

Constructive and Destructive Group Behaviors

Each group will have its own feel and personality based on the people in the group. This exercise helps clarify, both to you and your participants, the strengths and weaknesses each member contributes to the group.

Activity (10 minutes): Each participant chooses his most constructive and destructive group behavior from the following lists. Each participant then shares the choice with the larger group and explains why she chose those behaviors. The facilitator may also wish to write down each participant's strengths and weaknesses so individual participants can be called on when a certain behavior is needed or needs to be curbed.

Constructive Group Behaviors

<i>Cooperating:</i>	Expresses interest in the views and perspectives of other group members and is willing to adapt for the good of the group.
<i>Clarifying:</i>	Makes issues clear for the group by listening, summarizing and focusing discussions.
<i>Inspiring:</i>	Enlivens the group, encourages participation and progress.
<i>Harmonizing:</i>	Encourages group cohesion and collaboration. For example, uses humor as a relief after a particularly difficult discussion.
<i>Risk Taking:</i>	Is willing to risk possible personal loss or embarrassment for the group or project success.
<i>Process Checking:</i>	Questions the group on process issues such as agenda, time frames, discussion topics, decision methods, use of information, etc.

Destructive Group Behaviors

<i>Dominating:</i>	Takes much of meeting time expressing self views and opinions. Tries to take control by use of power, time, etc.
<i>Rushing:</i>	Encourages the group to move on before task is complete. Gets "tired" of listening to others and working as a group.
<i>Withdrawing:</i>	Removes self from discussions or decision-making. Refuses to participate.
<i>Discounting:</i>	Disregards or minimizes group or individual ideas or suggestions. Severe discounting behavior includes insults, which are often jokes.
<i>Digressing:</i>	Rambles, tells stories, and takes group away from primary purpose.
<i>Blocking:</i>	Impedes group progress by obstructing all ideas and suggestions. "That will never work because..."