

# Group characteristics and development



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Group Characteristics and Development The group that I would be discussing is our s team of debaters. I have been participating in public-speaking competitions since grade nine, both my parents have been very good debaters so I feel it runs in the family. Our debating group comprises of Sera, John, Serisha, Adam and I. Broadly we all form members of the debating society at the University, however due to the varied schedules of all the students those whose class schedules match form a smaller group to practice and share their experiences. Four of us had known each other before coming to the same university since we had all met at the various debating competitions which we had taken part in previously and won laurels for our respective institutions. Serisha was new to all the members because she had travelled all the way from India to study at our school. At one competition I had lost to Sera and Adam had lost to me, so Sera stood first, I stood second and Adam third. Consequently, we all shared a common passion for debating and respected each other's debating style. Therefore, when we all met at school, we took no time in forming our group. It has been approximately 11 months now since we have all been a part of this group. Initially, it was evident that Serisha felt a little left out because the rest of us had some common experiences to share and talk about. The change which I feel exists now is that Serisha is as comfortable with us as we are with her. The basic tasks for which the group was formed was keeping practice sessions, practicing for upcoming competitions, discussing a good public speaking video each week and coordinating with other sub-groups of the debating society and learning about their progress. All this work required a leader to take responsibility that the assigned work was done. Sera was made the leader of the group through consensus, since she had won the

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maximum number of debating titles. The rest of us were all on an equal footing and the area of authority of the leader was defined to the point that he/ she could give an expulsion warning to anyone who consistently lacked interest in the activities of the group. It was also decided that the leadership of the group would be rotated after every 6 months, so I am the current leader of the group. Some of the norms of the group are that there is a \$20 fine on anyone who does not show up on a meeting without a valid reason, the validity of the reason is agreed upon by all the group members to ensure objectivity, if a member is assigned the task to search for a public speaking video to be discussed in the next group meeting and fails to do so a further \$20 fine is levied upon him/ her. The personality characteristics of the members definitely reflect in the way they act and respond in the group. Sera has a very domineering personality, consequently when she was the leader she was very vocal and authoritative. Now that she is not the leader she still acts as authoritatively as she did previously, however I believe I as a leader know where and when I need to take the stand and use my power. Adam is a very amiable person and believes in pleasing everyone, therefore he seldom tends to disagree with anyone's opinion and prefers to stay silent when there is a difference of opinion amongst the members. Serisha and John have remained very consistent throughout, they are firm yet considerate. I believe a strong characteristic of our group is that of mutual respect. All the group members recognize the talents of others and adequately show respect for what the others are saying. Owing to this fact I can say without doubt that our group members are very cohesive. Everyone tries to give space to the others if it is felt that the other person is going through a tough phase. Everyone shares that passion for debating and thus

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no one takes the group lightly. For this reason an area of common grounds is established between all group members. This makes the environment of the group very comfortable for everyone to work in. This I feel is the most distinguishing trait of our debating group, as opposed to other groups that I have been a part of in which members are so competitive that all they care about is excelling in the group even if it is at the cost of their relationship with the group members.