

# *High-Powered Teams*



## *A Guide to Getting the Most Out of Your Student Team*

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# **Instructor's Manual**

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# Introduction

*Effective teams don't just happen!*



As a college student, I participated in many teams. For good reason, I always cringed when the instructor announced that a major portion of the final grade would be

based on a group project.

The team experience was seldom a pleasant one, nor was it one that I believed increased my learning. In my student teams, no one knew who was in charge or what the ground rules were. Furthermore, we didn't know each other very well or know how to harness our skills and capabilities to get the job done.

Our team meetings were always awkward. We wasted hours in meetings that usually went in circles. No one on our team knew the skills for making a meeting productive. Some students tended to dominate the group; it was their way or the highway. Others didn't speak up or were afraid to share their ideas. Some members were happy to let others do the work for them. And then there was always at least one member who didn't show up for meetings, didn't turn in work on time, and simply was undependable.

In sports, successful teams have a game plan. But in my classroom teams, the game plan was missing. Unlike a sports team, our project teams did not identify team objectives or make a list of the tasks to be done or identify who was responsible for completing them. Without a task list, we couldn't lay out a logical sequence or timeline for completing our work. Consequently, we made up the game plan on the fly. This resulted in misunderstandings, poor communication, missed due dates, and arguments among team members.

Finally, of course, there was the question of equality. Who deserved getting the "A" grade on the project? Few of us wanted to acknowledge this 1000-pound gorilla in the room, but we always held animosity for the slackers who never did their fair share of the work but got the good grade anyway.

After making the transition from college student to college professor, I was determined not to subject my students to the frustration I had experienced with working in student teams. But I knew that teams were an essential part of contemporary life and that students should learn how to effectively function in multi-disciplinary teams.

I was familiar with research showing that students learn more, remember it longer, and develop superior reasoning and critical thinking skills when they work in a cooperative learning and team

environment. Why didn't I feel that my team members and I were learning more and developing better critical thinking skills by participating in a team project? The answer is that these teams were not well managed. We had set no ground rules for team operation. We didn't assess individual team member skills, and most importantly we didn't develop a game plan. For teams to work productively students must manage and take ownership of their teams.

So how do students manage their teams to achieve the best possible learning environment? By learning more about student cooperative learning (teams) from colleagues, by reading the literature on collaborative education, and by using a great deal of input from my own students, I developed a process to help students manage teams.

The process consists of several steps. These steps help students organize their teams, conduct productive meetings, optimize team member skills, and set ground rules for team operation. The steps also help students to identify, organize, and prioritize tasks, and to develop a timeline for completing them.

At the end of each semester, my students and I debriefed how the team process had gone. We identified what worked and what didn't work. For those areas that needed improvement, we identified remedies that would allow the teamwork to go more

smoothly. Each semester I updated my course handouts to include these suggestions. Eventually I developed a comprehensive manual to help students get the most out of their student teams. As students took ownership of their teams and learned to manage them, course evaluations became more and more positive. In fact, students reported that they learned more by working in teams and liked it better than doing the work individually. Finally, the outcomes of a cooperative learning and team environment were being consistently achieved!

When other faculty members heard about how the students in my courses managed their own teams, they wanted to implement the same processes. However, a succinct guide with an explanation of the key processes that make up a well-managed, high-powered student team was not available. At the urging of faculty and students alike, I compiled my methods into the current manual, *High-Powered Teams: A Guide to Getting the Most out of Your Student Team*.

In this instructor's manual, I've included a brief background on cooperative learning and student teams that you can skip if you are already familiar with this teaching strategy. I've also provided teaching notes for implementing the suggested methods for each chapter.

The concepts and principles of managing teams transcend disciplines. I have found these methods to be useful in any course that I have taught. Although my instructional experience has been primarily in business, computer science, and health services administration, instructors from other disciplines have told me that the methods are easily adaptable to the other disciplines. Furthermore, all the suggested strategies apply to any type of team. It doesn't matter if the team is online or campus-based.

Designing and implementing an effective work team in your classroom requires that you give structure to and teach students the process for managing their own teams. This manual provides a framework that instructors can use to successfully implement student teams in their classrooms.

Chapter 1, Why Student Teams?, gives the rationale for using student teams as an instructional strategy and presents some basis concepts about cooperative education. Chapter, Implementing Classroom Teams, outlines what I have found are essential elements in designing and implementing classroom teams. These are key regardless of the subject domain or type of team (online or campus-based). Chapters 3 through 11 provide outlines (lesson plans) for incorporating instruction on teamwork into your regular class sessions. These chapters

follow the content of the student manual High-Powered Teams:  
Getting the Most Out of Your Student Team.

I hope that you find the information in this instructor's manual helpful. Feedback is appreciated. Because this is an e-book I can easily update and improve it based on your feedback.

# Chapter 1

## Why Student Teams?

*“The leaders who work most effectively.....never say ‘I’. They don’t think ‘I’. They think ‘we’; They think ‘team’ “ (Tom Peters)*

To answer the question “Why Student Teams?” we need to look at two trends.

The first trend is the increasing emphasis placed on team skills in the workplace. More and more businesses are using teams in the workplace and are seeking employees who have the set of skills required to organize and manage work teams.

The second trend is using cooperative learning as a teaching method. Besides enriching learning (students learning more and remembering it longer), this method also fosters the type of skill set that employers are seeking, namely, positive face-to-face interaction, interpersonal and small group skills, group processing, and positive interaction (The Ohio State University, 2001).

As a professor in schools and departments of business, health services administration, and computer science and informatics, I felt that the evidence for using team learning was compelling enough to include it as a teaching method in my classroom.

## **Teams in the Workplace**

For centuries it has been recognized that cohesive work groups performing interdependent tasks with common goals out-produce and outperform any random collection of individuals. We see examples of this in our everyday experience in community associations, athletic groups, and social institutions.

Today, organizations are using the talent of their employees by establishing accountable work groups. As a professor in business and health services administration departments, I have seen that teamwork is an important part of today's business world, where businesses are bringing together employees from all areas in the organization to establish interdisciplinary teams. Businesses believe that knowledge, experience, and information from a broad base are critical for decision making and execution of project work.

Results from research bear out that the use of teams increases employee communication and involvement in decision-making. This results in a company that is more flexible and that can make changes more quickly and easily (Mohrman, Cohen, & Mohrman, 1995). Research also suggests that organizations are able to learn more effectively and retain this knowledge better when teams are used. In addition, employees who work in teams seem to feel better about decisions that they make themselves as opposed to those that are forced upon them.

They are also more likely to implement decisions made collaboratively (West, 1998). Businesses that use teams report improved productivity, safety, and employee attitude, and decreased absenteeism (Beverlein and Harris, 1998).

Working well with others is key for almost every job in today's business world. Some companies use specific questions to assess a job candidate's skill in working in teams. The following questions, for example, appear in a human resources newsletter (Healthfield, 2006).

- “Give an example of a successful project you were part of. What was your role? Why was the project successful?”
- “Describe two situations from your past work experience in which you have determined a team was the best potential solution to a problem, a needed process improvement, or a planned change. How did each work out?”
- “What actions and support, in your experience, make a team function successfully?”
- “Give me an example of a time when your work group or department worked especially well with another work group or department to accomplish a goal.”
- “Have you been a member of a team that struggled or failed to accomplish its goal? If so, what assessment did you make of the reasons for the failure?”

These questions try to identify how well the job candidate works as a member in a cross-functional or department team. They also assess the degree to which the candidate values team-work and recognizes reasons for team failure and success (Healthfield, 2006).

Some may argue that workplace teams are counter to the industrial way of life, which promotes controlling and rewarding the individual. But the team philosophy has taken hold in business and is an acceptable structure for a majority of organizations today. With 51 percent of all employees on one kind of team or another, there is a business imperative for training people how to work in teams (Ozols, 1996).

Although technical competence is important, research shows that 85 percent of the reasons teams of people succeed or struggle has more to do with interpersonal issues (Cullen, S., 2006). These skills can be learned and embraced.

Given the emphasis on teamwork, I believe that creating a learning environment that helps my students master interpersonal and team skills is important.

## **Cooperative Education**

I first became an advocate of using student teams as a teaching method in the mid-1980's. At that time I was teaching at The

Ohio State University and had attended a seminar on cooperative education sponsored by the University's Office of Faculty Development. After attending the seminar, I assessed the precepts of cooperative learning and determined that these supported the learning outcomes I wanted my students to achieve and could also be easily integrated with my subject domain.

Cooperative learning can be summarized as a set of processes that help people interact in order to accomplish a specific goal or develop an end product that is usually content specific.

Cooperative learning includes mechanisms for group analysis and introspection, but the fundamental approach remains teacher centered (Pantz, 1996). This is different than collaborative learning, which is student-centered, lacks formal structures, and allows students more say in forming friendship and interest groups. A succinct discussion on the differences between cooperative and collaborative learning can be found in Pantz, 1996.

Spencer Kagan (as cited in Pantz, 1996) provides the following definition and illustration of cooperative learning:

*The structural approach to cooperative learning is based on the creation, analysis and systematic application of structures, or content-free ways of organizing social interaction in the classroom. Structures usually involve a series of steps, with proscribed behavior at each step.*

*An important cornerstone of the approach is the distinction between “structures” and “activities.*

*To illustrate, teachers can design many excellent cooperative activities, such as making a team mural or a quilt. Such activities almost always have a specific content-bound objective and thus cannot be used to deliver a range of academic content. Structures may be used repeatedly with almost any subject matter, at a wide range of grade levels and at various points in a lesson plan.*

Research has demonstrated that students learn more, remember it longer and develop superior communication, reasoning and critical thinking skills through cooperative, team learning experiences (Gokhale, Anuradha A., 1995). Specifically Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1991) ,and Bruffee (1993) (as cited in The Ohio State University, 2001) have identified the positive outcomes of cooperative education as positive interdependence, positive interaction, psychological adjustment and social competence and effort to achieve.

In my classes students have reported that they understand the material better, feel more confident, and are more satisfied than in courses where lecture and individual work are the primary instructional strategies. Students also have reported that they have an understanding of the “big picture” and why the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

## **Summary**

As a college professor, I felt compelled to provide my students with the best possible learning environment. I wanted my students to be successful in mastering a domain of knowledge and I wanted them to acquire the requisite problem-solving, critical-thinking, and interpersonal skills required for success in the world outside of academia.

In my study of instructional strategy, I learned that student-centered instruction that includes activities that actively engage students is important to the outcomes I was striving for. I learned that student motivation, personal investment, and interest in learning are increased when instructional strategies are individualized, such as through small group work or teamwork. I also became acquainted with cooperative (team) education as an instructional strategy that is an active rather than passive teaching method and one that engages students in the learning process. Research, I had learned, suggests that students learn more, remember it longer, and develop superior communication, reasoning and critical thinking skills through cooperative, team learning experiences.

Given my goals and my study of instructional strategy, I seriously began to integrate cooperative learning into my classes. During my 20-plus years working with student teams, I have used several methods that have proven helpful in getting the most out

of cooperative teams. The student manual *High-Powered Teams: A Guide to Getting the Most out of Your Student Team* and this accompanying teacher's manual are a compilation of my experiences, which I am happy to share.

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## Chapter 2

# Implementing Classroom Teams

Achieving high-powered teams in the classroom isn't rocket science. It does, however, involve good planning on the part of the instructor. I have found the following considerations to be essential in designing and implementing classroom teams.

Many of these elements are part of good team design, regardless if the teams are in the classroom environment, work, social, or other environment. I also believe that these principles hold true regardless of the subject matter.

**Ensure group work is appropriate for the task.** For example, projects in my courses have included analysis and design of computer applications for a real client, development of a strategic information systems plan based on a case study, development of an information and privacy program based on a class simulation, development of a request for proposal for a computer system based on a classroom simulation, simulation of a contract negotiation between a vendor and client, and assessment of information systems strategic plans.

In each of the above, the project lent itself to group work. There were multiple tasks that required different types and levels of skills. Tasks were interdependent. The project was sufficiently

complex and, given time and other constraints, would be difficult for an individual student to complete.

**Ensure the group work is relevant and feasible.** The project examples above were relevant to the learning process. For example, the analysis and design of computer applications for a real client was for a course in systems analysis and design. As didactic information on the analysis and design processes were presented (data flow diagrams, entity relationship diagrams, use cases), students could incorporate these into the project. The development of a privacy program was incorporated into a sophomore level course in information systems management where policy and procedure development and enforcement were important components of the didactic material.

While each project made students stretch and was not necessarily a “slam dunk,” each was feasible within the time and resource constraints of an academic quarter or semester.

**Make sure group work has a rationale.** I have found that students really charge ahead in teamwork if they understand the payoffs. When students understand that they will likely learn more and learn it better through group work and that they will be gaining competitive skills both in the subject matter and in teamwork, they respond positively to group work. I always bring to class examples of previous classes group work. When

students see that the projects are feasible (can be done) and observe the quality produced by their peers, they are motivated to do as well, if not better. In fact, I have found that student groups usually surpass previous groups in quality and quantity.

**Make sure group membership is appropriate.** Group membership must be balanced with a skill set up to the task. For example, in a systems analysis project involving the development of a database, the membership must include individuals who have database skills. Or if the project involves developing a Website, group membership must contain Web development skills. It's also beneficial to balance the group by personal styles (Myers Briggs or other indicators). Style diversity in the group helps to move the project along and teaches students how to work with individuals who have styles different than their own.

Group size must be appropriate to the project. I have used groups as small as 3 and as large as 12. Usually for undergraduate classes I have found that five is an optimal size both for project completion and providing diverse interpersonal experiences. In undergraduate courses I have also used projects where groups were interdependent. For example, in developing an information systems strategic plan, groups had responsibility for specific parts of the plan and interdependencies among groups were built into the project.

I have only used large groups in graduate courses for example, when the project was a simulation of a systems development department and the large group could be subdivided into small groups.

To ensure group balance, I distribute a questionnaire asking students to rate themselves (no experience, novice, intermediate, expert) on a list of skills pertinent to the group project. I also ask students to indicate their personal style inventory, if this has already been completed in the class. Methods for determining student style are discussed later in this manual.

**Develop framework for team management.** A framework for team management must be in place to guide students in learning team management and interpersonal skills. While the instructor maintains the final authority and is the final arbitrator (if needed), the framework should provide groups the flexibility to run their own teams. For example, the framework used in *High-Powered Teams* consists of key action items and provides a step-by-step process for implementing them. Student teams, however, are given freedom within the framework to run their own teams (for example, specifying their own team norms).

The framework should provide methods that help students define and manage the project. Techniques such as developing a project definition document, using a Gantt chart, conducting productive meetings, and preparing weekly interim reports are some examples. Specifics about these methods are discussed later in this manual.

A principle tenet of cooperative learning is individual responsibility and accountability. A major student complaint about working in teams is that the “social loafer” benefits from the work of the rest of the team when grades are assigned only on the final product and overall group performance. The framework, therefore, must include assessment methods that take into account individual as well as group performance.

The framework should support both individual and group evaluation. This can take the form of the instructor evaluating individual and group effort through regular interim reports, review of team meeting minutes, and interim evaluation of work products. Other methods may include asking students to evaluate each other, and perform self-evaluations, as well as instructor evaluations of individual students. Handling evaluations is discussed later in this manual.

**Keep track of and evaluate team materials.** Keeping track of team materials, such as team charters, agendas, minutes, and interim reports, is important for grading/evaluation purposes and to track how the team is managing itself. If the materials are paper-based, an easy way to do this is to have a different color folder for each team and to bring the folders to each class session. At the beginning of each class session the team leader places the team's work in the folder. No materials are taken out of the folder so the instructor has the total picture of teamwork at any given time.

Each week the instructor should review each team folder to see if the team is on schedule and to identify any problems the team might be having. If the documents are placed on an online bulletin board, the instructor should review these at least weekly.

For campus-based classes, periodically allow time in class for teams to work together so that you can observe how teams are operating and can assist them if they are encountering problems in moving the project forward. For online classes, the instructor should review the team's meeting chat sessions on a weekly basis to determine how well the team is managing itself and should intervene if there appear to be any potential problems.

The next sections of this manual suggest methods for integrating the above elements and provide direction in helping students use the *High-Powered Teams*.

## Chapter 3

# Preparing Students for Teamwork

**Note:** *Formal student teams can be formed either prior to or after having students complete the following activities. If the teams are formed after the activities are completed, the instructor has the ability to balance (ensure diversity) personal style within teams when team assignments are made.*

### Objectives:

At the conclusion of this chapter, students should be able to:

- Explain the key actions of high-powered teams
- Summarize the benefits of teamwork
- Explain how diversity of personal style can increase team performance
- Identify attributes of their own personal styles

### Student Assignment:

- Read Chapters 2 and 3 in *High-Powered Teams*

### Class Activity:

- Discuss key actions of high-powered teams
- Solidify team belief through the team building exercise *Lost on the Moon*
- Identify personal style through a personal style inventory

## **Introduce Students to Teamwork**

- Introduce students to the key actions that make a high-powered team. (The key actions are covered in Chapter 2: Key Actions of High Performing Teams in *High-Powered Teams*.)
  - Discuss key actions of high-powered teams
  - Have students participate in a team building exercise such as Lost on the Moon
  - Have students complete a personal style inventory

**Discuss key actions of high-powered teams.** The purpose of this discussion is to have students do the following:

- Reflect on their previous team experiences
- Identify key elements that made previous team experiences either favorable or unfavorable, and
- Identify key actions that teams can take to ensure a high-powered team.

I always start the discussion about teamwork by asking the question “How many of you have worked on student teams?” Usually most of the class members have participated in a student team. The next question I ask is, “For how many of you has the team experience been one of the best experiences of your academic career?” One or two students may raise a hand for this question. I follow-up with the question, “For how many of

you has the team experience been one of the worst of your academic career?” Most students raise their hands in response to this question.

Then I ask students to examine the dynamics of their team experience by asking them to do the following:

- For those of you who didn't have a good team experience, write down the key factors that you think made the experience less than favorable.
- For those of you had a good team experience, write down the key factors that made this a favorable experience.

Once students have finished writing down their thoughts, I debrief the class by writing their comments on an overhead, blackboard, or flip chart; we then discuss each of the comments. (This exercise can also be done interactively or through an electronic bulletin board, if this is an online course). I usually follow up this discussion with the question, “What actions would rectify the problems that we've listed about student teams?” For each problem, we address a corrective action.

Once the student list is exhausted, comparisons between what the students have identified as key failures and/or successes and their associated corrective actions are compared with the Key Actions in Chapter 2 of their manual.

Interestingly, students will nail many of the key actions that are necessary to make a high-powered team. So it isn't necessarily that students don't know what goes wrong on teams; more often than not, it is that they don't know how to frame the actions to make the necessary corrections.

I also emphasize to the students that in this class we are going to implement a structure for the management of student teams that addresses all of the problems they have cited. I explain to them why using teams as an instructional strategy is important (See Chapter 1) and explain that they will gain skills that will make them more competitive in the marketplace.

The above exercise is powerful in many ways. First it grabs the students' attention and makes them active participants in their learning. Second it is anchored in reality and allows students to share their own experiences. Third, it provides students the opportunity to critically analyze a problem situation and come up with solutions. Finally, the comparison of their experience and proposed solutions to the key actions of high-powered teams presented in Chapter 2, validates their experience and gives credibility to the information presented in Chapter 2 of *High-Powered Teams*.

After this exercise, I always can feel the electricity in the air and that the class is up for the challenge and ready to go .

**Team Building Exercise.** The purpose of this exercise is to help students solidify team belief by doing the following:

- Recognizing how teamwork helps to achieve a common goal
- Respecting the contribution of other team members
- Recognizing that team effort can outperform individual effort
- Understanding that each team member adds information, perspective, experiences, and competencies to achieve a common goal

The team-building exercise can be done prior to or after students have been assigned to teams.

Use the Lost on the Moon team building exercise found in Chapter 3 of *High-Powered Teams*. This team-building exercise is sufficiently challenging for college students and will help students achieve the above purpose.

- Ask students to read the Lost on the Moon scenario and then have them rank the 15 survival items individually on the worksheet sheet provided in the student manual. Allow about 10 minutes for this part of the exercise.

- After students have completed this exercise, put them in groups of three to five to compare and discuss their individual rankings. Have students as a team reach consensus on ranking the survival items. Have the team record it's ranking of items on the worksheet provided in the student manual.
- Instruct student teams to compare their team and individual ranking with NASA's answer sheet found in Appendix A of the student manual and calculate their individual and team scores.
- Lead a class discussion on results of the exercise. Students should reflect on how the contributions of all team members helped to produce a better final outcome. They should also reflect on how they learned from other team members and how cooperation produced a superior outcome. In the 15 years that I have used this exercise I have never had an individual outrank a team effort.

**Understanding Personal Style.** The purpose of this exercise is to have students do the following:

- Reflect on the value that differences in personal style can bring in forming a high-powered team.

- Recognize how differences in personal style can lead to conflict
- Identify ways of handling conflict arising from personal style diversity
- Identify their personal styles

While personal style diversity is what makes teams strong, conflict can easily surface and lead to poor performance when team members don't understand that differences exist in the way people receive information, form opinions and communicate. Teams also need to assess their strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis their team diversity. For example, if everyone on the team is an idea person, work may never get completed or even started.

- Review the concepts about personal style found in Chapter 3 of *High-Powered Teams* with the class. Ask students to give examples from their own experiences of how a diversity of personal style has made a goal easier to achieve, and how it has caused conflict.
- Give examples from your own experience of how diversity of personal style has contributed to a superior outcome on a project.
- Have students identify their personal style by using the Typefocus instrument discussed in Chapter 3.

- If you have not already made formal team assignments, ask students to turn in the results of their personal style inventory so that you can use them to ensure as much diversity as possible when you make team assignments.
- If you have already made formal team assignments, have students get into their teams and discuss their personal styles and the strengths that each would bring to a team. The team should map their personal styles using the form provided in Chapter 3.
- Encourage teams to develop a way of remembering their team members styles. For example, they can develop style cards (tent cards) that show each member's style and displayed whenever the team has meetings.

## Chapter 4: Make Team Assignments

Form teams that have a balance of skill and personal style appropriate to the course project, rather than forming groups by convenience or student self-selection.

### Objectives:

- Form student teams that have size, skill and style diversity appropriate to accomplishing the team assignment

**Class Activity:** Consider doing the following:

- Administer a short self-report questionnaire to identify student skill level before team formation. Include questions that identify skills necessary for completion of the course project. Ask students to rate themselves (no experience, novice, intermediate, expert) on a list of skills pertinent to the group project.
- Administer a style inventory to determine students' personal styles. In Chapter 3 of *High-Powered Teams*, I suggest using TypeFocus as an inventory to identifying student personal style. However, any number of other inventories can be used, such as the traditional Myers-Briggs.

- Form teams by balancing skill and personal styles based on information from the self-report questionnaire and style inventory. The team itself should select the team leader.

Having the right team size to accomplish the course project is important. Too small of a group usually lacks enough diversity; too large of a group makes management difficult. As a rule, I have found that a team of five students provides is a sufficient number to ensure a balanced workload and provide style and skill diversity in a team.

# Chapter 5

## Project Framework

Introduce the tools and techniques for ensuring a high-powered student team.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this chapter students should be able to do the following:

- Understand the importance of using a framework for managing their student teams
- Explain in general terms the components of a framework for team management
- Understand the expectations for using a framework for managing their student teams
- Understand how team and individual evaluation is performed for the final project grade

### **Class Activity**

You should provide a brief explanation of each of the following tools, your expectations for their use, and how you will use each for evaluation purposes in the course syllabus. Review this part of the syllabus during one of the first class sessions.

- Project notebook
- Team charter
- Team meeting agendas
- Team meeting minutes
- Individual conflict assessments
- Meeting evaluations
- Project-definition document
- Gantt chart
- Team communication plan
- Weekly interim reports
- Post project evaluation
- Post project individual team member evaluations

Each of these is addressed in the student manual High-Powered Teams. Figure 5.1. shows a sample syllabus describing the due dates, and evaluation mechanisms.

**Figure 5.1.  
Sample course syllabus team management  
description**

The instructor will assign students to teams to complete a semester course project. The team project includes applying systems analysis techniques in developing a database prototype for a specific problem.

The team is responsible for preparing and using the following to manage the course project:

**Project notebook:** The notebook documents how the team managed its project.

The project notebook is a three-ring binder that is appropriately tabbed and includes the following:

- Team charter
- Team meeting agendas
- Team meeting minutes
- Meeting evaluations
- Project definition document
- Task list and Gantt chart
- Team communication plan
- Interim team reports
- Post project evaluation
- Post project individual team member evaluations

*Date due: May 14..*

**Team charter:** Written agreement among team members about the team's mission, goals, and ground rules. Use format in Chapter 4 of *High-Powered Teams*.

*Date due: January 14.*

**Team meeting agendas and minutes:** Teams are required to meet at least weekly. Written agendas and minutes are required for each meeting. Use the format in Chapter 5 of *High-Powered Teams*.

*Date due: Written agendas and minutes of each team meeting are due each Wednesday during regular class session beginning January 21.*

**Meeting evaluations:** Evaluation of the degree to which the team is conducting productive meetings. Meeting evaluations are required for each team meeting. Use the format in Appendix C of *High-Powered Teams*.

*Date due: Each Wednesday during regular class session beginning January 21.*

**Project-Definition Document:** Describes the nature of the project, including problem statement, name, description, scope, constraints, objectives, timeline, costs, required resources and project leadership. Use the format found in Chapter 6 of High-Powered Teams.  
*Date due: January 28.*

**Task list and Gantt Chart:** A list of all tasks and assigned responsibilities for completion along with a timeline (Gantt chart) is required. Use the format found in Chapter 7 of High-Powered Teams.  
*Date Due: February 5.*

**Team Communication Plan:** A plan for how information will be communicated among team members and other stakeholders. Use the format in Chapter 7 of High-Powered Teams.  
*Date Due: February 5.*

**Interim Team Reports:** These reports assess task status ad completion, as well as scheduling and resource needs. Use the format in Chapter 8 of High-Powered Teams.  
*Date due: Each Wednesday, during regular class session beginning January 21.*

**Post project evaluation:** Identifies how well the team did in planning and executing the project. Use format in Chapter 9 of High-Powered Teams.  
*Date Due: May 14 last day of regular class session*

**Individual team evaluations:** Evaluation of the contribution of each team member to the project effort. Use evaluation format in Chapter 9 of High-Powered Teams.  
*Date Due: May 14 last day of regular class session*

**Project Deliverable:** List specifics of the format for the final report and expectations for the deliverable.

**Evaluation and Grading:** Insert here your grading and evaluation methods. For example:

The team project is worth 35 percent of the total course grade. Twenty-five percent of this is based on individual team member effort. Ten percent is based on the quality and timeliness of team documentation and the final report and deliverable.

The instructor evaluates individual effort by reviewing team documents such as minutes, interim reports, task assignments and the quality of complemented project elements contributed by the individual team member to the final project.

# Chapter 6

## Team Charter

Developing the charter compels the team to think about its mission, goals, values and expectations for behavior and sets the foundation for a well-run team operation.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this chapter students should be able to do the following:

- Explain the purpose of a team charter
- Explain the components of a team charter
- Prepare a team mission statement
- Prepare team goals
- Prepare team norms
- Construct a team charter

### **Student Assignment:**

Read Chapter 4 in *High-Powered Teams*.

### **Class Activity:**

Take 20 to 30 minutes to discuss the components of a team charter and the charter's purpose. Discuss the examples of mission statement, goals, and norms

provided in the student manual. Give additional examples or ask student teams to give examples.

Assign Exercise 4.1. Develop Your Team Charter. Require that the Charter be handed in and provide feedback to the students. Require students to redo the document if it is incomplete or unclear.

# Chapter 7

## Conducting Productive Team Meetings

Students rarely have any training in how to conduct productive meetings. Team meetings are where work should get done and decisions should be made. However, team conflict is also likely to occur during meetings, particularly if students do not have conflict management skills. Because of the importance of meetings to a well functioning team, it is essential that students learn the basics of meeting management and how to deal with conflict.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this chapter students should be able to do the following:

- Identify barriers to conducting productive meetings
- Discuss techniques used to achieve productive meetings
- Establish team meeting rules
- Prepare meeting agendas
- Apply conflict-management techniques during team meetings
- Conduct productive team meetings
- Participate productively in team meetings

- Prepare meeting minutes

**Student assignment:**

Read Chapter 5 in *High-Powered Teams*

**Class activity:**

- Ask students to make a list of impediments to well run meetings. Ask students to volunteer the items on their list; write these on the board or overhead. If this is an online class, ask students to contribute their ideas to the online bulletin board or chat.
- When the list is complete, have the class categorize the underlying causes. For example, process issues, people issues, information issues, and so on.
- Review the elements of productive meetings listed in Chapter 5 of *High-Powered Teams*.
- Evaluate each of the underlying causes of poor meetings that the class has identified and discuss how these could be minimized or eliminated by using the techniques listed in the evaluation form in Exercise 5.1.
- Review conflict-management techniques discussed in Chapter 5. Have students complete on their own Exercise 5.2. Review with the class the examples

given in Chapter 5 for guiding positive meeting behaviors.

- Go over minute and agenda formats. Review minute and agenda due dates.

# Chapter 8

## Defining the Project

A project-definition document describes the common understanding among team members about the nature of the project, serves as a contract among the team members, and clearly states expectations for project scope, timeline, resources, and results. The project definition document becomes the team's general road map.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this chapter students should be able to do the following:

- Explain the purpose of a project-definition document
- Discuss the components of a project-definition document
- Prepare a project-definition document

### **Student assignment:**

Read Chapter 6 in *High-Powered Teams*.

**Class activity:**

- Go over each of the components of the project-definition document with the class. If the project is clearly defined in the syllabus, or if there is little flexibility in scope and objectives among teams, then the definition document can be developed as a classroom exercise. (In many of my systems analysis classes there was flexibility in maximum scope.)
- Review the case study in Chapter 6 and/or provide additional case studies.
- Review the due date for the project-definition document.

# Chapter 9

## Planning the Project

Student teams need to develop a plan of action based on the project-definition document. The plan of action needs to include the following:

- List of tasks to be completed
- Timeline for completion of each task (Gantt Chart)
- Assignment of responsibility for task completion
- Identification of resource needs
- Development of communication plan

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this chapter the student should be able to do the following:

- Explain the techniques to manage a team project
- Develop team tasks
- Develop a task timeline
- Assign responsibility for completing tasks
- Develop a Gantt chart
- Identify required project resources
- Use a Gantt chart to manage team project
- Develop a communication plan

**Student assignment:**

Read Chapter 7 in *High-Powered Teams*.

**Class Activity:**

- Review the elements of planning a project.  
Review the purpose and format of a Gantt chart and how one is constructed.
- Review the task-assignment grid
- Review elements of a communication plan
- Assign teams exercises 7.1, 7.2, 7.3. and 7.4.
- Review the due date for the Gantt chart and the Communication Plan.

# Chapter 10

## Managing the Project

The team relies on tools and techniques such as norms, the project-definition document, and the Gantt chart to keep the project on target. However, management of the team and its project is carried out through team meetings and communications.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this chapter the student should be able to do the following:

- Discuss the purpose of interim team reports
- Identify the components of interim team reports
- Prepare interim team reports
- Use interim team reports as a means to keep the project on task and on schedule.

### **Student assignment:**

Read Chapter 8, Managing the Project, in *High-Powered Teams*.

### **Class activity:**

- Review with students the purpose and components of the Interim Report.

- Show students how to use the questions on page 113 to evaluate the progress of the team in completing its project.
- Review due dates for Interim Team Reports.

# Chapter 11

## Project Closeout

Closeout activities will depend on the type of class project, but minimally they should include preparation of a final report, a post-project evaluation, individual team evaluations, and final compilation of the project notebook.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this chapter the student should be able to do the following:

- Prepare a final project report
- Conduct a post-project evaluation
- Evaluate the contribution of team members to the team effort
- Compile a project notebook

### **Student assignment:**

Read Chapter 9 in *High-Powered Teams*.

### **Class activity:**

- Review requirements for the final project report.
- Review the purpose and elements of a post-project evaluation. Use the form in Figure 9.1 as an example.

- Review purpose and elements of individual team member evaluations. Use the form in Figure 9.2 as an example.
- Review how the final evaluations will be used in grade assignments.
- Review the purpose and contents of the project notebook. Refer to Appendix B in High-Powered Teams.
- Review the due dates for final project report, project notebook, and team and individual evaluations.

## Closing Thoughts

You can use *High-Powered Teams* in a general orientation session in a specific discipline, for example, in business administration, computer science, health services administration and so on. Team building exercises and personal style inventories are examples of parts of the process that can be easily integrated into an orientation session. Furthermore, students can be introduced to the rationale for using teams and the general structure for managing them, making it easier to apply teamwork in coursework throughout the curriculum. Introducing students to teams during orientation sessions was successfully used in two of the graduate programs in which I taught. By introducing teamwork at the beginning of the student's academic program, cooperative learning became a unifying principle throughout the curriculum.

Like any other instructional method, effectively implementing cooperative learning methods takes practice and experimentation. A number of variables may impact how cooperative learning methods are used including the subject matter domain, the student population, the classroom environment (online or campus-based), the length of the academic period, and so on. So there is no cookie-cutter approach that will work effectively in all situations. The methods

described in this manual have worked for me with hundreds of student teams. However, it is likely that you may want to modify some of the methods, customize them, or create different ones that work better given your special circumstances. A discussion board is provided for your use to share your ideas, methods, or questions at <http://www.mljohnsphd.com>. I look forward to hearing from many of you so that we all can learn from each other and ultimately better serve our students.