

Please read...

Teamwork is an essential part of success. Like a basketball team working together to set up the perfect shot, every team member has a specific role to play in accomplishing tasks on the job. Although it may seem as if one player scored the basket, that basket was made possible by many people's planning, coordination, and cooperation to get that player the ball. Employers look for people who not only know how to work well with others, but who understand that not every player on the team can or will be the one who gets the ball. When everyone in the workplace works together to accomplish goals, everyone achieves more.

Teamwork involves building relationships and working with other people using a number of important skills and habits:

- Working cooperatively
- Contributing to groups with ideas, suggestions, and effort
- Communication (both giving and receiving)
- Sense of responsibility
- Healthy respect for different opinions, customs, and individual preferences
- Ability to participate in group decision-making

The ability to work as part of a team is one of the most important skills in today's job market. Employers are looking for workers who can contribute their own ideas, but also want people who can work with others to create and develop projects and plans.

When employees work together to accomplish a goal, everyone benefits. Employers might expect to "see" this in action in different ways. For example, team members in the workplace plan ahead and work cooperatively to assign tasks, assess progress, and deliver on time. They have professional discussions during which differing approaches and opinions might be shared and assessed in a respectful manner. Even when certain employees end up with tasks that were not their first choices, jobs get done with limited complaints because it is in the spirit of teamwork and with the overall goal in mind. A leader or manager may often serve as the teamwork facilitator. In this case, team members participate respectfully in discussion, carry out assigned tasks, and defer to the leader in the best interest of the goal. Consensus is wonderful, but not always possible, and an assigned leader will often support and facilitate the decision-making necessary for quality teamwork to exist.

The activities in this section seek to teach participants about the importance of teamwork to workplace success and the specific role each individual on a team may play. Participants will learn about positive teamwork behavior and discover how their own conduct can impact others on a team. The section also discusses possible obstacles to teams working successfully and offers the opportunity to build constructive strategies for overcoming these challenges.

Write a paragraph journal response to each of the following prompts:

- 1) A friend comes to you seeking advice. He got into trouble at work for not being a team player. He really likes his job and isn't quite sure what to do. What suggestions would you give to your friend to help him improve? How might he respond to his boss?
- 2) Pick (1) of the quotes in Appendix A of this document and write about how that quote connects to your experiences in school.
- 3) Complete the Teamwork Inventory Survey in Appendix B of this document and respond to the following questions:

I am most proud of my ability to:

I want to improve my ability to:

I will reach out to some of these people for guidance:

Turn your completed summer assignment in to an AP teacher by August 25, 2017

Appendix A

“Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.” - Vince Lombardi (football coach)

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”
- Henry Ford (pioneer of the assembly-line production method)

“There is no such thing as a self-made man. You will reach your goals only with the help of others.” - George Shinn (former owner of Charlotte, now New Orleans, Hornets basketball team)

“It is amazing what can be accomplished when nobody cares about who gets the credit.”
- Robert Yates (politician in the 1700s)

“Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success.” - Author Unknown

“I am a member of a team, and I rely on the team, I defer to it and sacrifice for it, because the team, not the individual, is the ultimate champion.” - Mia Hamm (retired American soccer player)

“Respect your fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about one another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another achieve it.”

- Bill Bradley (American hall of fame basketball player, Rhodes scholar and former three-term Democratic U.S. Senator from New Jersey)

“Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.”

- Michael Jordan (former American basketball player, businessman and majority owner of the Charlotte Bobcats)

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

- Helen Keller (American author, political activist, lecturer, and the first deafblind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree.)

“The strength of the team is each individual member...the strength of each member is the team.”

- Phil Jackson (widely considered one of the greatest coaches in the history of the NBA)

“Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.” - Mattie Stepanek (advocate on behalf of peace, people with disabilities, and children with life-threatening conditions who died one month before his 14th birthday)

“Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down.” - Oprah Winfrey (American television host, actress, producer, and philanthropist)

“Finding good players is easy. Getting them to play as a team is another story.” - Casey Stengel (baseball hall of fame)

Appendix B Elements of Teamwork – An Inventory of Skills

Part of being a good team member is learning how to understand your personal strengths (what you have to offer) AND where you might need to draw assistance from others. Listed on this sheet are 10 of the characteristics that make a productive team member. Rate your level of confidence in each skill (HONESTLY) - and then devise a plan for how you can improve some of the areas you think might need a “jump start.”

SKILL #1: RELIABLE

This means: You can be counted on to get the job done.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #2: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

This means: You express your thoughts and ideas clearly and directly, with respect for others.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #3: ACTIVE LISTENER

This means: You listen to and respect different points of view. Others can offer you constructive feedback - and you don't get upset or defensive.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #4: PARTICIPATES

This means: You are prepared - and get involved in team activities. You are regular contributor.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #5: SHARES OPENLY AND WILLINGLY

This means: You are willing to share information, experience, and knowledge with the group.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #6: COOPERATIVE

This means: You work with other members of the team to accomplish the job - no matter what.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #7: FLEXIBLE

This means: You adapt easily when the team changes direction or you're asked to try something new.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #8: COMMITTED

This means: You are responsible and dedicated. You always give your best effort!

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #9: PROBLEM SOLVER

This means: You focus on solutions. You are good about not going out of your way to find fault in others.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

SKILL #10: RESPECTFUL

This means: You treat other team members with courtesy and consideration - all of the time.

Rating: _____ Not so confident _____ Sort of Confident _____ Really confident

Consider your answers:

Did you have mostly “not so confident” checked off?

If so, you are still developing your confidence as a team player. These skills often take some time to develop - so don't worry. It might be helpful to reach out to someone you know and trust to help you focus on developing a plan for working on some of the skills in which you would like to be more confident. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Asking for help when you need it is another great skill of a productive team player.

Did you have mostly “sort of confident” checked off?

If so, you are pretty confident in your teamwork skills - but could probably use a little extra support or development in a few areas. Invite someone close to you (someone you know and trust), to work with you on the areas you would like to improve. Most people would be really happy to help you! Learning the strategies to become a good team member takes time, energy, and dedication.

Did you have mostly “really confident” checked off?

If so, you are truly confident in your ability to be a good team player. That's great! Figure out an area or two where you would like to continue to see improvement (since we should always be striving to be the best we can be) and develop a plan for how to further grow those skills. Also try to offer support to someone you know who might be struggling with building his or her own level of teamwork confidence.
