Assigning Group Roles

Roles can be assigned by luck of the draw (using playing cards) or by preference of individuals.

Roles assigned within the groups can be rotated frequently to form positive interdependence. This practice discourages domination by one person, a problem common in less-structured group work, and gives all students an opportunity to practice various social, communication, and leadership skills. This emphasis on rotating roles prepares all students for success not only in the classroom, but in the "real world" of society, where teamwork is essential. If students assign their own roles, group members may often opt for tasks that come easily or may circumvent tasks that challenge them. Assigning (and rotating) roles allows students to be stretched by a variety of tasks.

It is often useful to give the rationale for these rotating roles, which will differ from institution to institution and from discipline to discipline.

The following defined roles work well in college and university classrooms:

GROUP FACILITATOR:
- Responsible for moderating all team discussions
- Keeps the group on task for each assignment
- Ensures that everybody assumes their share of the work involved
- Makes certain that everyone benefits from an optimal learning situation

GROUP RECORDER
- Responsible for getting and managing group's materials, resources
- Distributes materials
- Returns all papers, assignments, notes to the team/members
- Maintains all team records
- Records all assigned team activities
- Summarizes all team discussions
- Prepares the group's activities, worksheets, written assignments, reports

GROUP REPORTER
- Orally summarizes the group's activities or conclusions
- Routinely assist the GROUP RECORDER with preparation of group products

GROUP TIMEKEEPER
- Responsible for keeping the group members aware of time constraints for activities
- Help the group remain on task
- Consults with other team members when necessary
- Assumes role of any absent group member

For long-term group projects, other roles may be assigned, such as:

Researcher

Word Processor

Presentation Manager

Resource Procurer

Liaison to Instructor

Team Roles

Facilitator

Recorder

Member

OTHER ROLES:

    Spokesperson
    Timekeeper
    Laison to (instructor; other groups)
    Resource/Materials

22

Team Facilitator

1. Calls meeting to order

2. Helps the team set its agenda

3. Serves the wishes of the team

4. Arranges logistics for the team

5. Keeps the team on the task

6. Suggests solutions to team problems

7. Helps members clarify points

8. Protects members from attack

9. Contributes sparingly

10. Reviews effectiveness of team process with the team

Team Recorder

1. Keeps a **public record** of the team's ideas and progress (uses flipcharts)

2. Records essential ideas of the team

3. Checks to be sure ideas are clear and accurate

4. Works closely with the facilitator

5. Uses charts, multiple colors, and other techniques to highlight and summarize ideas of the team

Team Member

1. Supports the work of the team

2. Contributes ideas about content and process

3. Listens carefully to others

4. Serves as facilitator or recorder when asked

5. Supports the facilitator and the recorder

6. Builds on others' ideas

7. Helps move the team to its goal

8. Keeps on task

9. Maintains a positive attitude

Effective Teamwork

1. Clarify the required work of the team

2. Keep the end (purpose) in mind

3. Attend to group process

4. Encourage all to contribute

5. Keep track of time

6. Finish the task on time

7. Don't sweat the small things

8. Keep focused, avoid "star gazing"

Individual Rating Form

List the members of the group you worked with during the development of the project, including yourself; rate each as follows:

1	2	3	4
Detracted from achievement of group goals	Made little contribution to group goals	Made much contribution to group goals	Contributed to group goals beyond what would be normally expected

<u>Group Members</u>   <u>Rating</u>

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____