

Learning objectives:

As a result of participating in this session, you will:

- 1) Hear descriptions of eight behavioral roles that occur during a team project.
- 2) Identify one or more of your preferred roles.
- 3) Consider how these behaviors can contribute to team success or failure.
- 4) Devise a few strategies that will be helpful to your team as it works together

Listen to an overview of eight study group roles

As you listen to the eight study group roles, remember they are used to describe behavior, not to stereotype people. All of us are capable of performing each and all of these behaviors. If we couldn't, then we wouldn't be able to complete individual projects.

As I describe each one, ask yourself: *Does this behavior sound like me?* If it doesn't, then think about how you would react to someone exhibiting such behavior in your group. Also consider how the behavior can help a team and in what ways it can hinder a team.

For the purpose of teaching the behaviors, they have been associated with "characters" and will be discussed in the extreme. This method of teaching helps distinguish the eight behaviors in a limited time. Nevertheless, be aware of the dangers of associating individuals too closely with a stylized role. *These descriptions are not personality profiles.* They apply only to group behavior.

You'll soon see that the behaviors are depicted as group monsters. The pictures are meant to remind you that too much of any behavior can lead to problems. We'll discuss what can go wrong if a group has too much or too little of the team behavior.

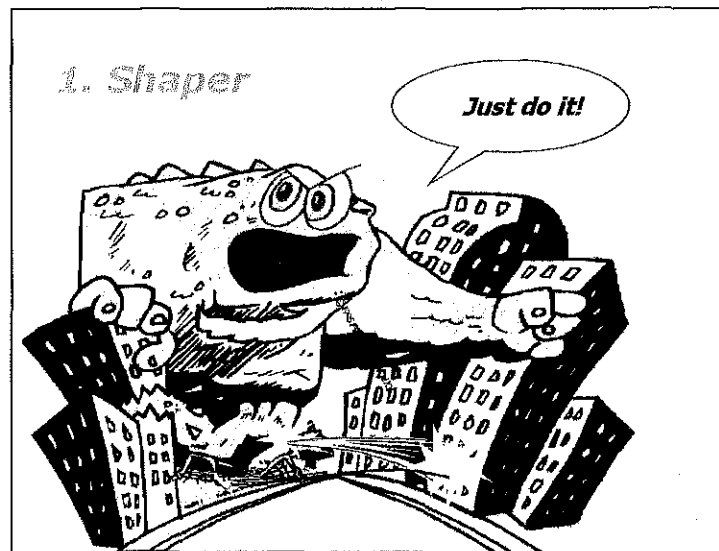
Identify your preferences as I explain each of them.

I hope you'll be comfortable selecting your top two or three roles. The role that sounds most like you will be called your "primary" role. It's the one that is more likely to show up as a group monster during periods of high stress. I also hope you'll be able to select a "secondary" and third-level or "tertiary" role based on what you hear and see.

These roles are linked to the research of Dr. M. Belbin, a professor from Henley Management College in England. (For more information see the last page of this handout.)

The eight team roles I will discuss are:

1. Shaper
2. Coordinator
3. Idea Generator
4. Networker
5. Monitor Evaluator
6. Implementer
7. Finisher
8. Internal Facilitator



- Seen as a dynamic, forceful team member with high energy
- Acts like an engine to push the team forward
- Likes competition and loves to win
- Challenges inertia, ineffectiveness, or self-deception

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- Have you ever pushed a team in the direction you wanted it to go and later discovered it was the wrong direction?
 - Do you become impatient with members who stall progress?
 - In times of stress, might others complain that you're too bossy or too challenging if you think something needs to get done?

Too little shaping behavior on a team:

Without an engine, no one gets the group started and no one pushes for top results. Instead, team members waste a great deal of time at the start of the project. They may settle for an acceptable rather than a top-notch presentation.

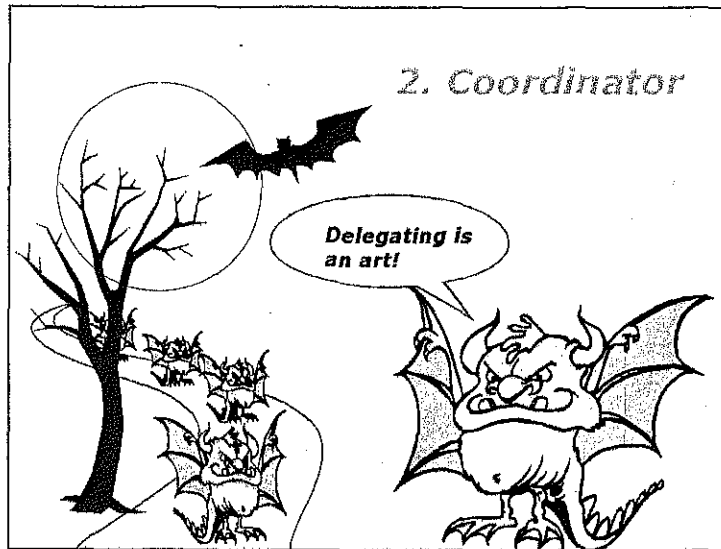
Too much shaping:

This team has the strong potential for early conflict. Several people may try to force the team in different directions. There may be more disagreement than some group members would like to have on their team.

No, this doesn't seem like me at all



Yes, this seems exactly like me



- Seen as objective — welcomes all potential contributions
- Acts like a chairperson, pulling members together
- Asks for opinions, but then takes a stand
- Determines how to get the best from others

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- Are you ever too generous in asking all participants to voice their views?
 - Do you ever delegate tasks that you could take on yourself?
 - In times of stress, do you ever over-mediate or become too procedural during meetings?

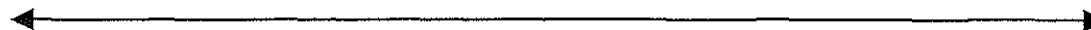
Too little coordinating behavior on a team:

Team meetings are likely to be unstructured and take too long. At the end of a group session, items that should have been addressed will have been forgotten. Some people might not be asked to contribute; therefore, the talents of some group members will be overlooked.

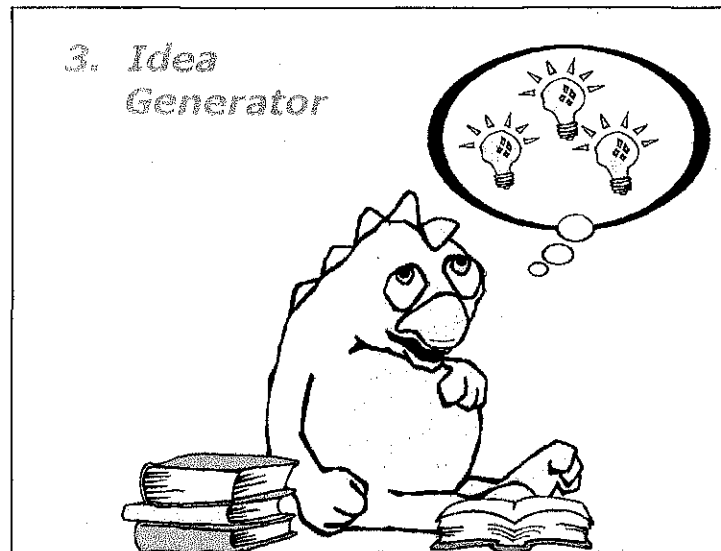
Too much coordinating:

This team may have too many people trying to run each meeting. Or it may suffer from too many meetings and too many different agendas. In addition, prolonged debate about how to delegate responsibilities may delay the study group.

No, this doesn't
seem like me at all



Yes, this seems
exactly like me



- Seen as the team's source for original ideas
- Relies on creativity and critical thinking ability
- Contributes most when encouraged by a Coordinator
- Likes finding a subject that stretches the imagination

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- Do you ever have trouble explaining or clarifying your complex ideas? Are you highly theoretical?
 - Could you be overly sensitive if someone criticizes one of your germinating ideas?
 - Under stress, might you retreat and work on your own?

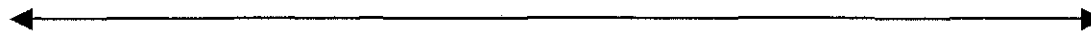
Too little idea generating behavior on a team:

The team goes for the first idea or the first solution. Since it doesn't have enough input to begin the decision-making process, it may just move to action before exploring better possibilities.

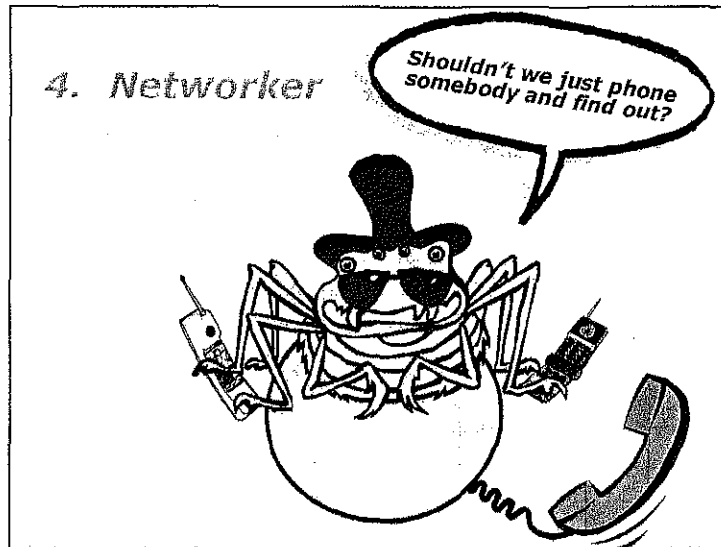
Too much idea generating:

Too many ideas could derail the group, with members each trying to "top" others' ideas. The team may spend too much time and energy getting all the possibilities on the table. In such cases, frustrated individuals may go off and work on their own. On this team, imagination could easily trump practicality.

No, this doesn't
seem like me at all



Yes, this seems
exactly like me



- Seen as the team's connection to the outside world
- Displays a talent for being a creative "borrower"
- Values social relationships
- Expresses an enthusiasm for change

- Could other team members complain that you like new ideas far more than you like follow through?
- Do you tend to get bored rather easily and rely on others to provide the spark that keeps you interested?
- Under stress, do you find that you're talking more than working?

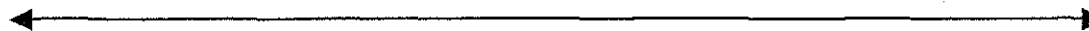
Too little networking behavior on a team:

The group focus is myopic. The team does work that has already been done, reinvents the wheel, and fails to find out what the decision-makers really want. The group is missing the creative spark that would be provided by a networker; the people on the team are not asking the questions that need to be asked.

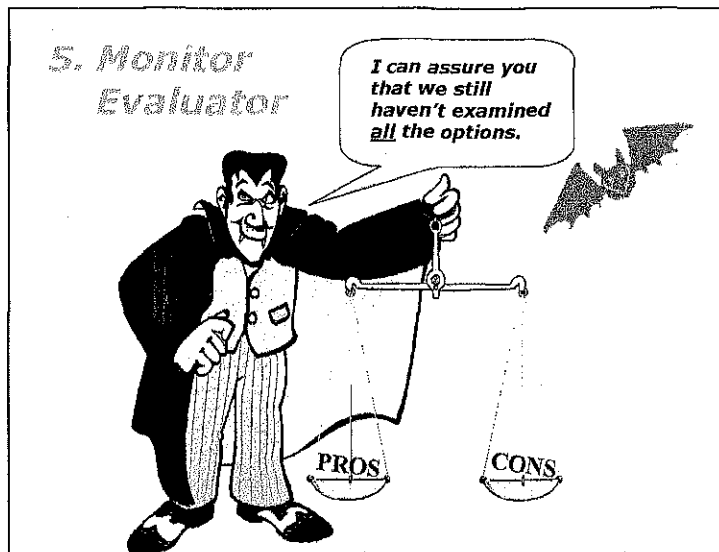
Too much networking:

Everyone's on the phone and out networking and nobody is doing the work or the follow through. This team is connected to everything but its own work.

No, this doesn't seem like me at all



Yes, this seems exactly like me



- Seen as an exceptionally thorough decision-maker
- Bases decisions on the facts
- Relies on strong analytical skills and critical thinking ability
- Tends to make greatest contributions at the time a decision needs to be made

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- Do you find it difficult to motivate or inspire teammates?
 - Could others believe that you need to be more intuitive?
 - Under stress, could you slow down the group to the point that you earn the title: "the terminator of enthusiasm"?

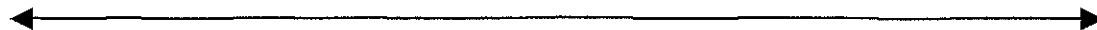
Too little evaluating behavior on a team:

The team's decisions are likely to be made without complete analysis. In a team presentation, the group might be caught unprepared for the audience's difficult questions, if no one on this team ever took on the role of "devil's advocate."

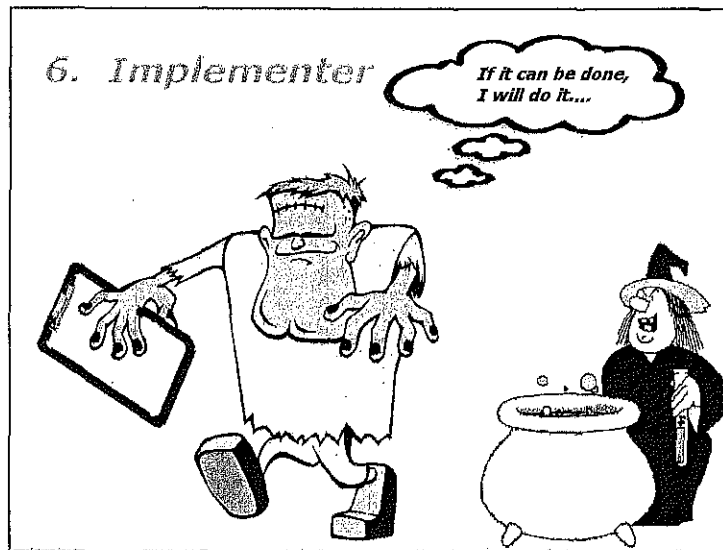
Too much evaluating:

Ideas will be quashed as they are instantly evaluated. The team may not start moving soon enough to meet deadline because it is in search of more and more information for the "right" decision. In other words, the team suffers from "analysis paralysis."

No, this doesn't
seem like me at all



Yes, this seems
exactly like me



- ✧ Seen as the one who makes it happen
- ✧ Acts as record-keeper, task organizer, and check-list maker
- ✧ Relies on self-discipline, organizational ability and common sense
- ✧ Likes finding practical solutions to problems

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- ✧ Do you find it difficult to get started without clear goals?
 - ✧ Are you wary of unproven ideas?
 - ✧ Under stress, might your teammates complain that you are so dedicated to the plan that you won't accept change?

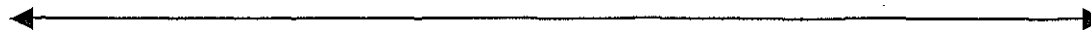
Too little implementing behavior on a team:

This team has lots of ideas and a sound decision, but no plan and no schedule of responsibilities so nothing gets done – except more thinking and/or decision-making. No one seems to know who is doing what or when it should be done.

Too much implementing:

This team has several plans operating at once. People agree in a meeting and then all go off and follow their own “master” plans.

No, this doesn't
seem like me at all



Yes, this seems
exactly like me



- Seen as the detail and loose-ends manager
- Acts as the team's time keeper
- Displays a perfectionist's talent for finding and fixing errors
- Likes to check the finished product before it has to be turned in

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- Do you tend to worry about what could go wrong?
 - Do you ever hold up the team, trying to ensure that work has been properly done?
 - Under times of stress, could someone on the team complain that you need to learn how to "let go"?

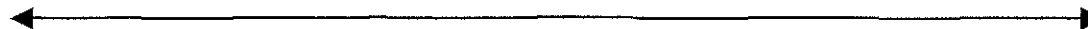
Too little finishing behavior on a team:

This team misses deadlines. It may not have adequate time to check the finished product or may overlook an important detail early in the project that hurts the results.

Too much finishing:

The team is so focused on the details it may miss the big picture or get so bogged down in details that it still misses the deadline. In other words, the team is focusing on spelling, word choice, and font style rather than the objective. The product is likely typo free, but the decision-maker may decide that it missed the point.

No, this doesn't
seem like me at all



Yes, this seems
exactly like me

8. Internal Facilitator



- Seen as highly perceptive and very social
- Serves as the team diplomat
- Likes a pleasant team environment
- Fosters team unity —
“smoothes ruffled feathers” and averts friction

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- ❑ Do you sometimes hesitate to get your points across in the face of strong opposition?
 - ❑ Are you overly responsive to the group atmosphere?
 - ❑ During times of crisis, might other team members find you indecisive?

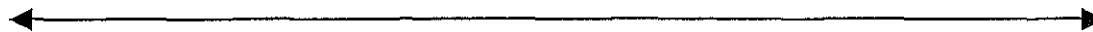
Too little facilitating behavior on a team:

There is a great deal of conflict on this team, much of it unresolved. The tension may prevent constructive work. People aren't relating effectively to one another and many remain unaware of misperceptions or hurt feelings. Third-party feedback may be the norm.

Too much facilitating:

This team exists in a tea party or beer blast environment. Everyone has a great time, but while working with the group is lots of fun, working and learning can take second place to socializing.

No, this doesn't
seem like me at all



Yes, this seems
exactly like me

If possible, try to choose three behaviors as preferences.

Primary (P) _____

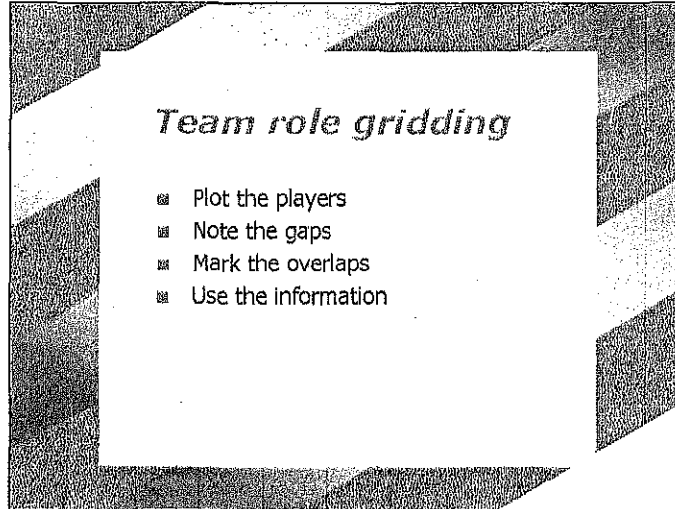
Secondary (S) _____

Tertiary (T) _____

If your preferences are not clear, try to list your choices in another way.

If you are stuck between two options, look at the monster pictures and think about your team behavior under stress. Primary behaviors would be likely to surface at such times. If you still can't choose, then either opt for two primary preferences or two secondary preferences, depending on how closely you identified with the described behaviors.

If you only have a slight preference for any of the behaviors, identify them all as tertiary preferences. Please try to limit the number of behaviors you select to three so your team will get a better idea of what you most like to contribute.



Assessing your preferences is interesting and helpful, but considering your own preferences with the preferences of your teammates adds the real value.

Therefore:

1. Record names and preferences on page 13
2. Note your gaps
3. Mark your overlaps
4. Discuss the findings with the group
5. List specific actions your group could take to make the semester successful.
6. If time permits, look at the writing and speaking information on page 19.

When completing step five, be specific and realistic. For example, if you are missing the original ideas that would be provided with "idea generator," then the team could read about brainstorming, "brainwriting*," or the "Delphi method" and hold a special meeting to use one of the techniques. Bad action steps for this example would be "think up lots of ideas," which is too general, or "kidnap a creative scientist from another team," which is not realistic.

*Brainwriting was developed by Bernd Rohback and is explained by D. Harrington-Mackin in *The Team-Building Tool Kit*

Team Role Gridding Exercise (record name and "P," "S," and "T" results)

Team Member	1 (SH)	2 (CO)	3 (IG)	4 (NW)	5 (ME)	6 (IM)	7 (FN)	8 (IF)

Possible strategies to improve your effectiveness:

Baney, Joann, *Guide to Interpersonal Communication*, 2003

Belbin, Meredith, *Management Teams: Why They Succeed and Fail*, 2nd edition, 2004

— *Team Roles at Work*, 1996

Harrington-Mackin, Deborah, *The Team Building Tool Kit*, 1994

Scholtes, Peter and Brian Joiner, *The Team Handbook*, 1996

Discovered team Behaviors	Belbin's Initial Team Roles	Today's Vocabulary
I. Direction and Coordination	Shaper	1. Shaper
	Chairman (later Co-ordinator)	2. Coordinator
II. Creativity	Plant	3. Idea Generator
	Resource investigator	4. Networker
III. Analysis	Monitor evaluator	5. Monitor Evaluator
IV. Implementation	Company worker (later Implementer)	6. Implementer
V. Finishing	Completer finisher	7. Finisher
VI. Cohesion	Teamworker	8. Internal Facilitator
	(added later "Specialist")	

Source: adapted from Belbin's *Team Roles at Work*