WORKBOOK WORKSHOP 1

Facilitating Multidisciplinary Collaboration

Your Name:_____

1. Self-disclosure exercise

Please write down a few words about your own experience of being a member of a multidisciplinary group consisting of people you had not met before (e.g., about your experience in Engineering Design).

Consider for example:

- How did you feel back then during or just before the first meeting (e.g. nervous; excited)? Can you remember why you felt like that? What was pleasant/unpleasant about working in that team?
- Were you happy with the end result? Why (not)?

What is (are) your main take-away(s) from that experience?

Self-disclosure can be a powerful intervention. It makes it easier for the teams to connect with you. And, perhaps more importantly, by being open about your experience and take-away(s), you make it easier for your team to do the same and to share important information (e.g. SSA1). It can also serve as a foundation for other interventions (see next pages).

2. Observing your teams & intervene when necessary

What is effective team behavior during the initial phase of collaboration? And how can your teams deviate from this "ideal"? I also give advice on how you can intervene when you think it is necessary.

Instructions:

- Read the descriptions carefully
- Take the time to observe the processes in your team
- When you think it is time to intervene, highlight what you tried
- Afterwards jot down some quick thoughts on the effectiveness/usefulness/consequences

Phase 1	High Performing Team description
Covers meetings 1-4	Effective teams in this stage consist of members who aim to collectively get a clear understanding of the assignment by talking about the requirements etc., during the first meetings. They freely exchange knowledge, viewpoints and discuss ideas related to the assignment and don't settle too soon on an idea. Further, they openly talk about how to approach the task, when to meet, how to communicate, etc. and implement such a structure early on. They discuss members' individual goals/aspirations (usually in terms of effort/time and grades) and formulate a collectively agreed upon goal. Finally, effective teams quickly establish how to make decisions (so called decision rules: majority, consensus, veto, etc.).

Tutor team nr:_____

| open communication | work norms & procedures |
| shared goals | participation |

My team deviates from that description in the following way	What you can do	Evaluation & reflection notes
No/hardly a discussion about how to approach the task, meeting times, task responsibilities, nor about how to make decisions as a team.	Ask questions related to these issues! Have they thought of that? Otherwise you can suggest it is a good thing to discuss now.	
The discussion about planning of tasks, task responsibilities, how to organize the work, meeting times, how to make decisions, does not come to an end.	Stress that it is important to come to some agreements on how to do the work and how to make decisions. Also indicate that when necessary, the team can agree to later on make changes to the agreements.	
Some members don't share their viewpoints, knowledge, opinions, or ideas regarding the task (assignment).	Invite the specific person(s) to chip in: "John, do you have perhaps a different perspective on the issue?" or "Hang on everyone, I think it is important to invite Charlotte to share her thoughts". When the entire team is not doing well on this point, you can suggest the minimal group approach (everyone writes down ideas, thoughts, etc. after which they are shared in the group). You can then ask people to give a reflection on ideas etc. by specifically inviting them.	

One or two members are very dominant in sharing viewpoints, knowledge, opinions, or ideas regarding the task (assignment) and/or on how to approach the assignment, how to work together, etc.	See above. When persistent, you may consider to give feedback about their behavior: "I see you are very enthusiastic and have given this a lot of thought, so thank you for your input. I *also* would like to hear the input of the others.." and then invite the other team members to voice their ideas or opinions.	
Members dismiss, laugh at, or show contempt when others give ideas or suggestions or may verbally attack people who have a different opinion about the task (assignment)	Correct this behavior: "I think it is important that everyone feels they can contribute to the task, so let's listen to what John has to say" or "It is important to not show our opinion regarding ideas/suggestions, that will hamper the creative process of our team". When it happens in another type of discussion you can try: "Please, an open debate means we have to listen first to what others say and then we can start a discussion based on facts".	
No sharing of aspirations (e.g. "I am happy with a 6") and/or no collective goal is developed.	Ask questions about what they hope to achieve in this course. What are their priorities, goals (also grade-wise), etc. After sharing, you may want to suggest that it will help the team to collectively define their goal/aspiration.	

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