

# Communication skills, working in teams and with other professionals.

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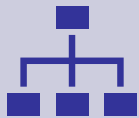


Peipsi  
Center for  
Transboundary  
Cooperation





Teamwork is the concept of people working together cooperatively, as in a sports team.



Projects require that people work together, so teamwork has become an important concept in organizations.



Effective teams are an intermediary goal towards getting good, sustainable results.



Industry has seen increasing efforts through training and cross-training to help people to work together more effectively and to accomplish shared goals, whether colleagues are present or absent.

- A 2003 national representative survey, HOW-FAIR , revealed that Americans think that '**being a team player**' was the **most important factor** in **getting ahead** in the **workplace**.

- This was ranked higher than several factors, including
  - 'merit and performance',
  - 'leadership skills',
  - 'intelligence',
  - 'making money for the organization'
  - 'long hours'.



Many intellectual disciplines have made cooperation an object of study.



These include anthropology; social psychology; genetics; biology; mathematics; game theory; linguistics; operations research; economics; and, of course, moral and rational philosophy.

- Scientifically grounded methods to enhance cooperation include:
  - developing a shared purpose;
  - creating an open,
  - safe environment;
  - including all who share a common purpose and encouraging diverse viewpoints;
  - negotiating agreement;
  - insisting on fairness and equity in the application of rules.

- Five scientifically grounded methods are suggested to foster cooperation:
  - 1) develop a shared purpose;
  - 2) create an open, safe environment;
  - 3) include all those who share the common purpose and encourage diverse viewpoints;
  - 4) learn how to negotiate agreement;
  - 5) insist on fairness and equity in applying rules.

# Develop a Shared Purpose



A system needs a purpose to help persons manage their interactions.



In searching for the motive for cooperation, a stronger answer than "financial incentives" is "purpose."

# Develop a Shared Purpose

Systems, especially human systems, derive their identity from a shared, common purpose.

Take away purpose, and the system dissolves; the interactions no longer have meaning, and one has only isolated elements

# Develop a Shared Purpose

- Cooperation, like a system itself, begins with a common purpose based on that which is perceived to be of greatest importance to the participants.

# Develop a Shared Purpose



An individual physician who is involved in a conflict or a situation requiring mutual decision making can foster cooperation by beginning the dialogue with a question:

***What are we trying to accomplish?***



This question will provide an opportunity for understanding common aims and moving beyond initial positions.

# Create an Open, Safe Environment



Cooperation can feel unsafe, especially at first.



Physicians may create fear within groups and organizations.

# Create an Open, Safe Environment

- Nonphysician staff with good ideas or requests for change whisper those ideas and requests or withhold them entirely, fearing criticism or reprisal from the higher-status physicians.

# Create an Open, Safe Environment

- Similarly, physicians may underestimate the power they could have as role models if they were to engage in new forms of cooperative activity and be willing to give up something of their own to improve the effectiveness of the team.

# Create an Open, Safe Environment

- A physician can help others engage in cooperative behavior by being the first to model willingness to suggest and test a change.

# Create an Open, Safe Environment



For example, if a primary care physician thinks that changing his schedule for rounds could increase the chance that he will encounter a specialist and thereby smooth communication or improve the flow of patients in the hospital, the primary care physician should try the change and report back.



If the change worries the physician, he should scale down the test but should not avoid action.

# Include Those Who Share the Common Purpose and Encourage Diverse Viewpoints



Convening those working in various roles in the system establishes the opportunity for cooperation.



Enough persons should be included to permit presentation and discussion of the aims, current performance, and boundaries of the relevant system.

# Include Those Who Share the Common Purpose and Encourage Diverse Viewpoints



The physician's goal as leader of cooperation should be to seek, or to start to create, a shared sense of purpose to achieve some improvements.



Persons are more likely to cooperate when they are involved in the process of change and when that process respects their differences in style and pace.

# Include Those Who Share the Common Purpose and Encourage Diverse Viewpoints



In the presence of physicians, other professionals do not always express their opinions.



Silence does not necessarily mean agreement or lack of a better idea.

# Include Those Who Share the Common Purpose and Encourage Diverse Viewpoints

- When meeting with nonphysicians for the purpose of decision making, an individual physician can increase the pool of ideas by asking each person individually for his or her concerns, ideas, and opinions.

# Learn How To Negotiate Agreement

- Strong leaders master the arts of dialogue, group communication, and negotiation, as taught by experts, and they both model and teach these approaches in the work setting.

# Learn How To Negotiate Agreement



Physicians, by virtue of their status in the health care system, can further a spirit of fairness.



Once a course of action has been established, physicians are in a position to initiate discussion of consequences and defaults (such as "nonresponse implies consent") for all involved, particularly physician-colleagues

# Conclusions



Cooperation does not mean that physicians must give up leadership roles



On the contrary, shifting the meaning of leadership should strengthen it.

# Conclusions

- The physician who wishes to help improve the systems of care must understand that he or she is a central participant in a larger whole that, when correctly led, serves the same ends that the medical profession does.

# Conclusions

- For decades-even centuries-the profession of medicine has been tutored toward excellence in understanding what its elements are, what it is made of, and how it gets better at what it does.

# Conclusions

- Now, in a time of both promising and fearful transformation of health care, the profession of medicine must learn equally well to ask how we will get better at what we must accomplish together if we are to accomplish it at all.

If you can't communicate it doesn't  
matter what you know!

# Conflict

- The situation when aims, interpretations of facts or the benefits of two or more people excluded mutually

# Conflict situations

Unclear dividing of the tasks



Socio-emotional conflicts



Conflicts based on rivalry  
between members of the team



Financial conflicts

# The signs of conflict

Tense  
atmosphere

Decreased  
motion

Leak of  
cooperation,  
teamwork

Avoiding  
challenges

More  
complains in  
the staff

Outstanding  
complains



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