Enhancing Group and Team Communication Skills

2020-03-24

Course(s) Used:

- Team and Small Group Communication

    Goals and Objectives:

- Students understand the common constraints on group decision making.
- Students are able to articulate how these satisficing and group-think are influenced by these constraints.

    Rationale:
    Students need to be able to articulate when and why groups choose sub-optimal decision-making strategies.

Materials Needed

Materials:

- None

    Technology:

- Classroom computer and projector

Outline of the Lesson

1. Review of previous session's content
2. Many decisions about participation and leadership in groups are made before anyone says anything.
3. Placement is also associated with how much we talk

    A. Initiating messages is associated with more central placement in a group

    B. Receiving messages is associated with more central placement in a group

4. Placement predicts leader emergence[1,2]

    A. Much of turn regulation is managed through eye contact[3]

    B. Some positions make eye contact more likely or more difficult

    C. We tend to look at the people that we expect to speak next

    D. We tend to look at people when listening, and less when talking

5. Lesson closing

[1] The study of how people are arranged in the environment is called "Small Group Ecology"

[2] Howells, L. T., & Becker, S. W. (1962). Seating arrangement and leadership emergence. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 65*(2) 148–150. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0040421

[3] We know this, which is why students avoid eye contact when they don't want to answer.

Variations and Accommodations

Follow guidance from local accommodation authorities.