



5 Teamwork

Learning objectives in this unit

- Exploring team relationships
- Dealing with conflict
- Adding emphasis
- Responding to feedback

Case study

- Developing a teamwork ethos

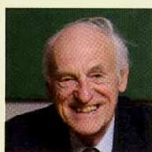
Starting point

- 1 What problems can occur when working with other people?
- 2 What different types of personality are needed for a successful team?

Working with words | Exploring team relationships

- 1 Dr Meredith Belbin of the Henley Management College developed nine team roles to show how different individuals behave in teams. Read the text and compare these team roles with your ideas in *Starting point*.

What kind of team player are you?



Meredith Belbin

1 Plant

Valued in a team for their ability to come up with strange and innovative solutions. Like the absent-minded professor-inventor, they often spend time quietly working alone, which results in solutions to problems, but they may have trouble communicating their ideas effectively.

2 Resource investigator

This person contributes to the team with boundless enthusiasm at the start of the project. They are excellent networkers who express themselves clearly and they vigorously pursue opportunities outside the team. They tend to lose momentum towards the end of a project.

3 Coordinator

The natural chairperson, able to detach themselves from the detail, to see the bigger picture. They are mature, good at delegating and at helping the rest of the team to reach decisions. Their management and delegating powers may mean they don't pay enough attention to their own duties at work.

4 Shaper

They spur their team into action. You have to tread carefully with this person; they thrive on pressure and challenge, and often get results by pushing others hard to do the same. In their drive to get things done, they may upset other team members by seeming to treat them unfairly.

5 Team worker

Working closely with everyone, they like to steer clear of confrontation. They are good listeners and can help to calm situations by talking through problems with colleagues. However, as they don't like taking sides, they may find it difficult to make decisions.

6 Completer – Finisher

The team's perfectionist. They take themselves very seriously – keeping to schedules and maintaining quality are equally important to them, and they pay painstaking attention to detail. Colleagues may have trouble relating to them as they are poor delegators and they tend to worry excessively about minor details.

7 Monitor – Evaluator

They are good at judging the situation due to a great ability to analyse logically. They assess periodically and look at all the available options objectively. However, their work can fall short of expectations as they can lack drive and find it difficult to relate passionately to their work.

8 Implementer

This person is disciplined and can be relied on to perform to a high level and to cope with things practically. They tend not to deviate from a set path and can find it difficult to take new ideas on board.

9 Specialist

They are highly skilled and are usually viewed positively for providing specialized knowledge. They tend not to see the bigger picture, focusing on technicalities.



- 2** Read the text again and discuss questions 1–2 with a partner.
- 1 What is the main positive and negative characteristic of each role?
 - 2 Which team role best describes you?
- 3** Underline the adverb in *italics* which collocates with each verb in 1–8. Then check your answers in the text in **1**.
- 1 communicate their ideas *thoroughly* / *effectively*
 - 2 express themselves *understandably* / *clearly*
 - 3 tread *carefully* / *well* with this person
 - 4 push others *hard* / *roughly*
 - 5 treat employees *unfairly* / *carelessly*
 - 6 work *tightly* / *closely* with a colleague
 - 7 look at (available options) *objectively* / *deliberately*
 - 8 be viewed *satisfactorily* / *positively*
- 4** Work with a partner. Use as many of the verb + adverb combinations in **3** as you can and give each other advice for successful working relationships at your work / in your job.
- 5** 26▷ Three people are talking about the roles they play in their teams at work. Listen to the extracts and identify the strengths and weaknesses of each person.
- 6** Which of the two Belbin roles best fits each of the people you listened to in **5**?
- 1 Shaper / Team worker
 - 2 Coordinator / Completer – Finisher
 - 3 Resource investigator / Implementer
- 7** Work with a partner. Discuss which of the three people you would choose to work with you / in your team, and why.
- 8** Work with a partner. Replace the underlined words in sentences 1–6 with multi-word verbs in **bold** in the text in **1** with a similar meaning. Change the form of the verb where necessary.
- 1 I didn't spend enough time on the sales figures – I think they're actually incorrect.
 - 2 I'm capable of handling most complications by myself. _____
 - 3 There are some particularly tight deadlines to meet. _____
 - 4 I prefer to avoid any last-minute changes. _____
 - 5 Otherwise we would not achieve our sales targets, would we? _____
 - 6 I think we should concentrate on solving the problem, rather than discussing who was to blame. _____
- »» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 5** on page 110.
- 9** Work with a partner. Take turns to describe a colleague / team leader you work with, using vocabulary from **3** and **8**. How similar / different are their working styles?
- 10** Work with a partner. Ask and answer questions about recent projects you have worked on to find out which Belbin role you think you each play in a team. Consider the following aspects.
- 1 task / project
 - 2 colleagues / fellow team members
 - 3 schedules / pressure
 - 4 issues / problems
 - 5 confrontation / fairness
- Alternatively, turn to File 15 on page 139, for some project outlines. Discuss the projects, and work together to establish the best mix of Belbin roles for each.

Business communication skills

Context

Duverger is a well-established European kitchenware company and it is about to launch an exciting new range of branded kitchenware. The company intends to create a 'big splash' with an extensive promotional campaign across Europe, starting with a product launch at a convention in Vienna next week. The Sales, Marketing, and Production departments in Duverger are working together on the promotional campaign. The first box of brochures for the company's stand in Vienna has just been delivered, but they don't look quite right.

Negotiating | Dealing with conflict



- 1 What can go wrong when brochures are printed? Why do these things happen?
- 2 27▷ A meeting takes place between three managers – Jenny, Riccardo, and Paul – to discuss the situation. Listen to Extract 1 from the meeting. Compare your answers to 1 with what actually went wrong.
- 3 27▷ The three managers handle the discussion and deal with conflict in different ways. Listen again and decide who – Jenny (*J*), Riccardo (*R*), or Paul (*P*) –
 - 1 attempts to clarify the situation _____
 - 2 encourages the others to keep to the facts _____
 - 3 expresses their concerns diplomatically _____
 - 4 expresses their concerns more directly. _____
- 4 Match phrases a–i from Extract 1 to these categories. Can you add any more phrases?
 - 1 Keeping to the facts / being objective: _____
 - 2 Talking about concerns directly: _____
 - 3 Talking about concerns more diplomatically: _____
 - 4 Clarifying / checking understanding: _____
 - a Do you understand what I'm trying to say?
 - b Would I be right in thinking ...?
 - c I don't know if you are aware, but ...?
 - d Let's try not to get personal here.
 - e Can we try and stay focused on the facts?
 - f I'm really not happy with ...
 - g Can I just make sure I've understood this correctly?
 - h I'm a bit worried about ...
 - i The real issue here is ...

- 5 Work with a partner. Discuss what you would say in these 'conflict' situations. Then have the conversations.

Situation 1

- Student A Tell B about your boss's plans to get rid of the coffee area.
- Student B You are surprised. Try to clarify what A has said.
- Student A Confirm.
- Student B You are very concerned and want to know what staff can do about this decision. Express your concerns directly.
- Student A Tell B to focus on the facts – there has been no final decision yet. You are concerned that staff don't have enough informal meeting space. Be diplomatic.

Situation 2

- Student A Tell B (the senior manager) you are not happy that a colleague who has been at the company for less time than you has been promoted above you and is now your line manager. Express your concerns directly.
- Student B Tell A to focus on the facts – the new line manager is very capable and is qualified for the job. Be diplomatic.