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### Critical Review of Devil's Advocate Strategy

Working on a team project can bring many challenges. These challenges may not become apparent until they are experienced firsthand. With proper knowledge of the underlying psychological effects of teamwork, one can improve team efficiency. One particular negative effect is groupthink. Groupthink occurs when team members aim to conform their decisions to each other, potentially leading to negative outcomes. One possible strategy to prevent groupthink is by secretly assigning a person to be a devil's advocate. This person will aim to disrupt groupthink by raising points that oppose the thoughts of the group. Studies have analyzed the devil's advocate strategy. One of these studies is "The Devil's Advocate: A Strategy to Avoid Groupthink and Stimulate Discussion in Focus Groups." This study involved secretly converting team members into devil's advocates and then collecting interview data. One of the authors of this study is Frances Baum, who is a social scientist. She has plenty of other work, meaning that she is experienced in the field. The study includes some positive and negative interview results. One response is as follows, "It was useful, I remember at least one occasion when the devil's advocate put another viewpoint that I hadn't considered-opens up your mind a bit" (MacDougall 538). This response generally describes the main benefits of a devil's advocate. There may also be negative effects, such as getting "too much into the issues" (MacDougall 539). The study mentions some possible solutions to the negative effects, such as training devil's advocates before they perform.

### Research Proposal to Relate Friendship with Team Performance

I propose a research procedure to study how friendship affects team performance. This will uncover knowledge that will allow for improved team efficiency. I am currently working in a team, so this knowledge would be beneficial to me. I plan to not only analyze friendship, but also different social dynamics. For example, I would like to analyze groups involving hostility or romance. In a worker's response to a devil's advocate, they said, "They introduced several of the interactions, used humor well, kept arguments going from the devil's advocate point of view and drew out other side" (MacDougall 539). The humor aspect is important because it signifies a possible friendship dynamic in this team. This worker mentioned positive opinions towards this devil's advocate, sparking a hypothesis that friendship is associated with team efficiency.

Works Cited

MacDougall, Colin, and Frances Baum. "The Devil's Advocate: A Strategy to Avoid Groupthink and Stimulate Discussion in Focus Groups." Sage Journals, Nov. 1997, [journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/104973239700700407](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/104973239700700407).