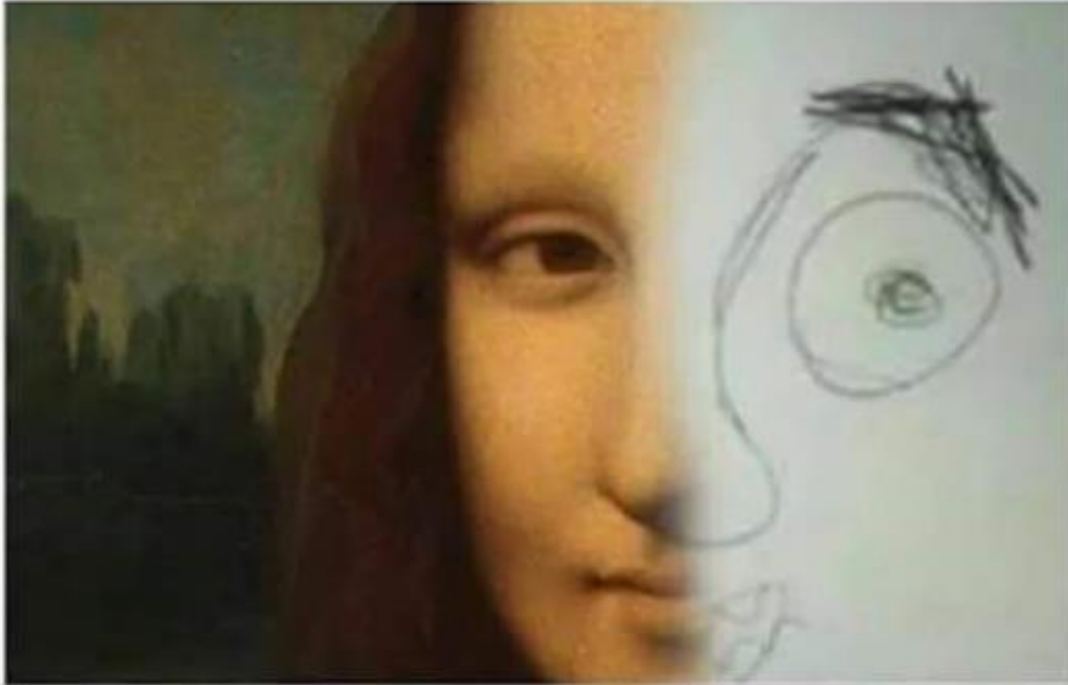


Group Work: Tips for Success

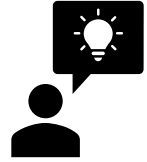
MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT SERVICES (MSS)

CAMOSUN COLLEGE

You make half of the assignment and I'll make the other half and then we'll join them together



Consider:



Think of an unsuccessful group that you were part of (work, study, sports, music). What are some things that made it unsuccessful?

How about a successful group that you were part of? What are some things that made it successful?

For you, what makes a good team member?



"Your long-term success depends on how well you communicate with your boss, co-workers, and customers, and whether you can be an effective and contributing team member."

-Guffey et al. (2016), p. 35



Introduction

- Group work helps facilitate learning
- Well-functioning groups = positive learning experience
- Dysfunctional groups = nightmare?
- *How can we avoid the pitfalls of group work?*

Objectives

By the end of this workshop, learners will be able to...

- Understand the purpose of group work
- Apply strategies for starting strong in a group
- Learn how to avoid potential conflict
- Learn how to use tone to communicate more effectively in a group
- Identify what makes a good group member



Photo by kampus production for Pexels



Why do group work?

Most valuable skill development takes place as the group works together. The process is just as important as the product.

- Leadership
- Organization
- Sharing ideas / Negotiating in Speaking/Writing
- Problem solving
- Conflict management
- Responsibility to others

Tips for Starting Strong

A person in a light blue shirt is seen from the chest up, holding a black and white checkered flag high in the air with their right hand. The background is a bright, cloudy sky. The overall image has a slightly desaturated, high-contrast aesthetic.

Icebreakers

Don't rush the getting-to-know-you phase.

- Ask questions and report answers to group; or find things in common.
- Discuss what 'responsibility,' 'fair distribution of work,' and 'respectful communication' mean to you and your group members.
- Clarify any questions about assignment.



Group Roles

Identify different strengths of each team member. It helps to choose group roles:

- Organizer
- Facilitator
- Researcher
- Writer
- Editor
- Designer, etc.

Many SURVEYS to match personality with group skills:

- Fisher's "[5-minute personality test](#)" or Univ. of Kent's "[Teamworking skills](#)"



Group Contract

Agree to ground rules and sign.

- Create a group contract including:
 - Contact information
 - Communication methods
 - Respectful communication rules
 - Schedule of regular outside-class meetings
 - Initial roles (& rotation schedule)
 - Rules for work completion & consequences for incomplete work



Photo by Pixabay for Pexels

A group of people in a meeting, leaning over a table with papers and a laptop, illustrating teamwork. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The text "Tips for Working Together" is centered in white, with thin white horizontal lines above and below it. The background shows hands pointing at documents, a laptop, and various office supplies like pens and markers.

Tips for Working Together

Intercultural Groups

- Groups from diverse cultures take time to cohere but have better outcomes than same-culture groups. (deVita, 2001)
- Why?
 - Variety of ideas/experiences
 - Avoid 'Groupthink'
 - Can't assume shared expectations: clear communication essential
 - Less familiar = more professional
- Remember that Intercultural Competence is an important skill to develop
- But it takes work: encourage, focus on team-building

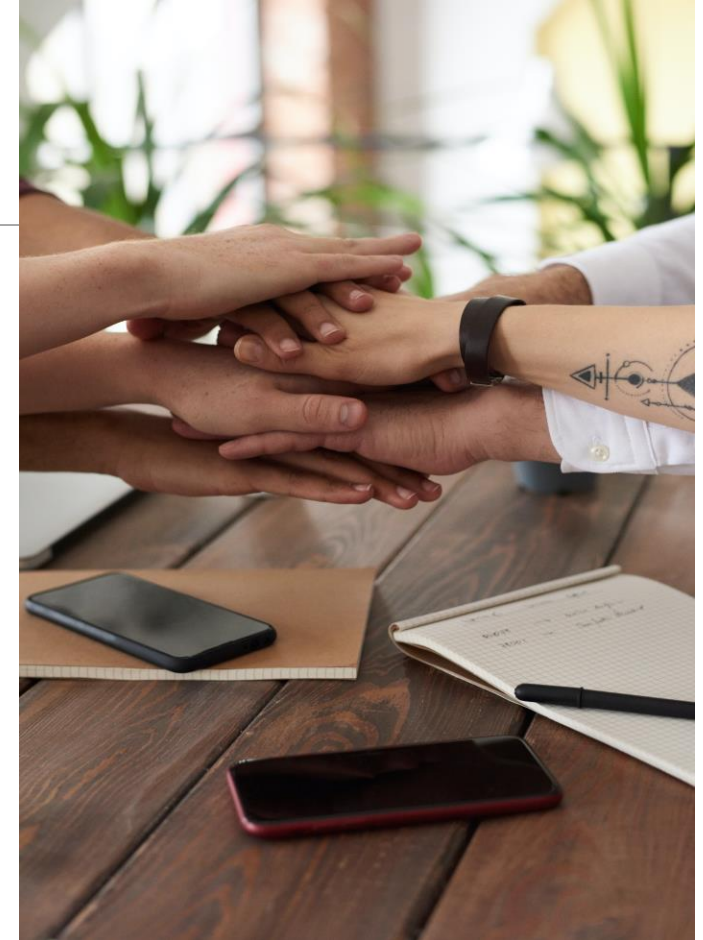
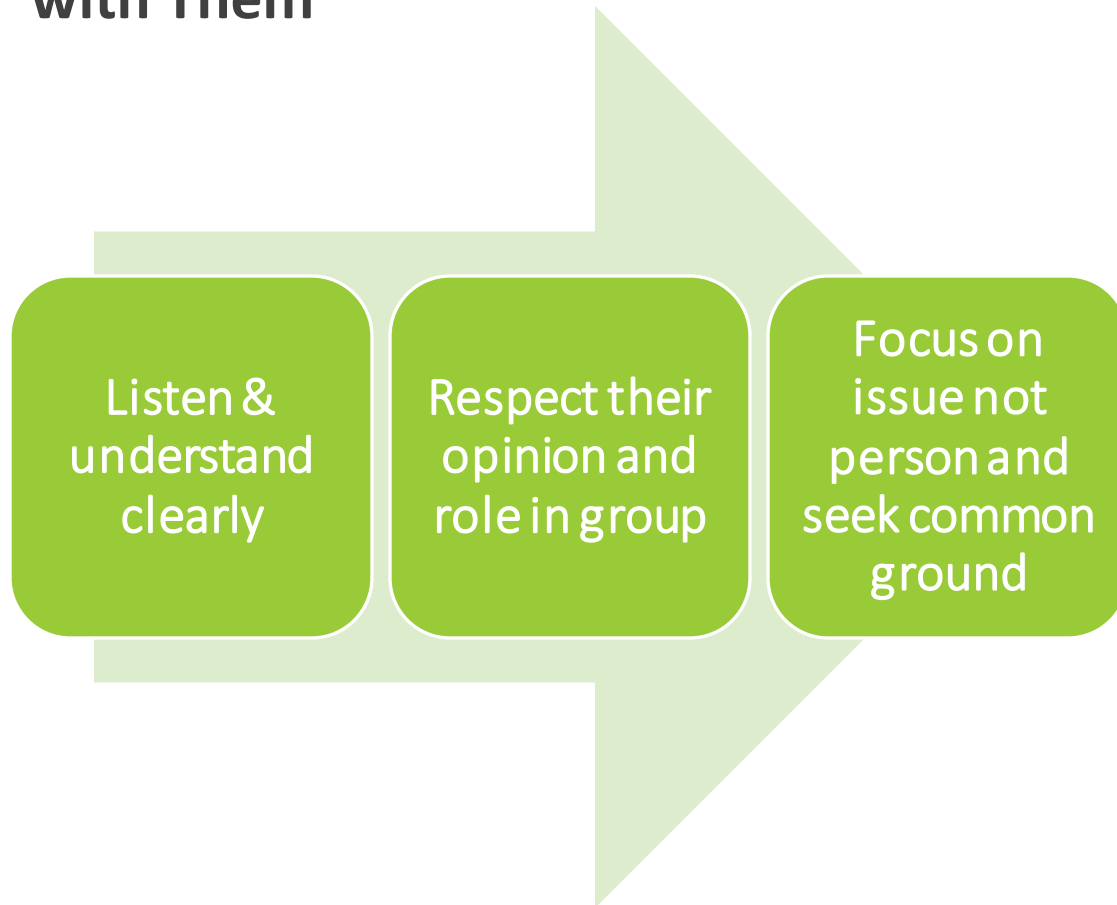


Photo by Fauxesl for Pexels

Dealing with Conflict

Conflicts Happen – It's How You Deal with Them



Member Conflicts

- Classic problem members: "Lone Wolves" "Dominators" "Freeloaders"
- Don't Assume Personality Problem. Usually underlying issue(s):
 - Language difficulties
 - Cultural differences
 - Stress / Time pressures
 - Lack of confidence

Tone to Avoid Conflict

POTENTIAL CONFLICT (MOST DIRECT)

- Why aren't you getting back to us?
- That won't work.
- You're so quiet.

MORE NEUTRAL (KINDER/SOFTER)

- We miss having you in our group discussions. We **understand** everyone is busy, but we **would really appreciate** your help with this project. Can we arrange a better time to meet perhaps? **What works for you?**
- Are you sure? Can we check the textbook/instructions/ask the instructor?
- Hey ____ (name). I've noticed you've been pretty quiet over there. Do you like the ideas we have so far to ... ?

What Makes a Good Team Member?

CAN THIS BE YOU?

- Accepts value of rules and follows them
- Builds the team up - stays positive and encourages others
- Focuses on solutions, not the problem or person



Photo by Rodnae Productions for Pexels



Conclusion

Focus on the PROCESS as much as the product

- Teamwork skills are essential for future work

Take time to build positive working relationships

- Agree on rules --> create a Team Contract

Conflicts will happen

- Resolving them respectfully will make your team stronger

Think positive

- Group bond may extend beyond project – study group, future network, or FRIENDS!

**teamwork
makes the
dreamwork**



800 x 800

Resources

- Learn more at Camosun's excellent 'Group Work' learning skills guide
 - <https://camosun.libguides.com/Groupwork/groups>
- See this example Team Contract from Camosun's School of Business
 - https://camosun.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=35753515
- See the **Extra Resources: Group Work** file provided on D2L (from Cristina)
- See “Giving and Receiving Feedback” presentation:
 - <https://camosunmss.opened.ca/academic-english-support/self-access-study-resources/study-skills/#giving-feedback>

Reflect: What are some things we talked about that you can apply to your next group project?

How was the workshop today?
Take a minute to give feedback:



Need more help?

Camosun Library Student Learning Success Guides

https://camosun.libguides.com/Student_learning_success_guides

Camosun Writing Centre and Learning Skills

<https://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills>

Your school's Multilingual Support Specialist (MSS) for EAL students

<http://camosunmss.opened.ca>



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