

Effective Team-working and Communication Module

BMSW4009

Student Name: Jaromir Dunko

Student Number: 2429013

Effective teamwork in an organization is reliant on many interdependent factors. These factors include communication, trust, achieving a common goal, respect for diversity, and understanding of roles within the organization (West, 2012). Strong teams have psychological safety, which allows everyone to share their ideas and challenge one another safely (Edmondson, 1999).

I tend to take on the coordinator role in teams; this is supported by Belbin's Team Roles (Belbin, 2010). I excel at structuring operations, meeting deadlines, and alleviating discord between competing opinions. In my Belbin SPI test, the results showed strong confirmation in my primary roles of Coordinator and Implementer. This confirms my confidence in delegating responsibilities and converting ideas into actionable tasks.

The Thomas-Kilmann Test showed my main way of dealing with disagreements as Compromising which helps create cooperation. This realization has helped me be more adaptable and balanced during team conflicts with others.

These self-assessments have taught me the way I work in teams and how important it is to use the differentiating personal and working styles to form a cohesive group. The module taught me that for a team to work effectively, self-awareness and communicativeness is important. Understanding a person's communication style and adjusting it to others will gain respect.

One of the key takeaways I had taken was the importance of valuing diversity and inclusion for not only demographics but also thought, personality, and working style.

I learnt from team-based assessments that open discussion, shared ownership and constant feedback enhances outcomes. I now learned that differences can enhance creativity and problem solving, when embraced.

Theoretical Models and Application.

I learnt how to build healthy teams and good relationships through a couple of models.

1. Groups undergo four stages during their development.

The stages of team development include forming, storming, norming, and performing. Throughout our project on group presentation, we were polite with our group members (forming), tensions regarding responsibilities (storming), agreement on a specific role (norming), and smooth cooperation at the end (performing). It helped me normalise conflict as a stage of development and reinforced the need for patience and trust within the group. Belbin's Team Roles (2010).

Belbin's theory tells us teams which have diversity are balanced. Our group initially struggled with conflicting roles and demanding unclear relationships. Once we recognized our Belbin roles, we redistributed tasks to suit our interests. Our Monitor Evaluator took care of the proofreading while our Plant generated new ideas. The change boosted the team's efficiency and morale.

3. Transactional Analysis (TA). (Berne,1964)

The TA explained to me the dynamics of interpersonal communication based on Parent, Adult and Child ego states. I noticed that under stress I go to a "Parent" role which could be controlling. Shifting to a rational state, of being "adult", made collaboration easier and misunderstandings less likely. At one point, this model managed to de-escalate a disagreement over how to divide the task and change the conversation to problem-solving language. Practical Learning and Teamwork Improvements.

Applying these models in real-time deepened my learning. For instance, I now catch the team and give them feedback on the task performed, aligned with the "Norming" stage of Tuckman. These days, I also encourage the team to take roles that fit their Belbin profile. This has led to improved task performance and accountability.

Most importantly, I have become more conscious of how my choices in communication affect my relationships. I learnt to ask questions, listen actively and acknowledge others' contributions to build trust and an inclusive environment.

Conclusion I now look at the behaviors, norms and rules of teams differently. Once I focused mostly on doing things. In other words, getting things done right. But I have learnt that teamwork isn't all about the contribution of the whole; it relies on mutual respect, communication as well as compromise.

Studying Tuckman's group development model made me realise that conflict between team members is a normal process. That knowledge enabled me to be more tolerant and proactive during difficult group work phases. Belbin's Team Roles made me understand how

important it is to delegate work based on strengths. My role then began to coordinate with others who assisted me in a way or other.

Transactional Analysis made me more conscious of my communication style's impact on relationships. I learned to change from the more directive role of a "Parent" to a more balanced "Adult" role into environmental issues, escalating tensions, and conflict. As teams interacted with one another, members became less inhibited.

I have learned how differences can improve a project and make the team effective and smart. I feel that I can more effectively manage conflict, adapt to group needs, and offer more than just task completion.

To keep getting better, I'll take these next specific steps.

- Enhance your emotional intelligence through taking time to reflect after team tasks and getting feedback.
- Try using team role assessments at the start of group work to better allocate responsibilities and reduce friction.
- I will have to use TA and similar frameworks to ensure my response is not a reaction when under team pressure.

These behaviours will enable me to help form teams that are more inclusive, productive and engaged in the classroom and workplace.

Belbin, R.M. (2010) *Team Roles at Work*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Berne, E. (1964) *Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships*. New York: Grove Press.

Edmondson, A. (1999) 'Psychological safety and learning behaviour in work teams', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), pp. 350–383.

Thomas, K.W. and Kilmann, R.H. (1974) *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument*. Mountain View, CA: CPP.

Tuckman, B.W. (1965) 'Developmental sequence in small groups', *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), pp. 384–399.

West, M.A. (2012) *Effective Teamwork: Practical Lessons from Organisational Research*. 3rd ed. Oxford: BPS Blackwell.

Goleman, D. (1998) Working with Emotional Intelligence. London: Bloomsbury.

Hargie, O. (2011) Skilled Interpersonal Communication: Research, Theory and Practice. 5th ed. London: Routledge.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Belbin SPI Report
- Appendix B: Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Management Questionnaire Results
- Appendix C: Group Presentation Roles and Responsibilities Breakdown