

Group Dynamics (Leadership–2)

SUBMITTED BY: Leya Matthew

SUBJECT(S): Management

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

In this lesson, students and teacher collaboratively identify best practices of group work. Students analyze their own experiences for what works and does not work in group work. Meanwhile, the Knowledge@Wharton article helps students analyze the same for brainstorming. The suggestions that come up in this lesson will be useful for planning and executing brainstorming and group working in classes to follow.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Management, IV. Personal Management Skills

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“MLK Day Tribute: Student Lessons in Leadership”](#)
- [“Future of the Business World: Adventures in Group Innovation and E-Learning”](#)
- [“Career Insight: The First Woman to Coach in the NFL on Teamwork and the Power of Relationships”](#)

Common Core Standard(s):

1. CCR Standard for Reading: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it.

2. CCR Standards for Listening: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on each other's ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
3. CCR Standards for Speaking: Present information, findings and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Objectives/Purposes: In this lesson, students will (1) analyze an instance of group work and brainstorming from personal experiences, and (2) create a set of norms for productive group work and brainstorming sessions.

Knowledge@Wharton Article: [“How Group Dynamics May Be Killing Innovation”](#)

Activity:

1. Introduction and Orientation (5 mins)

Teacher asks students to introduce themselves (name, and one interesting thing about themselves) and then orients students towards today's lesson. *We will be looking at group dynamics in general and focusing on a group work technique that is very commonly used in Marketing—Brainstorming. You will be doing a lot of brainstorming in this program too, so let's try and identify some best practices for group work and brainstorming.*

2. Work with Knowledge@Wharton article (25 mins)

Teacher now randomly divides the class into small groups and distributes copies of the Knowledge@Wharton article “How Group Dynamics May Be Killing Innovation.” Students are asked to read the introduction and the section titled **Self-Censorship and Build-Up individually. After reading the article, students are asked to identify one instance of brainstorming and one instance of teamwork that was productive or non-productive, from their own experiences. It can be from school or non-school settings. Teacher asks students to analyze what made their experience productive or non-productive using the themes identified in the article.**

You may differentiate between brainstorming and group work briefly if needed. The primary objective of brainstorming is to come up with innovative ideas. Group work is much broader than that, the most common form of group work is where individuals delegate work and each person contributes some unique skill to the group. For example, in a music band, one person may write

the lyrics, another may compose it, another may sing, and the others may play specific instruments. The most productive groups are those where the skills match well and each person has something unique to contribute, including leadership.

Teacher now asks students to share their analysis with their small group. Teacher clarifies that students are not expected to share the experience but their analysis — what made the experience productive or non-productive. The other group members are encouraged to give feedback for the analysis presented. During this time, the teacher floats around the groups and observes the participation of the students. You should have a list of students in your class, and it would be a good idea to take notes about your observations. For example, if you feel one student is dominating the discussion, you could note roughly how many minutes each student in the group talked. So, instead of telling the group that one individual student dominated the discussion, you could provide them with your data, and they could infer the conclusion from that data.

- Read article individually. (5 mins)
- Identify one instance of group work and brainstorming from personal experience. (2 min)
- Analyze personal experience using the themes in the article. (5 mins)
- Share analysis with small group. (10 mins)

3. Share with large group (10 mins)

Teacher now brings the small groups back to the large group and gives students a few minutes to identify best norms for brainstorming and group work from their analysis and shared experiences. Now, teacher asks students for their list of suggestions and norms for group work and brainstorming. Teacher notes down the list of suggestions.

4. Wrap-up

Teacher wraps up by recapping general themes. You could also summarize the points the students came up with and talk about what you learned from the students.

Tying it All together: In this lesson, teacher takes the help of students to identify how best to plan and execute group-work for later lessons. Alongside, both teacher and students get a platform to explicitly clarify expectations and to build a collaborative relationship.

Practice Outside of the Classroom: One of the purposes of the lesson is to identify guidelines to plan and implement group work and brainstorming sessions for later lessons. Therefore, both

students and teacher are expected to use the principles identified here throughout the course.

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently: Since this is a lesson about group work, teacher should be very sensitive to the group processes that are occurring during class. You will have to find your own balance between autonomy/freedom and structure. Please provide your own critical feedback without accepting everything the students say at face value.

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