



Exercise – Pairing the group roles with descriptions

Instructions

People are not always aware of their role in a group. Likewise, people can also have multiple roles in a group. Being aware of what role(s) you and others play as group members can help you to take actions, which contribute to the success of a group project. This exercise helps you to check your understanding.

Instructions are detailed on page 2.

Correct answers are presented on page 4.

Further information

The Learning Resources Study Hub provides a range of opportunities (such as workshops and drop-ins) for you to enhance your academic skills. For more information visit:

lrweb.beds.ac.uk/studyhub



Exercise

- 1) Pair the group role (table below) with the corresponding description (listed on page 3):
- 2) Indicate the type of impact (positive or negative) each role can have on group functioning.

The first line in the table below illustrates how to do this:

| Group role | Description | Positive / negative |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------|
| Chairperson | F) Runs the meeting helps the group to stay focused on addressing objectives (agenda items). This person ensures that everyone has the opportunity to speak. | Positive |
| Challenger | | |
| Follower | | |
| Motivator | | |
| Distracter | | |
| Antagonist | | |
| Innovator | | |
| Secretary | | |
| Observer | | |
| Dominator | | |
| Time keeper | | |
| Digresser | | |
| Communication officer | | |
| Blocker | | |

Definitions of group roles

- A) Behaves in a way that undermines the ability of the group to focus on the task in hand
- B) Ensures that systems are in place to ensure that group members can communicate effectively. For instance, via email / social media / phone / Skype
- C) Actively challenge decisions that are being made to encourage critical thinking amongst the group
- D) Ensures that deadlines are put in place for all agreed actions
- E) Does not participate in discussion will just sit quietly and watch.
- ~~F) Runs the meeting helps the group to stay focused on addressing objectives (agenda items). This person ensures that everyone has the opportunity to speak.~~
- G) Immediately disagrees with everything that is suggested.
- H) Takes minutes during the meeting
- I) Is positive about the group and how individuals are working.
- J) Immediately takes over the running of the group. Assigns for everybody tasks to complete.
- K) Immediately agrees with everything that is said – even if they really disagree.
- L) Consistently comes up with new ideas
- M) Enjoys arguments and therefore will try to argue with other members of the group.
- N) Discusses topics that are unrelated to the purpose of the group work

Answers

| Group role | Definition | Positive / negative |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Chairperson | F) Runs the meeting helps the group to stay focused on addressing objectives (agenda items). This person ensures that everyone has the opportunity to speak. | Positive |
| Challenger | C) Actively challenge decisions that are being made to encourage critical thinking amongst the group | Positive |
| Follower | K) Immediately agrees with everything that is said – even if they really disagree. | Negative |
| Motivator | I) Is positive about the group and how individuals are working. | Positive |
| Distracter | A) Behaves in a way that undermines the ability of the group to focus on the task in hand | Negative |
| Antagonist | M) Enjoys arguments and therefore will try to argue with other members of the group. | Negative |
| Innovator | L) Consistently comes up with new ideas | Positive |
| Secretary | H) Takes minutes during the meeting | Positive |
| Observer | E) Does not participate in discussion will just sit quietly and watch. | Negative |
| Dominator | J) Immediately takes over the running of the group. Assigns for everybody tasks to complete. | Negative |
| Time keeper | D) Ensures that deadlines are put in place for all agreed actions | Positive |
| Digresser | N) Discusses topics that are unrelated to the purpose of the group work | Negative |
| Communication officer | B) Ensures that systems are in place to ensure that group members can communicate effectively. For instance, via email / social media / phone / Skype. | Positive |
| Blocker | G) Immediately disagrees with everything that is suggested. | Negative |