Guide To Assessing Teamwork and Collaboration

Teamwork is the concept of people working together toward a common goal.

Collaboration is a structured, recursive process where two or more people work together toward a common goal—typically an intellectual endeavor that is creative in nature—by sharing knowledge, learning and building consensus. Collaboration does not require leadership and can sometimes bring better results through decentralization and egalitarianism.

Assess the work using each of the four criteria below:

Team members actively participate in the task or project to accomplish a common goal.	The team did not define the task and few members participate actively. There is no follow-up.	Team informally defined the tasks but not all members understand them so not all members are able to make meaningful contributions. The follow-up is sporadic.	Team clearly defined the tasks to be accomplished, assigned aspects to various members and anticipated future needs. The team engages in follow-up activities to monitor progress.	Team has an extensive project management plan that outlines the tasks to be accomplished, resources that are needed, due dates, assigned aspects to various members and anticipated future needs. The team engages in regular follow-up activities to monitor progress and provide feedback to team members.
Team members participate in decision-making.	Because there is no decision-making process, individuals make decisions, and they do not reflect the thinking or the desires of the team.	Decision-making procedures were established informally, leading to inconsistency in implementation and a failure to involve all members in decision-making.	Clear procedures for making decisions are established and clearly articulated. Decisions, the process by which they were made, and the involvement of members are also clearly articulated.	All team members mobilize personal strengths to set forth their ideas and to negotiate a fit between personal ideas and ideas of others, using contrasts to spark and sustain knowledge advancement of the entire team, acknowledging that each member has a significant role to play and personal responsibility in decision-making.
Team adjusts to unforeseen circumstances.	The team seems to be thrashing about. Activity plans (if they exist) are unfocused, and thus there is no ability to adjust and make corrections.	The team is not always able to adjust as needed to meet goals. Realization of the need for mid-course corrections sometimes comes too late.	When working to achieve goals, the team is able to adjust plans as needs arise. There is a clear understanding of the nature of mid-course corrections and why they were needed.	Team members know that working to achieve goals requires flexibility in thought and action, being creatively adaptive, "unfreakable" in the face of challenging problems and changing situations.

Team members use their diversity to build strength.	The team atmosphere is competitive and individualistic rather than cooperative and supportive.	There is a general atmosphere of respect for team members, but some members may not be heard as much as others. Acknowledging others' work is serendipitous rather than planned. Some members may not feel free to turn to others for help.	Every team member is treated with respect. All members listen to all ideas. The work of each person is acknowledged. Members feel free to seek assistance from others or to ask questions.	Team members recognize each other as legitimate contributors to the shared goals; they build on each other's ideas and take responsibility for the overall advancement of knowledge of the team. They see diversity as a strength that helps to strengthen the overall outcomes. Team members encourage diverse points of view, openly negotiate emerging understandings and provide and accept specific feedback to and from each other to improve team processes and project outcomes.

References:

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