

Team roles

Purpose: To develop understanding of the roles and responsibilities of roles that contribute to a team's success

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Handout 3.3

Steps:

1. Divide into teams of six.
2. Seek a volunteer to serve as facilitator.
3. Assign one role to each team member except the facilitator.
4. Ask each person to read and report on his or her role. The report should include a description of the role, its responsibilities, how the role contributes to the team's success, and current practices related to the roles in participants' schools or districts.
5. Have one person select a role from the list, read the description, and share it with the entire team. Be sure to share not only what a person in this role does, but also why this role helps a team be effective and efficient.

Timekeeper

The timekeeper helps the team stay aware of how it is using time, how much time is assigned to each task, and how much time the team is using to accomplish a specific task. The timekeeper gives advance notice when a time limit is near and helps the team renegotiate time if the task is incomplete and needs further attention. If members agree to give a task more time, the timekeeper helps them adjust time to accomplish the balance of the team's agenda.

Resource manager

The resource manager helps the team have whatever materials, supplies, or other resources it might need to accomplish its goals. The resource manager makes sure the team has these items close by so members don't waste time collecting or finding them during the meeting.

For example, the resource manager might make sure the meeting room has enough outlets for everyone to plug in a computer if needed or that copies are available of the student texts or curriculum the team plans to use. The resource manager might also bring other texts, journals, books, and so on that are related to the focus on the learning. The resource manager also coordinates with all team members to bring resources to the meeting so everything they need is easily accessible.

Recorder

The recorder works with team members to capture big ideas, next actions, topics discussed, information to share outside the team, and so on. The recorder completes the summary log about the meeting and shares it with the principal or posts it on the team's community site. The recorder captures who is responsible for certain tasks prior to the next meeting, the recommended focus for the next meeting, and the resources needed so everyone has a record to review. The recorder works with the summarizer to capture a brief statement of summary about the meeting. Teams sometimes use forms to record their meeting notes.

Process observer

The process observer provides feedback to team members individually and collectively on the team's operations, particularly on how well the team adhered to its agreements and where it veered from them. When teams are new, the process observer might note only strengths. As teams mature, the process observer might note strengths and areas for improvement. The process observer also might engage members in a discussion of their individual and collective behaviors rather than being the person to provide the feedback.

Summarizer

The summarizer helps team members transition from one part of the agenda to the next by summarizing what just occurred. This summary is useful for the recorder and builds in natural transitions within the team's work. Summarizers capture the big ideas, check with the recorder to make sure the ideas are recorded, and help team members stay focused on their work and learning. When a summarizer is not designated within a team, the recorder can serve as the summarizer or the role can rotate among members within a single meeting.