group. Belbin (1981 & 1993, cited in Blundel, 2004) and others have identified numerous roles within a team, usually in keeping with individual personality and strengths. Many university student groups have five or six people, and their suggested roles are below. These roles may be rotated amongst members or a member holds onto his/her role for the duration of the assignment.

Whatever the size of your group, ensure that someone carries out the following:

- | Team role | Contribution | | Project/team leader/ Chair | Organises rooms, agendas and chairs meetings, co-ordinates and keeps the group focused and involved. Stops the group from | | person | going off at a tangent. Initiates, leads and drives the group towards achieving their task. | |
- | Innovator &/or Evaluator | Creates novel ideas and solutions to support the task. | | Assesses ideas and proposals. | | Investigator/ Info. gatherer | Collects information and resources to support the task and the group takes up and develops his/her contributions. | | Team worker/ harmoniser | Encourages others, fosters team morale and reduces negativity. | | Record keeper | Keeps records, shares information. Provides facts, ideas, feedback, and/or alternative proposals to finish the task. | | | Summarises what has been done. Lists what else needs to be done to complete the task. |
- | Completer | Keeps track on objectives meeting deadlines making sure the group is on target to complete the task and achieve the goals | | | set. Judging whether the task is being completed successfully and efficiently |

Group dynamics All group work consists of both task and process elements. Attention is often focused on the task, i. e. a report or presentation, and the process is neglected (how you get the task done, i. e. working in groups), which can be a major reason for ineffective group working.

Individuals need to focus on the group needs rather than their own personal needs. Encourage and support others and try to facilitate harmony. Self-seeking roles to avoid are: dominator, cynic, clown, aggressor, blocker, group humourist, recognition seeker, avoider, politician, etc. (based on Benne & Sheats, 1948 cited in Barker et al, 1991). Keep to the

responsibilities you were given – do what you said you would do. Ensure there is co-operation between members, if the team is to succeed. Listen to one another and acknowledge one another's ideas and suggestions. Listen actively and you will hear.

Buzan (2000) states that listening is a top management skill. So improve your listening skills now and you'll be more prepared for any job interview! Listen and DON'T: Pretend to pay attention – do so! Do other things at the same time. Decide it's uninteresting. Have your mobile on in meetings. Hogg the conversation – be aware of others' need to talk. Be distracted by someone's way of speech or mannerism. Get over-involved and so lose the thread of conversation. Let emotion filled words arouse personal anger, antagonism, etc. Focus on distractions instead of what's said.

Take linear one colour notes (instead, use different coloured pens, draw diagrams, mind maps, lists, tables). Just listen for facts (also consider the speaker's emotions, feelings, body language). Turn off when it is complex or difficult. Plan what you're going to say next. All group members need to agree any changes, e. g. to meetings, content of the assignment, etc. if the group is to be successful. Keep to the deadlines given. If you cannot manage your time well, be aware that you are letting others down. Meet and keep in contact regularly, where progress and any changes are tracked.

Cohesiveness, good communication, commitment and cooperation are essential. Misconduct, unethical behaviour, rule breaking, must be avoided. At times the group will be affected by pressures of deadlines, absence of an influential member, a traumatic experience, or a new member joining.

Disperse any cliques that may form. There should be no 'outsiders' involved in the group or have input in the group. Antagonistic or contentious individuals need to be dealt with by the group early on, so conflict is avoided. Consensus in decision making helps make all group members feel they have a say. Try the questionnaire 'Are We a Team?' in Appendix 5 to assess the extent to which your group is cohesive and how well you work together, at some stage in the second half of the process. Groups can access a small room for their meetings, by booking a study room. Virtual meetings may form part of your plan and if so, you need to make sure that everyone has suitable access. An agenda has to be agreed by the group for each meeting, otherwise the group may waste valuable time during the meeting by chatting or straying from discussing the issues. Decide how long you will spend discussing each item. Respect one another's opinion - everyone is entitled to their say.

A 'talking stick' could be used during meetings, where the person holding the stick gets to speak. Others must listen until another person gets to hold the stick, and has his/her say. Another useful idea for effective discussion at meetings is to follow de Bono's Six Hats Model (1985). See Appendix 6 for the full details. The '6 Thinking Hats' helps generate critical thinking, to brainstorm or reflect, as these six 'hats' are metaphors for thinking about different aspects of a task/experience, at different times. Break down your thinking into 6 areas; use all six hats, to explore effectively and thoroughly with less confusion.

De Bono considers that the emphasis should be on designing a way forward all the time. The hats are directions of how to think and not descriptions of

what has happened. He says this parallel thinking method allows the subject to be explored fully by considering one view at a time and accepting that they can be viewed as parallel, not necessary contradictory. It can be used constructively by all cultures. It allows you to find positive or constructive elements in negative or difficult situations and so helps to create a sense of perspective about it.

A variant of this technique is to look at problems from the point of view of different professionals, or roles, or customers. Evaluate your progress as you go and keep a record of the meetings, which will be useful later when you have to carry out reflective writing based on the group work. If a group member is going to be absent (with good reason), let the group know beforehand. Ask questions of the other group members in order for you to proceed with your task or to clarify an issue. Be honest with peers - if you do not know something, say so or if you are not on target with your work, tell the group.

The group will not function if everyone is not working openly, together towards the same goal. Behaviours serving task needs:

- Clarifying objectives
- Seeking information from group members
- Giving relevant information
- Proposing ideas and building on ideas or proposals contributed by others
- Summarising progress so far
- Evaluating progress against group objectives
- Time keeping
- Identifying a group member to take responsibility to ensure agreed actions are taken
- Setting up a way of reviewing progress after the meeting

Behaviours serving group needs:

Encourage members to contribute and value all contributions.

- Check that you have understood a point by summarising that understanding, before

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giving reasons for disagreeing • Help to resolve conflict without making others feel rejected • Change your view in light of arguments or information given by others • Help to control those who talk too much • Praising group progress towards objectives • Dissuading group members from negative behaviour

Behaviours interfering with task or group needs:

- Not preparing for the meeting/not doing your job
- Talking too much and/or focusing your attention on yourself
- Reacting emotionally to points made
- Attacking others points by ridicule or unreasoned comments
- Not listening to others
- Interrupting others and/or talking at the same time as them
- Introducing a completely different point of view while productive discussion of something else is taking place
- Chatting to others privately during the meeting
- Using humour to excess
- Withdrawing from the group and/or refusing to participate
- Being late for meetings/not turning up at all/leaving early

Cameron (2005) Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a useful way of generating ideas as well as problem-solving. A 'facilitator' needs to be appointed for the session. S/he will write everyone's ideas down and encourage all members to participate. Then, collect ideas from all members of the group. Ideas or opinions should not be criticised or rejected at this stage. Acknowledge and record all ideas and suggestions. Once the brainstorming has been exhausted, move on to link ideas and themes, and synthesise them. The group should then agree on which ideas should remain and which should be discarded. Using Post-its and Flip Charts

Putting things down on paper is an essential part of keeping the group going.

- Brainstorming session: one member of the group puts ideas on the

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flipchart OR individuals note their ideas on post-its and these are collected and examined. Ideas are easily prioritised using post-its as they are easily rearranged.

- Resolve conflict: each member notes their opinion on a post-it and posts it on the board. The group can examine and consider the points made by the group.
- Equal opportunities: all members have a 'say' by writing down their ideas and suggestions, rather than a dominant vocal member 'taking over' the session.

Virtual Group Work It is not always easy for groups to meet regularly; however, an arrangement must be made to keep in regular contact. There is no excuse if students cannot meet face-to-face, because they can meet virtually. There are a number of ways they can do this: You could choose email updates, which anyone can set up through 'Your Groups' in the top black menu. For instructions to set up a group discussion forum, see Appendix 7. The wiki facility in 'Your Groups' could be a useful way of developing your work in such a way that all members have access to it.

See YouTube - Wikis in Plain English for a quick demonstration of a wiki in use for a collaborative group task. Or you could all agree to use a social networking site, such as Facebook, to work on. Lecturers sometimes monitor and assess the level of communication that occurs in these groups. E-mails can be sent to group members, with files attached to share your part of the task with the other group members. Note: Virtual group work should NOT replace regular face-to-face meetings; rather it should be used in addition to it and as a way of keeping in contact between meetings to support one another.

Group Diversity Be aware that some people initiate ideas, motivate, coordinate, maintain standards, seek opinions, and keep the group working towards their goal. Personality clashes, cross-cultural differences, discrimination, bullying and blocking people out can be issues that arise in groups. Difficult team members can be aggressive, try to be the centre of attention, waste time joking around, compete with other members, reject ideas without good reason, be 'hard done by'. Cross-cultural differences can sometimes cause conflict.

Hofstede (1991) and Morrison et al, (1994, cited in Levin, 2005: 89-91) identify cultural traits that may cause conflict: | Individualism Vs Collectivism | | People brought up in individualist cultures see themselves as individuals, taking it for granted that they can say what they think, take decisions on | | their own and confront others with their view. | | People brought up in a collectivist culture view themselves as members of a family and/or wider group.

To them, the preservation of harmony within the | | group is very important. Decisions are made by consensus within the group and confrontation is avoided. | | Tolerance of Uncertainty | | In some cultures there are authority figures to whom everyone else defers, everyone knows their place and rote learning is the method of education. | | People from this culture would feel uncomfortable in situations of uncertainty, or when they do not know where their place is and what the rules and | | regulations are, and where there is no 'right answer'. | On the other hand, there are cultures where authority comes under challenge, and independent and critical thinking are encouraged. People do not have a | | clearly defined place in society, rules

and expectations of a 'right answer' are absent but this is seen as an opportunity and a challenge. | | Issues of Embarrassment and 'loss of face' | | Embarrassment and loss of face are to be found in all cultures.

However, the reasons for embarrassment vary. People from some cultures may find it hard | | to admit they are unable to perform a particular task whereas a person from another culture would not be embarrassed by this. Revealing emotion may be | | unnatural; to express disagreement; to refuse something; to be able to understand something said to you more than once; to be discovered to have lied; | | and/or to renegotiate an agreement in the hope of getting a better deal. | In some cultures losing face happens when you feel challenged, when your contribution to a discussion is not acknowledged, if someone makes a joke at | | your expense or if you suffer a public-let-down. What one person feels as teasing, another might feel it as insulting. | | Gender Issues | | In every culture roles and places are assigned to men and women. People from different cultures have different assumptions, expectations and habits | | towards men and women.

Some men may find it difficult to deal with assertive women and some women may find it difficult to be assertive. Often people | | feel more comfortable in same gender groups where they can say what they think and feel. | | Codes of Behaviour | | There are codes of behaviour in all cultures. Certain behaviour is seen as acceptable in one culture but unacceptable behaviour in another and is | | viewed as rude, immodest, lacking respect, etc.

Some examples are: | | Standing very close to someone you are talking to | | Gesturing a lot when talking (moving your hands and head) | | Expressing impatience | | Confrontational behaviour, especially outright disagreement | | Interrupting someone who is speaking | | Boasting | | Silence during a conversation. Failure to respond immediately may cause discomfort or may imply agreement or disagreement. | | Failure to make eye contact with someone who is speaking or listening. This could be mistaken for insincerity or lack of attentiveness, whereas it is | | intended to show deference. | Lack of punctuality | Other differences may be how a person is treated according to their age, social status, occupation and/or educational background.

Working with people of other cultures and ethnic backgrounds is a great opportunity to learn about others, and indeed learn about yourself. Make ' understanding group members' backgrounds and points of view' an explicit group objective. Care will have to be taken with group rules (ways of operating) where less assertive students will have their say, and regular checks on how members feel about other members' responses to their contributions. Addressing Conflict

Due to groups involving people of different personalities, cultures, gender, etc. it is quite common for conflict to occur. Problems should be discussed in the group, i. e. a group member not working, non-attending group member, etc. and decisions on how to proceed should be considered in light of the ground rules set in the first meeting. This needs to be resolved without creating bad feeling amongst group members. Resolution is achieved by addressing the issues through discussion amongst the whole group. Do not leave problems to fester and grow. It is important that the group tries to

address this conflict themselves before involving a third party, i. e. your lecturer or an ASU adviser.

Here are some steps to try to resolve the conflict within the group, before seeking a negotiator:

- Set a rule of how disagreement will be resolved, i. e. if someone is not participating, if someone misses meetings, if there is a personality clash, etc.
- Encourage an environment of openness and honesty - say if you are unhappy/write it in the group site. Be honest about where you are at with your task.
- Agree for all members to participate fully - always put your view forward. Consider other members' feelings.
- Agree to put group needs before personal needs. Others are depending on you to provide your input and complete your task.
- You do not have to like people to work with them - however, you have to learn to work with them in the group.

This will help you to develop good interpersonal skills.

- Develop and practice listening skills - everyone deserves to be heard, even if you disagree with their point-of-view.
- Keep to deadlines - others are depending on you.
- Keep track of progress, so things do not fall behind and thus putting the group under pressure.
- Establish the nature of the disagreement. Do members perceive facts differently? Do they disagree about ways of working? Are members operating with different values? By exploring the cause of the disagreement, the group may be able to come to a better understanding of the task and its context. Solutions can then be suggested by the group.

In dealing with conflict you need to use your talking, listening, assertiveness and interpersonal skills to reach a resolution. Try not to give up until you have resolved the issue(s) as a group. If you are unable to resolve the conflict, then you MUST speak to your lecturer about it. Do NOT put it off until your report is due in or until the day of presentation. Group

Presentations It is important that the group present themselves as a team. This can be done in the following way:

- Prepare the slides using the same format and ensure the presentation is well structured. The team will need to meet regularly to ensure this occurs.
- Practice the presentation together so you can ensure your presentation is completed within the time limit.

By practicing regularly as a group, the presentation should be coherent, polished and well executed on the day.

- Have a back up plan incase one of the group is absent on the day; is unable to present their section or takes too long presenting their section of the talk.
- The first presenter should introduce the whole group and say what they will talk about.
- Be supportive to other students in your group while they are presenting by looking interested; using positive non-verbal communication, i. e. nod; help with using visual aids. You should not sit down after your section has been done.
- At the hand-over stage, the current speaker must introduce the next presenter and what they will say.

The next person to speak should thank the previous speaker before beginning his/her part of the presentation. Group Reports

- Advice given above on group roles, meetings, etc. applies when preparing your report.
- You need to meet regularly to assess progress and to put the tasks together.
- The report must be compiled as one piece of work, rather than having

obvious separate parts of different font styles and writing style. At the end...

Ensure the group meet before presenting/submitting their work to check that the work is well structured, clear and coherent and shows that you worked closely as a group. Submit on time. Reflection on Group Work

You may be asked to reflect on what happened, your role within the group, what you have learned from it and what you need to work on in the future.

Ensure you have clarified with the lecturer what is expected of you and what the assessment criteria is. Complete the reflection by considering the

following questions: • What went well? Why? • What went wrong? Why? •

How did you solve it? • What would you do differently next time? • What

contribution did you make? • What did you learn from others? • What did the

other members learn from you? • What strengths did you identify? Did the

group utilise your strengths? • What weaknesses did you identify? How did

you and the group address them? Did you improve on your weaknesses to

turn them into strengths? • What do you plan to do about the weaknesses

you have identified? • How does this link to the theories on successful group

work? Who did what, when, problems or difficulties encountered, etc.

Analyse the group activities: (What was the group trying to achieve? What

were the different views? Who said what? What was left unsaid? How were

decisions made? How did you feel about this? How did the others feel? What

was the energy levels and motivation like? Did anything unexpected

happen?). Action planning: Identify what you contributed to the group,

difficulties you experienced, and from this assess your strengths,

weaknesses and action points.

Focus on critical incidences - which were turning points for the group or which demonstrate particular difficulties / successes. Use the checklist in Appendix 9 at the end of each meeting to reflect on strengths and weaknesses. Avoid Academic Misconduct When participating in group work, you must avoid any academic misconduct, i. e. you must not plagiarise (use another's work as your own by not acknowledging it by making reference to the author's work in your assignment) or you are not accused of collusion (you work it not your own individual work but rather it has been undertaken jointly with another students, where you shared ideas or your material with another student and their work (or any part of it) is a replica of yours).

Academic misconduct is identified when your coursework is passed a software programme that detects and identifies cheating. Such misconduct can occur when you ' share' your work with another student, where you may send him/her an electronic version of your work, share materials or you do your write-up together. References Barker, L. , Wahlers, K. , Watson, K. & Kibler, R. (1991) *Groups in Process*. 4th edn. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Belbin, R. M. (1993) *Team Roles at Work*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. Belbin, R. M. (1981) *Management Teams: why they succeed or fail*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. Benne, K. D. & Sheats, P. (1948) ' Functional Roles of group Members. ' *Journal of Social Issues*. 4. pp. 41-49. Blundel, R. (2004) *Effective Organisational Communication*. 2nd edn. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. Buzan, T (2000) *Use Your Head*. London: BBC Active Cameron, S. (2005) *The Business Student's Handbook*. 3rd edn. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. De Bono, E (1985) *Six Thinking Hats*. Harmondsworth: Viking Elluminate (2010) *Window Descriptions*. Available at:

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Appendix 1 - Assessment of Group Work Group work is not always formally

assessed. However, in some modules at the overall assessment of a group

report or group presentation may include an assessment of the process of

preparation. This may include the following considerations: • Progress of

preparation (e. g. meeting of milestones; numbers of meetings; progress of

preparation) • Relative inputs of members of the group (e. g. ocumentation

of input; peer assessment of input) • Roles of group members in preparation

(e. g. project manager; reporter, etc) • Resolution of conflict situations • The

level of team building Appendix 2 - Icebreakers The following icebreakers

are a quick way of helping members of a group get to know one another a

little better. • What's you name? Members of a group tell what their name is

and provide the group with a little background of why they were given that

name. • What I like and what I hate - Members of the group introduce

themselves and share a like and a dislike they have, i. e. I love coffee but I

hate people who talk too much, I love jazz music but I hate queuing, etc. •

What's your hidden secret?

Each member of the group introduces themselves and tells the group one thing not many people know about them, i. e. I met Madonna, I play the piano, I dived in the Red Sea, I walked the Great Wall of China, I ate frogs legs once, etc.

- Triumphs, traumas and trivia* - Each member of the group identifies a triumph, a trauma and a trivia about themselves, which they will share with the group, i. e. I won a gold medal for running at school, I was in a car accident when I was 12, I do crosswords; I won ? 10 in the lotto last year, I lost my suitcases when I came to the UK, I tell terrible jokes; etc.

*Note: Care needs to be taken with this activity as deep feelings can emerge about traumas suffered.

Interview your neighbour* - Group splits into pairs and one member of each pair spends about three minutes listening to the other tell some of the above mentioned information, as well as the person's background information. Notes should be taken. Swap roles for next three minutes. Then each person feeds back to the group some information about their neighbour.

- * Note: Care needs to be taken not to ask questions that may intrude on an individual's privacy and the amount of information s/he wishes to divulge about themselves to the group.
- What do you already know about the topic? Members of the group jot down the most important thing they know about the topic on a Post-it and put it on a flipchart. Members can read what they know about the topic or the group can read it from the flipchart. This is a useful starting point for the task.

Adapted from: Race (2000: 37-39) Appendix 3 - Ground Rules Here are some suggested rules to be set by a group - these are by no means the only rules a group can adopt. Honesty and truthfulness is fostered in the group.

- You do not have to like someone to work with them. Members have to work

together despite their personal feelings about individuals in the group. Affirm collective responsibility. Once issues have been raised, aired, and solutions provided, the group lives with the decisions made by the group. • Everyone listens while someone speaks and everyone has a say. Members are entitled to their opinions, which should not be ignored, put down or belittled by others. Full participation is required. All members need to participate in discussion, complete their tasks, etc. • Fair share - everyone participates equally in the task. • Meet deadlines. • Agree and set up a regular programme of meetings. • Keep records. Record progress and milestones reached, minutes, agendas, self reflective logs. • Flexibility in meeting members' needs. Sometimes a member's personal needs may interfere with the group working - allowances must be made. Dealing with conflicts in the group. Appendix 4 - Group Work Log Module:

Assessment Aim:

_____ Group Objectives set: 1.

___ 2.

___ 3.

___ 4.

___ 5.

___ The group should agree roles for each of the members at the beginning of the task and this group log should be complete by the end of the task. |

Member's Name | Role/s | Assigned Tasks | Deadline date | Deadline met | No

of meetings attended | Individual comments | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | Details of all group meetings | Meeting Date | Discussion topic/s |

Actions & deadlines agreed | Attendees signatures/date | | 1. | | | 1. | | | 2. |

| | | 3. | | | 4. | | | 5. | | 2. | | 1. | | | 2. | | | 3. | | | 4. | | | 5. | | 3.

| | 1. | | | 2. | | | 3. | | | 4. | | | 5. | | 4. | | 1. | | | 2. | | | 3. | | |

4. | | | 5. | | 5. | | 1. | | | 2. | | | 3. | | | 4. | | | 5. | | 6. | | 1. | | | 2.

| | | 3. | | | 4. | | | 5. | Appendix 5 - Questionnaire: Are We a Team?

First, each individual member of the group fills in the questionnaire below.

Then the sheets are collected and the scores collated to the table below. =

never; 2 = rarely; 3 = sometimes; 4 = mostly; 5 = always 1) We all show

equal commitment to our objective 1 2 3 4 5 2) We all take part in deciding

how the work should be allocated 1 2 3 4 5 3) We are committed to helping

each other learn 1 2 3 4 5 4) We acknowledge good contributions from group

members 1 2 3 4 5 5) We handle disagreements and conflict constructively

within the group 1 2 3 4 5 6) We are able to give constructive criticism to one

another and accept it 1 2 3 4 5 7) We all turn up to meetings and stay to the

end 1 2 3 4 5 8) We are good at making sure everyone knows what is going

on 1 2 3 4 5 9) When one of us is under pressure, others offer to help them 1

2 3 4 5 10) We trust each other 1 2 3 4 5 11) We remain united even when

we disagree 1 2 3 4 5 12) We feel comfortable and relaxed with one another 1

2 3 4 5 13) We refer to our ground rules and review them when necessary 1 2

3 4 5 Stuart (1998, cited in Levin, 2005) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | TOTAL | | 1. We all

show equal commitment to our objective | | | | | | | 2. We all take part in

deciding how the work should be allocated | | | | | | | 3. We are committed to

helping each other learn | | | | | | | 4. We acknowledge good contributions

from group members | | | | | | | 5.

We handle disagreements & conflict constructively within the group | | | | | | |

| 6. We are able to give constructive criticism & accept it | | | | | | | 7. We all

turn up to meetings and stay to the end | | | | | | | 8. We are good at making

sure everyone knows what is going on | | | | | | | 9. When one of us is under

pressure, others offer to help them | | | | | | | 10.

We trust each other | | | | | | | 11. We remain united even when we disagree

| | | | | | | 12. We feel comfortable and relaxed with one another | | | | | | |

13. We refer to our ground rules and review them when necessary | | | | | | |

Action planning can occur as a result of the findings. Appendix 6 - De Bono's

(1985) ' 6 Thinking Hats' Model

Edward de Bono considers that the emphasis should be on designing a way

forward all the time. The hats are directions of how to think and not

descriptions of what has happened. White Hat: [pic] Facts, figures, laws,

information, neutral, objective... With this thinking you focus on the data

available and are non-judgmental. Look at the information you have, and see

what you can learn from it. Look for gaps in your knowledge, and identify

what you need to get or take account of. You consider past trends and

historical data. You may consider philosophical aspects such as whose truth it is, whose fact is it? Data may need to be supported by evidence.

Red Hat: [pic]Feelings, emotions, hunches, intuition about ... Wearing this hat, you consider the issues using intuition, gut reaction, and emotion. This may be feedback about your feelings and preferences but also consider how other people might react emotionally. Try to understand the responses of other people who do not have the same information or understanding as you. Black Hat: [pic]Negative, drawbacks, disadvantages, careful, cautious, defensive... This highlights the weak points in a situation or plan. By identifying them, it allows you to eliminate or alter them, or prepare contingency plans to counter them. Consider why something might not work (give reasons, consider past evidence).

Black Hat thinking may play 'devil's advocate'. It helps you to plan carefully, be prepared and more resilient. This way of thinking helps spot fatal flaws by considering safety and risks before embarking on a course of action. (Some successful people get so used to thinking positively that often they cannot see problems in advance. This leaves them under-prepared for difficulties.)

Yellow Hat: [pic] Positive, speculative, advantages, benefits, savings of... Consider what is right, why it is good and be constructive. Even in a very difficult or stressful situation find positives, e. g. learning will have taken place. It is an optimistic, sunny viewpoint that is often speculative.

It helps you to see the benefits of a situation/decision and the value in it.

Yellow Hat thinking is supportive when things seem gloomy and difficult. It finds reasons and logical support, and often links to creativity. Green Hat:

[pic] Creativity, ideas, innovation, growth, exploration, alternatives... Green Hat thinking is developing creative solutions to a problem. It may generate completely new ideas and developments or consider possible changes to a situation. It is a freewheeling, non-judgmental way of thinking. Blue Hat: [pic] Organise, control, plan (process, people, agendas)... This hat is often the view of a director or the chair at meetings.

They often choose the order or process, summarise the situation and offer conclusions which can be put into practice in the future. This way of thinking is generally cool and considered. When others' ideas cease, Blue Hat thinking may direct activity to other hats! For new ideas Blue may pass to Green Hat or when contingency plans are needed Black Hat thinking will be engaged, etc. | | Appendix 9: Group Work Check List (to be used after every meeting) Please reflect on the group meeting and check/cross the boxes as appropriate, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses: ? Each member was present at the meeting ? Everyone turned up on time Every member did their part of the work & brought it along ? Every member took a role in the meeting ? Each member in the group had a turn to speak ? Each member in the group participated ? The group members respected and appreciated one another's contributions ? Members of the group were polite to one another ? Disagreement / conflict in the group was resolved during the meeting ? Everyone was clear what they had to do next ? Everyone was clear what they had to bring / present at the next meeting ? It was clear how members could communicate with one another between meetings ? The next meeting date, time and venue was agreed by all members