



Fundamentals of Team-
Based Learning:

Peer Evaluation & Team Development

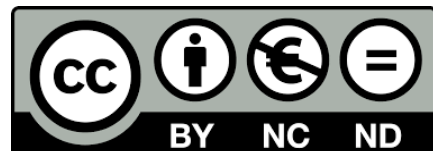
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INTRODUCTION & ABOUT YOUR EBOOK



Hi. My name is Beck McCarter and I am an expert in empowering pedagogies and digital learning. I'm an accredited TBL Trainer-Consultant and the course leader for the Fundamentals of Team-Based Learning Programme.

I created this eBook as a companion to the fourth workshop in the programme, Peer Evaluation & Team Development, and it contains all the preparatory material you will need to participate in the workshop.

I teach you about TBL by using TBL, partly so that you have an opportunity to experience everything from the student perspective but also because I've found that it's without doubt the most effective way to teach and learn.

In order to get the most out of the workshop, please take time to read through this booklet in advance and consider how the TBL approach would work for your subject and context.

I look forward to working with you!

Beck

Let's connect!



@beckmccarter

Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop, you should be able to:

- 1 Identify characteristics of high and low performing teams
- 2 Compare and contrast systems and strategies for facilitating team growth
- 3 Apply strategies to empower teams to self-manage performance through peer feedback and evaluation
- 4 Identify common errors and barriers to successful teamwork and peer evaluation

What's in a name?

GROUPS V TEAMS

It is quite common to hear exclamations of 'I've been doing that for years!' when some educators first hear the term Team-Based Learning because the benefits of small group learning are well established and the difference between a group and a team is inconsistently defined - sometimes the terms are even used interchangeably. Research in social psychology has demonstrated that, although all teams are definitely a form of group, not all groups can be considered teams. This is an important distinction to make as it is a major factor in the transformative impact team-based learning can have on student outcomes when properly implemented.



A group is a set of people who are connected through some shared activity or quality. A team is a collection of individuals with a shared identity working together to achieve a common purpose.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS

Groups don't become teams just because you label them so: members need time interacting together, sharing resources to tackle challenging tasks, and plenty of opportunity to exchange and respond to individual and group feedback regularly. MacMillan (2001) identified 6 characteristics of high-performing teams:

HIGH-PERFORMANCE TEAMS

- ✓ Common purpose
- ✓ Clear roles
- ✓ Accepted leadership
- ✓ Effective processes
- ✓ Solid relationships
- ✓ Excellent communication

Common purpose

A clear, compelling purpose motivates people to commit to a team and work through the inevitable ups and downs they will experience. Members must be aligned to the purpose before the team is able to perform effectively. Alignment happens when you create clarity around the goal, emphasise the relevance and significance of achieving it and provide encouragement that they are well able to do so.

Clear roles

Assigning roles such as leader, scribe, observer and so on are frequently a feature of cooperative learning but can be counterproductive in Team-Based Learning. We are more concerned with ensuring that each team member is aware of how they will allocate the work between them and how each contributes towards the goal. The resulting interdependence is a sign of mutual trust and effective collaboration.



Accepted leadership

Thiel's work mostly focussed on teams in organisational settings where there is an implicit assumption that teams will include people in leadership roles. In contrast, things are rarely so clear-cut for learning teams where there is a real risk of disputed or absent leadership within teams as well as the impact of other factors such as the instructor's preferred style of teaching. Team-Based Learning provides an excellent opportunity to develop competency in member-leader approaches where leadership is fluid and each team member is empowered to step up or back as required by the situation or their particular knowledge and expertise (McCallin, 1999).

Effective processes

There are two types of processes: task and maintenance. Task based processes develop fairly quickly because of the attention given to completion of work. Maintenance processes take longer to establish yet are critical to achieving effective and sustained team performance. Benne & Sheats (1948) laid the foundations of our understanding of group behaviours - below are some illustrative examples of these behaviours in action.

Task



- **Proposing** - 'Let's try to...'
- **Testing consensus** - 'Does everyone agree that we could...'
- **Consolidating** - 'I agree, and it would do...'
- **Clarifying** - 'Do you mean that...?'
- **Questioning** - 'Is that realistic?'
- **Contradicting** - 'I disagree because...'

Maintenance



- **Motivating** - 'We're doing really well, actually...'
- **Lightening** - 'We're in danger of missing lunch here, let's get priorities right.'
- **Observing** - 'We've got a bit stuck here. How about a break?'
- **Praise** - 'Jack really hit the nail on the head when he said...'



Solid relationships

You don't need to be best friends to be an effective team. It can be challenging to work within a team with a range of beliefs and values but the benefits are worthwhile: teams that leverage diversity are likely to be more innovative and make better decisions when compared to homogenous teams. If we can create an environment of psychological safety where respect, acceptance, courtesy and trust are valued then the team should thrive.



Excellent communication

Fast, clear, timely, accurate communication is a hallmark of a high-performing team. Members are able to speak candidly and employ a range of strategies to resolve conflict. Perhaps most importantly of all, members make an effort to listen as much if not more than they talk.

Old and new paradigms of feedback



Peer evaluation is a core element of Team-Based Learning because it encourages students to commit time and effort to teamwork and promotes the development of healthy intra-team dynamics. It can also be quite challenging to implement well as students may feel some initial discomfort grading their peers ([Sibley, 2014](#)).

Much of the literature on peer feedback concerns students commenting on each other's work and it is well established that composing such feedback is often even more beneficial than receiving it ([McConlogue, 2015](#)). In Team-Based Learning we go beyond this and ask students to assess how much each person contributed to the learning and the success of the team. It is more akin an appraisal or 360 degree evaluations now popular in workplaces. This emphasis on behaviour over product is key to leveraging social capital in course design and developing the interpersonal skills so strongly associated with this instructional strategy.

If students are to become more active partners in feedback processes and use feedback to facilitate their own development, they need to reach an understanding of the purpose of feedback, to develop the skills to judge the quality of their own work and that of others and to manage emotional responses to feedback ([Winstone & Carless, 2020](#)).

Benefits of Peer Evaluation

Peer evaluation can have a powerful effect on both individual and team development.



Promotes individual accountability

Establishing accountability requires both that the quality of individual and team work can be monitored and that desirable behaviour is incentivised – peers are well acquainted with the level of effort and contribution each person makes ([Stein et al, 2014](#)).



Improves team cohesiveness

Performance feedback provides data to help members develop a clear understanding of how individual effort and the way members work together affect group effectiveness ([Michaelson et al, 2004](#)).



Develops feedback literacy

Carless & Boud ([2018](#)) identify how peer feedback operationalises student feedback literacy as it supports them to appreciate feedback, make judgements, manage affect and take appropriate action in response to the feedback they receive.

Methods of Peer Evaluation

There are many ways to approach peer evaluation, each with pros and cons, so course context, institutional culture, instructor and course goals should all be taken into account when constructing your scheme.

MICHAELSEN METHOD

An individual team maintenance score is generated and usually contributes 5-10% of the final grade. Students allocate a score to each of their teammates based on their perceived contribution: they are required to give everyone a different score and provide reasons for the highest and lowest scores.

FINK METHOD

The evaluation score is calculated either on a simple allocation of points or based on a rubric and then used as a multiplier to adjust the final grade of a student so that there is differentiation within the team. Rubrics may be generated by the students.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - AUSTIN METHOD

Purely qualitative method used for formative feedback which students are asked to complete 2-3 times per semester. They are instructed to share something they appreciate about each teammate and one request for improvement.

KOLES METHOD

A hybrid approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data. A student's final score is determined both by their teammate's perception of their contribution to the team as well as the instructor's evaluation of the quality of feedback they provided to their teammates.