

## Building a Team

(contributed by Meg Einhorn)

### A simulation exercise

1. **Goal:** to encourage students to discover something of the talent, skills and qualities they bring to a team to help them consider their adequacies and deficiencies as a team.
2. **Time required:** thirty minutes to one hour, depending on size of teams.
3. **Numbers:** it is better if several teams do the task simultaneously so as to provide a richer variety of understanding about group dynamics.

#### 4. Procedure

(a) The tutor distributes the task and asks each team to keep to the time limit.

(b) After 20 minutes (the timing is flexible as the main point is to ensure that the teams can reach an agreement in the time allowed) invite the teams

(i) to explain and justify their choice;

(ii) to describe how they went about the choice;

(iii) to talk about what the procedure described in (b) told them about their team and the different people in it;

(iv) to predict how they might best use their collective strengths and weaknesses as a team.

#### 5. Variations

(a) The details of both the task and the profiles may be changed to suit the group.

(b) Teams can be invited to exchange members to enable each to achieve a better balance.

**Task:** You are working as a group of final year students in Community Studies on an educational project designed to examine the problems of teaching professional courses in the health/care field. The project is to be marked as a group task and you will also function as a tutorial group up to and including separate exams each of which will include a question in interdisciplinary studies.

*Your team is short of one member. Various other students are interested in joining you and their profiles are given on the attached sheet. You have twenty minutes to choose by consensus the final member of your team from these described on the profiles. You will then be asked to explain your choice and how you went about making it.*

## Profiles

**Philip**: A “mature” student, he has had a lot of experience in industrial management with a special interest in committee work. He actually likes writing reports and hopes to become an NHS administrator. Is married with a family of 4 children. In groups he tends to create a sort of safe and trusting atmosphere.

**Yvonne**: Is a very attractive blonde who matches her good looks in fine sense of humour. She is also very intelligent, is full of ideas, but does need a lot of encouragement to succeed. Yvonne tends to invest energy in her work only as long as promising results are just around the corner.

**Mary**: An interesting and caring girl with an unhappy home life, she seems to cover up for her problems by working hard and successfully. However, she does not return home every weekend, and is then not contactable. She is very critical of the way most systems are managed and her views on health and care tend to be very radical. In groups she has difficulties making her intentions understood.

**Harry**: Is a great raconteur who can make the most pedestrian incident sound fascinating. He writes well too, though his academic standing is low. He has however a lot of drive and is usually liked by all who work with him. Groups tend to depend on his presence, once he has established himself.

**Gill**: Is an excellent organiser. She achieves this through a mixture of charm; flirtation and sheer persistence and she would be the first to admit that she is consciously manipulates people when it suits her. She is good at directing the attention of the group to its own process and likes to talk openly about personal behaviour.

**Geoffrey**: Is very conscientious and particularly good at searching out and piecing together detailed information. He has, however, a stammer which makes him embarrassed to contribute to discussion and he would probably rather work on his own. His work is however also completed with great diligence.

**Winnie**: An acerbic partner for anyone, she has developed a fine critical intellect which frightens many people away. She gathers many admirers but has few if any close friends. She is much respected by the tutors and will probably stay on to do research. She is often valued for the intellectual discipline she exerts on a group.

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