GUIDELINES FOR USING STUDY GROUPS EFFECTIVELY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING
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Abstract

Instructors face a tremendous challenge when preparing students to enter the 21st Century. This Paper offers some tools to use in meeting this challenge. The Paper discusses some factors instructors need to keep in mind when creating groups, development stages of groups, suggested formats for effective group work, and how group interaction, learning, and productivity are affected. The Paper also offers information on dynamics of study groups, touches on the social benefits the groups derive from task and maintenance functions, and offers rules for groups to perform effectively. The role of the instructor in the group process is explained, and suggestions are offered to assign group grades. The Paper concludes by discussing the advantages of the study group process.

GUIDELINES FOR USING STUDY GROUPS EFFECTIVELY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Introduction

How can instructors meet the needs of an ever-changing student population, and the challenges this population faces as they enter the 21st Century? How can instructors help adult learners who, unlike the younger college student, have assumed responsibility not only for accomplishing in the work place but also for continued professional development? What tools can instructors use to help students become productive members of a world where information is multiplying almost as fast as it is becoming obsolete, where skills must continually be upgraded and perfected in order to compete effectively?

One of the answers lies in setting learning objectives to help adult learners achieve their academic goals. These learning objectives should include enhancing self-directed learning through the ever-increasing use of small group dynamics, and developing those interpersonal skills required to participate effectively in study groups.

Why do we place such emphasis on the study group process? For one, the study group process helps adult learners practice interaction skills needed to achieve a common objective, through sharing of talent, experiences, and learning resources. This not only allows learners to assume greater self direction and responsibility for their own learning, but also to share more information in less time and cover more content than if they were to do it alone. Furthermore, the study group process forces learners to participate actively in their own professional development and to be more responsible for acquiring knowledge and skills, unlike traditional learning environments where students assume a rather passive role.(University of Phoenix,1992).

Factors to Keep in Mind When Creating Groups

Several factors need to be kept in mind when creating groups. In the first place, groups should be formed on the first class meeting. Doing this enables students to start working on group assignments right away, especially those due on the next class meeting.

A second factor to keep in mind is for students to become familiar with each other prior to the formation of the groups. This can be done through ice-breaking, getting-acquainted, or warm-up activities, always remembering that these activities must never put the students on the spot. Both instructors and students benefit here by having a chance to settle in and get information on the make up of the class. In addition, these activities start the course off in an enjoyable and pleasant manner and make the classroom, the classmates, and even the instructor less threatening.

One ice-breaking activity I have found very helpful and have been using for several years is to ask class members to select a partner and interview each other using the questionnaire depicted in Figure 1. I usually give them six to ten minutes to interview each other, depending on the size of the class, and ask them to switch roles at half time. At the end of the exercise, students introduce to the class the person they have interviewed.

Instructors should give students the responsibility to form their own study groups. Once they are formed, instructors should not change the composition of the groups, unless requested by them. Otherwise the dynamics of the group will be affected, and the learning and performance will suffer.

The next thing to encourage when forming groups is the diversity of backgrounds. Similar experiences and occupations limit creativity. Diverse backgrounds tend to strengthen the learning process, and add a range of disciplines and real-world knowledge, which enhances the creative and critical thinking process.

Geographic proximity of the group members, and time of their meetings, are also important considerations, since during the program they are expected to spend many hours together outside of class. Care should be taken here not to select members on the basis of proximity only, for this would detract from the quality of the learning process.

How many members should a group have? Four to six members per group would be the ideal number. Groups of less than four students are unable to deal effectively with major group projects. Groups of more than six students need more direction, more structure, and rules to operate and stay focused. Otherwise creativity is reduced and the learning process is affected.

Not all students are familiar with the study group process. Some students may be new to the process, especially in the elective or non-core courses; some of them may be very experienced. The instructor should keep this in mind and, for the benefit of the new students, offer an overview of the study group process.

Group Development Stages

Both formal and informal groups exhibit four development stages: mutual acceptance, decision making, motivation and commitment, and control and sanctions. (Nelson and Quick, Organizational Development, 1997).

The first stage in the development of the group is mutual acceptance. The focus here is on interpersonal relations among the members. There is mutual assessment by members regarding emotional comfort, trustworthiness, and group acceptance. Other issues that may also surface are authority, influence, and power, when members with strong personalities try to dominate the process right away. Once a comfortable level of acceptance and mutual trust is reached, members attention can focus on the tasks at hand.

The second stage involves planning and decision making. The focus now turns to those activities having to do with understanding the nature of the group's task, and figuring out how to accomplish it. The issue of authority is very strong here, with the group trying to decided who should be responsible for what, and whether or not they need a primary leader.

Now that tasks and interpersonal issues have been resolved, the group enters the third stage. Here the focus is on motivation of self and other members of the group, especially when it comes to really getting started. Some maintenance functions evident here include encouraging, supporting, acknowledging contributions of others, and establishing performance and evaluation standards for the group. Execution as well as achievement are highly emphasized here.

The final development stage includes controls and sanctions. Now the group has evolved into a mature, productive, efficient, and effective unit. Interpersonal, task, and authority issues have been resolved successfully. Their purpose and mission are clear, everyone understands the performance and behavior expected, the level of cohesion is very high, and the leader-follower relationships are clearly defined. One important issue is worth mentioning here: the group may revert to earlier stages of development if the membership of the group changes through loss of a member or addition of a new one.

Another model of group development identifies five stages: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning. (Nelson & Quick, Organizational Behavior, 1997).

Some Formats for Group Work

There are several formats available to get students involved in group work. Which one to use depends on the nature of the task, the size and composition of the class, and the instructors preference.

One of them is called, □**Think-Pair-Share.** Here students are required to either think or write their answer to a question asked by the instructor. Their response should include evaluation, analysis or synthesis. It should also be shared first with a partner, then within a four-person learning team, and ultimately with a larger group or with the entire class. This exercise gives the students the opportunity to learn by reflection and verbalization, and improves the caliber of the discussion. (The Teaching Professor, 1995).

Another format is called, **"Three-Step Interview"**. In this format, students share information with each other during a paired interview. What they learned in this interview is then shared in a four-member learning team. The information could be a reaction to a film or article, or a hypothesis. This exercise can be used as an icebreaker. (The Teaching Professor, 1995).

A third format is called, **"Simple Jigsaw"**. The instructor divides the class into teams and an assignment or topic into four parts. One student from each team volunteers to become an "expert" on one of the parts. All the "experts" on each part work together to master it and discuss the best way to help the other students learn it. Then the "experts" go back to their home teams and teach the other group members. (The Teaching Professor, 1995).

A fourth format is called, **"Structured Controversy."** Here the class is divided in teams and assigned a controversial issue. Each team assumes a different position, and is responsible for discussing, researching and sharing its findings with the rest of the class. (The Teaching Professor, 1995).

A different format can be used when assigning responsibility to the group for class sessions. In this particular format, the class is divided in groups of two to three students. Each group is fully responsible for designing and leading a class session. The groups decide on the theme or topic for the class and the format for the session, and advise the instructor of the selection two or three days prior to the class session. All members are required to participate equally in selecting the topic, and in preparing and presenting it. Then the group is expected to assess the pros and cons of their experience, as well as any changes deemed necessary. This format is used very successfully at Indiana University. (http://www.indiana.edu/~iubnurse/r200paper.html).

And yet another format is present when using groups for the Case Method. This is the primary form of instruction at Harvard Business School, as well as many other higher learning institutions. Here groups of 4-6 students are responsible for analyzing and discussing actual situations managers face in real organizations, from the viewpoint of the general manager. Then the group members offer several solutions to the particular situation being analyzed, and recommend the course of action they consider best, based on the objectives of the company. (www.hbs.edu/mba/program/)

What Affects Group Interaction And Learning

Lets now examine factors that affect group interaction and learning. One factor to consider here is the **Friendliness Level**. Those groups that display a high level of congeniality, camaraderie, and willingness to help each other, set a very positive atmosphere and facilitate task accomplishment. The result of this friendly environment is more effective performance and a stronger learning process. (University of Phoenix, 1991).

Another factor is the **Intensity Level**. When students work in a group they tend to concentrate more, stay more focused, and display a high level of inner activity. This, in turn, improves the level of performance and enhances interaction among the members. (University of Phoenix, 1991).

A third factor is the **Amount of Activity**. Members of groups that generate several tasks and are actively involved in their performance, are animated, ask questions, debate issues and work together to complete the task in a timely manner and with a high level of quality. The agendas of the group members influence the amount of activity. Some members may want to compete, others may want to work alone to either achieve their own, or the groups goals, and some may want to work together. Of course the most successful groups are those where members want to work together and cooperate with each other to increase the performance quality. (University of Phoenix, 1991).

Instructors need to be aware of these factors, their effect on the groups performance and level of satisfaction, and ensure the students understand them and make them work to their best advantage.

What Affects Group Productivity

Instructors and students need to be aware of processes that affect group productivity. Not all groups work well or efficiently. Some students don't believe others in the group will perform up to their standards, so they decide to do all the work themselves and discourage others from becoming involved. Other students are "no-shows" throughout the duration of the project, and no one knows how to contact them. (The Teaching Professor, 1994).

Some students have good ideas and don't hesitate to offer them and to force their solutions on the group. They don't listen very well to others' ideas and constantly push everyone in their direction, whether they agree or not. And then, there are those students who attend all meetings and come well prepared, but are so quiet that others forget they are there. (The Teaching Professor, 1994).

How can instructors deal with these unwelcome group member characteristics? One way is to ask small groups of students to discuss them and come up with strategies for dealing with them. The answers will, then, be shared with all the groups as tools to use for corrective action when faced with any of these unwanted behaviors.

Dynamics of Study Groups

It is vital that Instructors set the tone for the study group process at the beginning of the class. As quickly as possible establish a supportive atmosphere conducive to creating mutual trust and encouraging positive feedback. As part of this, instructors should uncover learners hidden agendas inconsistent with the goals of the groups. Not doing this might result in conflict and friction, which will be detrimental to the learning process.

One way to uncover hidden agendas is to ensure learners understand clearly the group responsibilities and tasks, and recognize and address individual needs. Otherwise the group might not be able to achieve the desired performance.

Another group dynamics factor to keep in mind is learners contribution. What happens when some members fail to complete their part of the project on time or worse even, do not accept their share of the work? Should the instructor step in and enforce the rules, or let the group handle the situation? Here the group should decide on the course of action--either carry the non-contributors share or have a confrontation. The best method is for the group to approach the non-contributor, make him or her aware of how this kind of performance is affecting the group, and ask for corrective action.

If all this fails, empower the group to □fire the individual, explaining first the reasons for this decision. What is the instructors role when this happens? In the first place, act as a sounding board for the group; then, if the student requests the assistance of the instructor, help him or her join another group, explaining that study group assignments are a requirement to stay in the program.

Should all members contribute equally? This would be the ideal situation, but is not always the case. Depending upon their background and experience, some group members may provide more input than others. The problem arises when one member continues to contribute less than the others, in which case the group should find out the reasons for this. It could be that the members abilities are below those of the other members, which would require the groups encouragement and assistance. The result of this is a stronger group and a better product.

How about groups with a leader versus groups without a leader? There are pros and cons to both. For a group to be leaderless, group members need to contribute equally and feel comfortable with the goals established. They also need to set these goals and the priorities of the group right away, and agree upon the different tasks to accomplish them. Usually it takes time for members to trust one another and realize the benefits to be derived from keeping harmony and understanding each members strengths and weaknesses.

On the other hand, when there is uncertainty as to the direction of the group, this can create anxiety. In this case a group leader is needed. This will reduce fears and create a more familiar social order, but the group creativity and the performance will also be reduced. A good idea here is to rotate the leadership role. Another option is to share leadership. In this case one member would act as the task master, setting the agenda, initiating much of the work activity, and ensuring that the group would meet the established deadlines. Another member could take the leadership role of maintaining effective interpersonal relationships in the group. This is a characteristic of a mature group.

Group Social Benefits Through Task And Maintenance Functions

There are two sets of social benefits available to group members: (1) emotional and psychological closeness to other group members (psychological intimacy); and (2) closeness achieved through tasks and activities (integrated

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involvement). (Nelson & Quick, Organizational Behavior, 1997).

Groups perform both task and maintenance functions to help members achieve psychological intimacy and integrated involvement. Task functions are more important at the beginning of the groups life as the group members establish roles and determine objectives and procedures. They decrease in importance as the group matures. Using them effectively creates a successful team; not using them may result in disaster.

Maintenance functions foster psychological intimacy, which includes a sense of togetherness, willingness to cooperate, and to be a true team member. They also contribute to the success of the group project, and help reduce the tension created by task functions. Just as task functions, maintenance functions are important for teams to be successful. Figure 2 shows some of the maintenance and task functions observed in successful group.

Rules of The Group

Each group needs to establish rules and clearly identify individual roles and responsibilities at the beginning of each project. The benefit of this is a decrease in anxiety and in the possibility that an assertive group member may take over the group. The faculty member can help the group establish performance standards to enhance the process.

The group should also agree on an agenda and set their project calendar right away. This will allow the members to set their long-range personal planning around the schedule of meetings of the group, and will give everyone a clear vision of the tasks and deadlines at hand. Groups also need to ensure all members understand that participation is required of everyone within the group in order to achieve the level of performance desired.

Group cohesiveness is another important factor. Encourage members to perform internal group evaluations from time to time, preferably at the completion of each task, to determine lessons learned and how the process can be improved. Figure 3 is an example of how this internal group evaluation could be performed.

Several factors influence group cohesion, among them time to complete the project, size of the group, and internal and external competition. Group cohesion is not something that happens all of a sudden, it evolves over time as the group develops normally. As a general rule small groups, between 4-6 members, are usually more cohesive than larger ones, and this is one of the reasons why study groups should be kept small in size.

The Role of The Instructor

It is a good idea for instructors to remember that their role is that of facilitator, and to avoid interfering in the dynamics of the group. The instructors main responsibilities are to establish a positive tone, to monitor groups performance, and to guide the process of the group. The positive tone must be established during the first class meeting and continue to be reinforced throughout the duration of the project.

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I use the following technique as one of the ways to establish this positive tone. Since the majority of the students I teach, especially in Masters level courses, are military officers of different ranks, I always ensure they understand that once students enter my classroom they are all on the same level. To accomplish this, I use first names with everyone and strongly encourage them to do the same. I have found this reduces the intimidation non-officers feel in competing with their higher-ups during the course. Many non-officers have thanked me profusely at the completion of the course, for the opportunity I afforded them to shine in front of their superiors by reducing their intimidation and anxiety level. This technique also reduces the demands placed on officers to be the authority figure, and everyone seems to relax and have a good time.

Another example of this equality policy in action is when it comes to all other students, regardless of their color, gender, nationality, or station in life, whether housewives, medical doctors, business owners, executives, or the like. I ensure everyone understands that, once they enter my classroom, they are all at the same level.

Instructors must also monitor group performance, by providing clear direction on tasks and expected performance rather than dictating activities to be performed by the group. It is important that the group understand clearly the goals and expectations.

It is important for the instructor to rack the group process. This will help the groups ensure their schedule is realistic, will keep their performance from becoming sidetracked, and will contribute to the positive accomplishment of group tasks . One way to track the group process is to use the form depicted in Figure 4. Instructors should ask the groups to prepare this form after each group meeting and give it to the instructor at the class meeting following their group session. Doing this helps the groups stay focused and gives the instructor a status of their activities.

When it comes to guiding the selection process, instructors should limit their involvement to establishing the size of the groups and the criteria for their formation, discussed earlier. Group members may decide to move from one group to another, but the instructor should not participate in this decision. One technique I have found useful here is to have the groups fill out the form in Figure 5, immediately after the groups are first formed. Then I provide copies of the form to each member for easy reference in communicating with group members or other groups, outside of class.

In the event new members are added to the class, it is up to the groups to decide where the newcomers will be placed, provided the size of the groups does not exceed six students. If it does, the instructor should direct that a new group be formed.

Some groups tend to divide the tasks on the first group meeting, and this all right, as long as they continue to meet weekly and have each member be involved in the group process through give-and-take. This is the basis for the learning experience of the study group. The problem arises when

there is Asplintering, that is, the different members work alone on their respective tasks and only meet again when putting the final report together. The instructor should definitely discourage this group behavior by strongly emphasizing the importance of having the project flow together through group meetings, to build strategies and decide on solutions as a unit.

One idea here is to allow time at the end of each class meeting for the different groups to meet in the classroom. It is a good idea for the instructor to stay and listen in on the different group discussions, to get a status of the progress of the groups.

Assigning Group Grades

One of the considerations when assigning grades to the group projects is deciding what is a fair grade for each member of the group. Did they all contribute equally? Did some contribute more than others? Did some contribute less? One technique I have found very useful here is to assign a portion of the group grade based on individual performance. To determine this individual performance I ask members to fill out the form in Figure 6, on an individual basis. I assure them this is a confidential evaluation of their groups, in other words, for my eyes only.

The next item the instructor needs to consider is how to assign the remainder portion of the grade to the entire group. One thing to keep in mind is that assigning a single grade to the group aids in motivating the students to work towards a single purpose and to help each other accomplish it.

Since they will all be getting the same grade, this

is an incentive for the group to ensure that non-contributors participate, and that everyone's efforts to increase the level of performance are intensified. It also motivates the members who are stronger in a particular area to work with those whose strength is not the same. (University of Phoenix, 1992).

One word of caution is in order here. Sometimes placing too much importance on the grade assigned to the group will result in poor performers receiving a high final grade for the project, when the overall performance of the group they were in was outstanding. To add some fairness to the process, I usually assign 20% of the overall course grade to the group project, with 5% of that based on individual performance. I also ask them to include an Appendix to the written document, indicating the part that each group member was responsible for, and the level of contribution.

There are several guidelines instructors can use in evaluating and grading the written report. One I have found very useful is the form in Figure 7, adapted from one used by the faculty of the University of Phoenix . I always share these criteria with the students prior to the assignment, and include the completed form with the graded report I return to them.

The next step is grading the oral presentation of the project. I always require each group to present a summary of their project orally, and insist on the participation of all members of the group. Each group has 20 minutes to make their presentation, or an average of five minutes per member. The oral presentation is worth 5% of the total course grade. This portion of the group

study project seems to stimulate and energize everyone and build some healthy competition. Groups seem to want to outdo each other with their very creative presentations. For the oral presentation I ask each group to evaluate the presenters together, using the form in Figure 8. The evaluations are then handed to each presenting group at the end of their presentation, for their own edification. (University of Phoenix, 1992).

Advantages of Group Work

Not all students are in favor of group work. Some of them are, in fact, more comfortable working or studying alone. Some students are "loners", perhaps very shy, or have had an unsatisfactory experience in a previous group. Others may not like the pressure to conform or to fit in. (Howard Community College, 1996). Yet others may be impatient with the amount of time it takes the group to make a decision and think they can do it faster as an individual. Instructors need to be aware of these and other personality traits and emphasize the many benefits to be gained from the group experience.

One of the positive outcomes of the study group process is strengthening the students' ability to make decisions in the work place. By being exposed to, for example, the dynamics of analyzing and solving case problems as a group, students learn how the process works and the difference between reaching a conclusion as an individual versus reaching it as a group.

Participation in a study group also increases the students' self-confidence in dealing with problems

in the real world, for their role as a member of a group does not only include the classroom but also their workplace, their families, their friends, their religious affiliations, the organizations they belong to, to name a few.

Gaining confidence working with groups reduces the level of anxiety and uncertainty this task may create, as students understand the group dynamics. Since the deadlines imposed by the group and the amount of work involved is similar to situations students encounter in the workplace, this also prepares them to perform more effectively there, even under pressure.

Students increase their knowledge and experience as each one responds to the different contributions of the other members of the study group. Students also benefit from the many problem-solving techniques and creative solutions that emerge from this group interaction.

Another benefit to be gained is the increased capacity for self-understanding and self-assessment, as the group process heightens their sensitivity to their own behavioral characteristics as well as those of the other members. This helps them to learn not only to be leaders but also followers.

By working with others in the accomplishment of the task at hand, students learn to use their strengths and minimize their weaknesses. This increases their quality and performance level in the present project as well as other projects they may be assigned in the different courses they take.

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Their understanding and learning of the material in these courses also increases and becomes more meaningful, as members are involved in the interaction of asking questions, providing answers, sharing their knowledge with others, and getting explanations on material they may not understand. This, in turn, improves their personal and interpersonal methods of communicating, their analytical skills, and helps them become aware of differences in desired and undesired behavior.

Conclusion

In an effort to assist instructors to meet the challenge of preparing students to face the world of the 21st Century, we have compiled important guidelines on the effective use of study groups in teaching and learning. We have discussed factors instructors need to keep in mind when creating groups, development stages of groups, suggested formats for effective group work, and touched on how group interaction, learning and productivity are affected. We have covered some dynamics of study groups, the social benefits groups derive from task and maintenance functions, and offered rules for effective group interaction. And, finally, we have discussed the role the instructor plays, offered suggestions to assign group grades, and touched on advantages of the study group process.

It is a reality that the 21st Century is upon us and we are called upon to do what no other generation of educators had to do. Are we, as instructors, prepared to meet the profound challenges and responsibilities of our profession? Are we willing to transform our thinking and our educational methods accordingly?

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BIOGRAPHY

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Ms. Secrist holds a Master of Science degree in Business Organizational Management, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, both from the University of La Verne, La Verne, California. Ms. Secrist also holds a Systems Engineering Certificate from the California Institute of Technology Industrial Relations Center, and is working on her Doctor of Public Administration degree.

Ms. Secrist is a Senior Member of the Society of Logistics Engineers (SOLE) where she has been very active at the Chapter (Chairman), District, national and international levels. Ms. Secrist is also a member of the California Writers Club, the High Desert Cultural Arts Foundation, and the American Association of University Women.

PERSONAL

Date_____   Course Number_____

Course Title_____

Name_____   Telephone (optional)_____

EMPLOYMENT

Employer_____   Telephone (optional)_____

Job Title_____

How long in that profession?_____

EDUCATION

Academic Ranking (undergraduate, graduate)?_____

How far into the degree program?_____

GENERAL

Why are you taking this course?_____

How do you hope to use what you learn in this course?_____

What on-the-job experience have you had relating to this subject?_____

_____

How do you learn best (small groups, lectures, independent study)?_____

Discuss briefly your background?_____

Any hobbies?_____

Any pet peeves?_____

If you were an animal, what animal would you be and why?_____

_____

Any other interesting traits?_____

Figure 1 - Student Profile Questionnaire

TASK FUNCTIONS	MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS
Initiating activities	Supporting others
Seeking information	Following others leads
Giving information	Gate keeping communication
Elaborating concepts	Setting standards
Coordinating activities	Expressing member feelings
Summarizing ideas	Testing group decisions
Testing ideas	Testing consensus
Evaluating effectiveness	Harmonizing conflict
Diagnosing problems	Reducing tension

Figure 2 - Task and Maintenance Functions in Groups
SOURCE: Table 9-3, Page 265, Nelson & Quick, Organizational Behavior, 1997

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INTERNAL GROUP EVALUATION

Answer each of the following questions in relationship to this group by circling the number next to the alternative that most reflects your feelings:

1.   Do you feel that you are really a part of your group?
        5---Really a part of the group.
        4---Included in most ways.
        3---Included in some ways, but not in others.
        2---Do not feel I really belong.
        1---Do not work with any one group of people.

2.   If you had a chance to do the same activities in another group, how would you feel about moving?
        1---Would want very much to move.
        2---Would rather move than stay where I am.
        3---Would make no difference to me.
        4---Would rather stay where I am than move.
        5---Would want very much to stay where I am.

3.   How does your group compare with other groups that you are familiar with on each of the following points?
        The way people get along together.
              5---Better than most.
              3---About the same as most.
              1---Not as good as most.
        The way people stick together.
              5---Better than most.
              3---About the same as most.
              1---Not as good as most.
        The way people help one another on the project.
              5---Better than most.
              3---About the same as most.
              1---Not as good as most.

Add up your circled responses. If you have a number of 20 or above, you view your group as highly cohesive. If you have a number between 10 and 19, you view your group's cohesion as average. If you have a number of 7 or less, you view your group as very low in cohesion.

SOURCE: Adapted from Challenge 9.1, Page 260, Organizational Behavior, Nelson & Quick, Second Edition, 1997.

Figure 3 - Internal Group Evaluation
Form

Group Name_____   Date_____

Course Number_____   Instructor_____

Each group is required to prepare this form after each weekly group meeting. This will help the group stay focused, and will indicate to the instructor how the group is progressing.

1.   Purpose of this weeks meeting:
     _____ Planning the entire project (task identification, determination of deadlines)
     _____ Organizing the group (task assignments, determination of responsibilities)
     _____ Deciding which project to pursue
     _____ Task feedback and individual reports
     _____ Final report development

2.   Number of members in your group _____

3.   Number of members in attendance _____

4.   How much teamwork and cooperation were present? (Circle the appropriate number, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest):
        1   2   3   4   5

5.   What was the balance of the involvement in the group process from individual members? (Circle one, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest):
        1   2   3   4   5

Figure 4 - Weekly Meeting Status Report of Study Groups

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Group Name	Names of Members	Telephone Number

Figure 5 - Composition of Groups

Group Name_____ Date_____
Course Number_____ Instructor_____

Fill in the names of each member of your study group, including your own name. Then circle the appropriate number from one to five to rate each members contribution to the assigned project, with one being "No contribution, and 5 being "Outstanding contribution

_____ 1 2 3 4 5   _____ 1 2 3 4 5
_____ 1 2 3 4 5   _____ 1 2 3 4 5
_____ 1 2 3 4 5   _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Your next step is to objectively evaluate the performance of the entire group, based on the following questions. Again, circle one number from one to five, with one being "Not at all effective and 5 being "Very effective.

Were the members of the group effective in:
1.   Helping accomplish the groups goals by making individual contributions? 1 2 3 4 5
2.   Maintaining an atmosphere conducive to members contributions? 1 2 3 4 5
3.   Keeping focused on crucial issues during the discussions of the group? 1 2 3 4 5
4.   Looking for different points of view or compromises in the group? 1 2 3 4 5
5.   Dealing with conflicts and resolving them in the group? 1 2 3 4 5
6.   Contributing to the written outcomes of the group? 1 2 3 4 5
7.   Contributing to the oral presentation of the group? 1 2 3 4 5

Any suggestions as to changes you would like to see made in future groups?
_____
_____

Figure 6 - Individual and Group Evaluation

Group_____	Overall Grade_____
CRITERIA	**COMMENTS**
Appropriateness 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Meets objectives of assignment)	
Theory 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Incorporates learned theory into assignment)	
Organization 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Logical sequence of arguments and/or subject matter)	
Understanding 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Demonstrates understanding of learned theory)	
Critical Thinking 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Discussion and conclusions based on objective analysis of issue)	
Writing Skills 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Spelling, grammar, punctuation, language skills)	
Structure 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Paragraph/sentence construction, use of headings)	
Format 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Readability, general appearance)	
Additional Comments	

Figure 7 - Evaluation and Grading of Written Assignment

Guidelines for Using Study Groups Effectively in
Teaching and Learning

Group Name_____ Course #_____ Date_____		
Criteria to be used for grading: 1 (Below Average); 2 (Average); 3 (Good); 4 (Excellent)		
Category	Grade	Comments
Physical Appearance		
Posture		
Use of Visuals		
Eye Contact		
Easy to Understand		
Use of Time		
Content Quality		
Handling of Questions		
General Comments		

Figure 8 - Evaluation of Groups Oral Presentation

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