

Working in a team



Learner guide

Ready for work

Pre-employment skills

Working in a team

Version 1.2

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What is a team?

Have you ever been part of a team? There are many kinds of team. If you are in a club or group then you are in a team. Perhaps you are in a sports team or a music group. Your family is also a kind of team.

A team is a group of people doing something together. The people may be playing together or working together. A team can be two people or lots of people.

People form teams because it can be fun to do things with other people. Doing work in a team can also make the work easier. Some people like to be alone, but when you have a job you will probably have to work in a team. It's important to know how to work well in a team. This learner guide can help you learn how to be a good team member in your job.



Team members

You will work with different kinds of people in teams. You won't always be in teams with your friends or people your age. You may be in a team with:

- older people
- younger people
- men, women or both
- people with disabilities, such as a hearing or sight impairment
- people from another country
- people who speak English as a second language.

Having all kinds of people in your team is good. This means you get lots of different ideas and views. In a team you can share ideas and the team members can learn from each other.



Story

Tom works in a restaurant on Saturdays. He works in the kitchen helping cook the meals.

Sally is the waitress. She takes the meals to the customers.

Saul seats customers and organises bills. He also takes the money from the customers and gives them their change.

Saul, Tom and Sally need each other so the restaurant works smoothly. They are part of a team. Sally likes to watch Tom cook. Tom has been cooking for a long time and Sally wants to learn to cook. She asks Tom lots of questions and learns from him. He shares his ideas with her.

Activity 1

Why do you think having lots of different people in a team is good?

[Click to complete Activity 1](#)

Why do we do things in teams?

Teams can be fun and can make work easier. When we work in teams we get things done faster. Imagine if you had to clean your whole house. That job could take all day if you did it on your own. But if your family or housemates help you, you could finish in a few hours.

Team goals

In a soccer game or basketball game your team tries to score goals. Work teams try to reach goals too. A goal at work is something you try to get done. Your goal may be to help as many customers as you can, or to unpack a stack of boxes. People in a team work together to reach goals.



Everybody is good at something

Working in teams is a good way to make new friends. It is also a good way to find out about people. You get to know more about people and what they are good at by working with them. Everybody is good at different things. What are you good at?

- Are you good at cleaning?
- Are you good at thinking of ideas?
- Are you good at cooking?
- Are you good at working with machines?
- Are you good at using computers and technology?

Working in a team is good because everyone has different skills. When you put these skills together, the team can get things done better and more quickly. The team can reach its goals more easily. We need lots of different skills to reach goals at work and to do jobs well.



Story

Lisa, Rod and Sue are planning a birthday party for their friend Rena. Lisa and Sue are not good at writing, so Rod writes the invitations. Rod and Lisa are not good at cooking so Sue bakes the cake. Sue and Rod do not know much about music so Lisa chooses the music.

Each person is good at something. Everybody gets to do something they are good at. Together they have the skills to throw a great party.



Activity 2

Think about an experience you have had like the one in the story.

1. What were you doing?

2. Who was in the team?

3. What was each person good at?

[Click to complete Activity 2](#)

Planning in a team

Work teams make plans. Planning is when the team works out how to reach its goal. Teams need to plan so everything goes smoothly. People won't know what to do if the team doesn't have a plan. They won't get the job done or reach their goals.

Some work teams have a leader who works out the plan. In other teams everyone plans together and there is no leader. Teams have to plan how they will work. They also have to plan when the job must be finished.

Jobs for the team

Everyone in a team has a job to do. The team plans what jobs there are. Then the team members can choose who does which job. Most of the time you will do jobs you are good at. Sometimes, you may have to do a job you have never done before. You can always learn to do new things; it can be fun. If you don't know how to do something, ask your supervisor or another team member.



Time lines

A time line tells you how long you have to do something. Everyone in a team has a job and a time line. You need to finish your job in the time you are given.

If you do not finish your job in time, you may let other people down. The overall job won't be finished on time and people in your team may be upset.

A good idea is to make your own time line. It could look like this.



Story

Inga, Bill and Lee are in a work team at a department store. Their goal is to change a window display between 7 and 9 am on Monday morning. It needs to be finished before the store opens at 9 am.

Inga needs to choose the clothing for the mannequins and dress them. Bill needs to get all the other props together and put them in place. Lee needs to paint the background white.

Inga and Bill get to work on time and begin their jobs. They help each other when needed and finish their tasks on time.

Lee is running late. She can't find where she left the paint the week before. She starts painting late and does not finish by 9 am.

Inga, Bill and Lee get in trouble from their boss. Lee let the team down. She was not a good team member.

Activity 3

Read the previous story again, then answer the questions below.

1. How do you think Bill and Inga would feel about getting in trouble?

2. Why do you think they feel that way?

3. What should Lee have done?

[Click to complete Activity 3](#)

Good team members

Read about some things you need to do to be a good team member.

What you need to do	What it means
<p>Listen</p> 	<p>Listening means paying attention. When someone is talking to you, concentrate on what they are saying. Don't think about something else.</p> <p>You should listen because team members can learn from each other. Listen to show people respect. This means caring about what other people say and feel.</p> <p>You also need to listen carefully when people give you instructions so you don't make mistakes. A team doesn't work well when people don't listen to each other.</p>
<p>Cooperate</p> 	<p>People in a team should help each other. Sometimes when people need help they don't ask for it. If you see someone who needs help, you should help that person.</p> <p>If you need help, don't be scared to ask for it. Teams are about sharing and helping.</p> <p>Teams work well when everyone shares their ideas. If you have an idea, don't be scared to tell your team.</p>

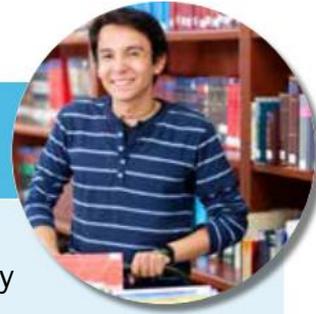
Activity 4

1. Have you ever said something and people did not listen to you? How did it make you feel?

2. Why is it important to listen to others?

[Click to complete Activity 4](#)

Story



Greg has just started work in a library. He is in a team of four people. The team looks after the history books. The manager asks Greg's team to do a job.

The team needs to move all the history books from downstairs to upstairs. Carrie, the team leader, tells Tim to do this. Everyone else does other jobs.

Greg thinks to himself, 'It would be quicker if we all helped. Then Tim would not have to keep going up and down the stairs.' Greg doesn't tell Carrie or the team his idea; he just does his own job. Tim spends the whole day moving the history books. At the end of the day Tim is very tired and sore. Greg feels bad for Tim and wishes he had told the others about his idea.

Activity 5

Read the previous story again, then answer the questions below.

1. What do you think Greg should have done when he had his idea?

2. Why do you think Greg didn't tell his idea to the team?

3. Do you think Greg's team leader is a good leader? Why?

[Click to complete Activity 5](#)

What you have learnt

Put a ✓ in the box when you have learnt these things.

- Most jobs involve teamwork.
- A team is a group of people who work together to reach goals.
- People can get things done faster when they work in a team.
- Teams are made up of people with many different skills because everybody is good at different things.
- Teams need to plan how to get a job done and when things must be done.
- You need to meet your time lines in your job to be a good team member.
- You need to listen to other people to be a good team member.
- You should help other people and feel comfortable asking for help in a team.

Check your learning

Task 1

Read the story, then do the task that follows.

Story

A team of workers is planning a work picnic. They are inviting their families to come too. They decide to hire a bus to take everyone. They plan the food to get ready before the picnic, and the food they will barbecue at the picnic. There will be some children to entertain. The grown-ups want to play a few games too.

These are the team workers:

- Jane organises meetings and conferences.
- Dino is a sports coach in his spare time.
- Brian always makes his own sandwiches for lunch.
- Peter used to be a school teacher before he got this job.
- Matt designs posters.
- Karen often talks about the things she has cooked for dinner.

Make a list of the jobs the work team will have to do for the picnic. Then look at what the people in the team like doing. Put their names beside the jobs you think they would do best.

Answers

Answers to activities

Activity 1

You can get lots of different ideas and views. The team members can learn from each other.

Activity 2

Answer to Question 1

Answers will vary according to the individual situation.

Answer to Question 2

Answers will vary according to the situation.

Answer to Question 3

Answers will vary according to the situation.

Activity 3

Answer to Question 1

Very disappointed as they did their part and achieved what they had to do.

Answer to Question 2

They would feel let down by Lee who was late and caused them to all get into trouble.

Answer to Question 3

Turned up on time and been organised and ready to do her part.

Activity 4

Answer to Question 1

I was annoyed because it made me feel like what I had to say wasn't important. It made me feel like the person wasn't interested in what I had to say.

Answer to Question 2

I like people to listen to me, so it is fair and respectful to listen to others. It is also important to listen carefully to find out what you need to do.

Activity 5**Answer to Question 1**

Greg should have told his team leader Carrie, or mentioned his idea to the rest of the team.

Answer to Question 2

Greg may have been a bit unsure about sharing his idea because he is new in his job.

Answer to Question 3

Greg's team leader could definitely improve. She could ask for ideas from team members, or make the team feel comfortable to share their ideas.

Answers to check your learning

Task 1

Answers will vary, but may include the following:

- Write and create invitations and a poster – Matt
- Hire a bus – Jane
- Buy the food – Jane and Brian
- Prepare the food – Brian and Karen
- Cook the food – Karen
- Run games suitable for adults and children – Dino and Peter

Task 2

Sports team

Here is an example answer.

I watched an Australian Rules football match on TV. The teams both worked well, but one team worked better together, as they seemed to know what was going to happen next. This tells me they are prepared and must train well together. They must listen to each other and learn how each other plays the game. This team won, as they were able to work better as a team and score more goals on the day.

The people you live with

Here is an example answer.

We have a monthly roster that we stick to, which includes:

- buying groceries
- cooking dinner
- doing dishes
- cleaning the lounge, bathroom and kitchen
- paying bills.

As there are five of us living in a share house, we do one task each per month, and then swap tasks.

It works well because we all know what we have to do, and have agreed to do the allocated task.