

Building positive relationships in life and work

Why teamwork matters!

People rarely work in isolation; rather, they operate as part of a team or multiple teams. Because of this, the success of any business or project depends to some extent on the teamwork of its people.

If you want to develop your career opportunities, knowing how to work effectively in a team is essential. In this resource, you will learn more about the elements of teamwork and what you can do to develop your abilities.

Elements of good teamwork

The highest level of achievement is attained when a team is committed to a task and full use is made of each team member's talents. Individual participation in a team depends on the following elements.

Tolerance: Accepting other people, sharing a common goal, and respecting the views of others in how to achieve that goal.

Honesty: Establishing trust in a team requires open and honest communication.

Commitment and dedication: Teamwork involves interaction of all players. Interacting groups are characterised by a high degree of interdependence between each member. In interacting groups, each member must complete a task in order for the other members to successfully perform their assigned tasks. The degree to which the goals of the group are shared is high, normally requiring group coordination to achieve specified goals.

Flexibility: Team members should be willing to accept a variety of roles in order to help their team achieve a common goal.

Why cooperate as a team?

Cooperation has many benefits. For example:

- Teamwork builds an awareness of interdependence;
- People who cooperate to achieve common goals tend to stimulate each other to higher levels of accomplishment;
- Teamwork builds and reinforces recognition and mutual support within a team;
- Teamwork builds networks and relationships; and
- Teamwork leads to a shared commitment to agreed goals.

What are your teamwork characteristics?

First, complete the following performance preference profile.

Group behaviour	This is like me	This is NOT like me
I like to accept a challenge		
I like to manage a project		
I like to assist people		
I like to coach people		
I like to demonstrate things		
I like to change the way things are done		
I like to be creative		
I like to entertain people		
I like to gather information		
I like to handle details		
I like to help others		
I like to repair things		

Group behaviour	This is like me	This is NOT like me
I like to organise events		
I like to persuade people		
I like to sell ideas		
I like to solve problems		
I like to see the 'big picture'		
I like to work on my own		

Next, highlight the statements in the previous table that you think are leadership traits. Then, with a different colour, highlight those that relate to being a team player.

Summarise what you have discovered about yourself below and decide whether you are more of a leader or team member.

Write your summary here:

Make it count!

Leadership abilities are commonly included as a criterion for graduate positions. Think about times at which you have been a leader and a team player, and try to complete the following two sentences. Once done, upload this resource to your portfolio and give it tag words such as leadership and teamwork.

I have excellent leadership skills. These have been developed through (for example, my part-time role at _____; surf life-saving, at which I have coached _____; my ensemble, where I play guitar and organise _____):

I have excellent teamwork skills, which have been demonstrated in (for example, group assignments at university, lab-based teamwork, my involvement in the local footy team, membership of a jazz band where I _____):

Adapted from [Australian Blueprint for Career Development](#) Phase 2 (C) Career Building 11.2 – Understand and experience the process of career building.