

# Teamwork: An Open Access Practical Guide

# Teamwork: An Open Access Practical Guide

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MAVS OPEN PRESS  
ARLINGTON



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# About the Publisher

If you are an instructor who is using this OER for a course, please let us know by filling out our [OER Adoption Form](#).

## ABOUT MAVS OPEN PRESS

Creation of this resource was supported by [Mavs Open Press](#), operated by the University of Texas at Arlington Libraries (UTA Libraries). Mavs Open Press offers no-cost services for UTA faculty, staff, and students who wish to openly publish their scholarship. The Libraries' program provides human and technological resources that empower our communities to publish new open access journals, to convert traditional print journals to open access publications, and to create or adapt open educational resources (OER). Our resources are openly licensed using [Creative Commons licenses](#) and are offered in various e-book formats free of charge, which can be downloaded from the Mavs Open Press [OER catalog](#). Optional print copies of this text may be available through the UTA Bookstore or can be purchased directly from [XanEdu](#), Mavs Open Press' exclusive print provider and distributor.

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## ABOUT PRESSBOOKS

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- Chrome
- Safari
- Edge

## CONTACT US

Information about [open education at UTA](#) is available online. Contact us at [oer@uta.edu](mailto:oer@uta.edu) for other inquiries related to UTA Libraries publishing services.

# About This Project

## Overview

*Teamwork: An Open Access Practical Guide* is the product of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) with the purpose of providing a resource on teamwork for students and instructors. Overall, this project furthers the goals of UTA's [QEP](#), [Maverick Advantage](#), and [Strategic Plan](#), along with the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board TX 60×30 Initiative](#). The guide is open access under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike ([CC-BY-NC-SA](#)) license for anyone to use. This resource will not only help students during their time at UTA but also in their future careers.

## Creation Process

The idea for this project originated September 2018 during a series of conversations between Andrew M. Clark and Justin T. Dellinger. Clark put together an advisory committee within a few weeks while Dellinger initiated the development process with Michelle Reed, Open Educational Resources (OER) Librarian. During this time, responsibilities were determined and within two months, the team generated a first draft. Clark shared this draft with Peer Academic Leaders (PALs), graduate and undergraduate students, the advisory committee, and the Division of Student Success, who all provided invaluable feedback that fundamentally influenced the final format of the guide. They all appreciated the practical nature and overall readability but suggested making the guide more visual and less like a formal textbook. After revisions, Clark and Dellinger shared the resource at two Professional Learning Community (PLC) events (also part of the QEP). They finalized a PDF version and then transitioned into Pressbooks with help of the Library's OER team and then worked to finalize the [instructor companion](#).

## How to Approach this Guide

This resource is meant to be used in a variety of ways. The editors purposefully implemented a modularized layout to make it easier to use whichever sections are most useful or appropriate. While some may choose to read it front to back, others might just choose one section that helps them with a particular course. In addition to the general content, there are additional resources and testimonials, as well as assessments that can help individuals and groups evaluate themselves.

The project team has also created a [companion guide](#) that provides resources for course instructors, including discussion prompts, sample activities and lesson plans, case studies for teamwork at UTA, and other practical resources.

# Acknowledgments

## Editors' Note

We would like to thank the Office of Provost, the Center for Research on Teaching and Learning Excellence, Learning Innovation and Networked Knowledge (LINK) Research Lab, Division of Student Success, Peer Academic Leaders (PALs), and Pressbooks team for their support and feedback on this resource.

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## Additional Thanks to...

- Paulina Fonseca (Student Assistant, Division of Faculty Affairs) for creating such a rich visual experience in the guide
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- Michelle Reed (Director of Open Educational Resources, UTA Libraries) for her assistance through the development of this resource
- All of the undergraduate and graduate students that provided feedback along the way

# Quality Enhancement Plan and Pre-Survey


If you have not yet used this book and are a student enrolled at UTA, we invite you to participate in this short pre-survey using the QR code or click the image below. The post-survey is available at the end of the guide.



The QEP is a central part of the university's accreditation under the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS COC). Section 7 of the SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation states, "The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is an integral component of the reaffirmation of accreditation process and is derived from an institution's ongoing comprehensive planning and evaluation processes. It reflects and affirms a commitment to enhance overall

institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue the institution considers important to improving student learning outcomes and/or student success" (SACSCOC, 2018, p. 58). Therefore, the QEP team will conduct research and assessments over the duration of the project. Assessments will take place in UNIV courses, coordinated by the Division of Student Success, as well as other courses taught by PLC members or others at UTA. Pre- and post-surveys, along with reflections, will be the primary data collected and the QEP has sought to make the process as unobtrusive as possible. Beyond assessment, *Teamwork: An Open Access Practical Guide* and the efforts of the PLC members will help to improve the development and marketability of this sought-after skill, which employers consistently list as one of the core competencies that they seek from graduates and potential hires (Hart Research Associates, 2018).

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## PART I

# INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE



## INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

- Student Learning Outcomes
- Why is Teamwork Important?



# Introduction

Have you ever worked on a project with at least one other person? If so, technically you've been part of a team. However, it may not have felt like a team to you. You may have had a common goal but had different ideas about how to reach it. Your personalities may have clashed because, depending on the size of the team, several of you wanted to take charge, or maybe no-one was willing to take the lead. Possibly you wanted to meet regularly but your partner or team members were always busy. If your team was part of a class, maybe you were aiming for an A as your final grade but others in your team would have been happy with a lower grade.

Depending on the project, and the person or people you're working with, it could have been a very satisfying or a very frustrating experience. One of the things that faculty hear from students is how much they dislike working in teams, but collaborating with other people can be a positive fulfilling experience. Research shows that teamwork is one of the most sought-after skills from employers. Working as part of a team in class can prepare you for teamwork outside of the classroom. You can learn many valuable skills that you can highlight to a potential employer on both your resume and in the interview.



*Figure 1.1*

As you work through this guide, we encourage you to reflect on what teamwork means to you. Think about how you can take what you've learned in these modules and apply the lessons to the various situations in which you function as part of a team.

# Objective

The purpose of this guide is to offer you some key insights into teamwork. Implementing these tips can make all of the difference in your ability to work together both in the classroom and in the workplace.

## Student Learning Outcomes

After reading and participating in the activities in this guide you'll:

- Recognize what effective teamwork looks like.
- Understand how to practice effective teamwork.
- Value effective teamwork.
- Learn how to take your teamwork experiences in the classroom and in life and use them to your advantage to further your career.
- Understand your strengths and how they can impact a team.
- Gain some ideas on tools to help make teamwork more effective.
- Articulate what you've learned and reflect on what it means to be part of a team.

## Why is teamwork so important?

1. Because it's an important life skill. Employers are looking for graduates who understand what effective teamwork looks like and how to work well with others. A survey of executives and hiring managers by Hart Research Associates (2018) for the American Association of Colleges and Universities shows that teamwork is one of the most desired skills by employers.

Intellectual and Practical Skills	Executives	Hiring Managers
Oral Communication	80%	90%
Teamwork skills with diverse groups	77%	87%
Written communication	79%	78%
Critical thinking and analytic reasoning	78%	84%
Complex problem solving	67%	75%
Information literacy	73%	79%
Innovation and creativity	61%	66%
Technological skills	60%	73%
Quantitative reasoning	54%	55%

Note. Adapted from *Fulfilling the American dream: Liberal education and the future of work*, by Hart Research Associates & AAC&U, retrieved from <http://www.aacu.org/leap/public-opinion-research>. Copyright 2018 by AAC&U.

2. As you look at the list above you may be thinking that effective teamwork encompasses all of the top five skills and probably more. Almost every job involves some form of teamwork. How you collaborate may differ from industry to industry, or class to class, but the fundamentals are the same. Globally the skill set that employers value is also very similar.

Ability to effectively communicate orally	90%
Ability to effectively work in teams	87%
Can apply knowledge/skills to real-world settings	87%
Ethical Judgement and decision-making	84%
Ability to analyze and solve complex problems	75%

Note. Adapted from *Fulfilling the American dream: Liberal education and the future of work*, by Hart Research Associates & AAC&U, retrieved from <http://www.aacu.org/leap/public-opinion-research>. Copyright 2018 by AAC&U.

3. Employers want graduates who can apply the knowledge and skills that they have obtained in their courses and through other activities to their new career. You may have the knowledge, but employers want you to demonstrate that you know how to put that knowledge to work in the new position.
4. Additionally, employers can determine that you have certain technical skills from your resume or portfolio, but they cannot always discern how well you communicate, collaborate, or think critically. These skills are typically conveyed in the interview.



Note. Adapted from *Fulfilling the American dream: Liberal education and the future of work*, by Hart Research Associates & AAC&U, retrieved from <http://www.aacu.org/leap/public-opinion-research>. Copyright 2018 by AAC&U.

## Testimonial

Ryan Hunt, Office of Communication, City of Arlington, shares his thoughts on how his office uses teamwork.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://uta.pressbooks.pub/teamworkstudent/?p=118#oembed-1>

## PART II

# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TEAMWORK?



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TEAMWORK?

- What is a Team?
- Benefits of Teamwork

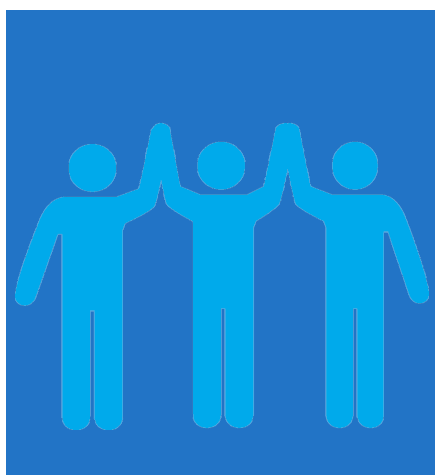
# What is a Team?

Salas, Sims, and Burke (2005) define teamwork as “two or more individuals with specified roles interacting adaptively, interdependently, and dynamically toward a common and valued goal (p. 562).

Hughes and Jones (2011) ask “what makes a team something different from any other group of people?” Teams, they say, are composed of individuals who share the following defining characteristics:

1. A shared collective identity,
2. Common goals,
3. Interdependence in terms of assigned tasks or outcomes,
4. Distinctive roles within the team (p. 54).

Collaborative learning, according to Barkley, Cross, and Major (2005), can be “carried out through pairs or small interactive groups”; however, collaborative learning takes place when students work together to “achieve shared learning goals” (p. 4).



**“Teamwork is the process of people actively working together to achieve a common goal”**

(Schermerhorn & Wright, 2014, p. 117).

Patrick Lencioni (2002), in his book *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, notes that while “teams... are made up of imperfect human beings [and so] are inherently dysfunctional” (p. vii), there are five traits that are hallmarks of a good team:

1. They trust one another.
2. They engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas.
3. They commit to decisions and plans of action.
4. They hold one another accountable for delivering against those plans.
5. They focus on the achievement of collective results” (p. 190).

These five traits are the signature of a solid team in a corporate setting, or in a classroom. However, it is not easy to form a good team in one semester. You need a leader, but you also need followers who are committed to the task at hand and who will support the leader and each other. Everyone needs to work cooperatively.



Figure 3.1



*Figure 3.2*

This next section looks at the benefits of teamwork and how you can become a good team leader and a good team member.

# Benefits of Teamwork



## BENEFITS OF TEAMWORK

1

### INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

A good team utilizes a wide range of knowledge, skills, and abilities of each team member. Team members have distinctive expertise, knowledge, and experiences that contribute to the team making effective decisions and avoiding errors.

2

### COPING WITH COMPLEXITY

A good team is effective in dealing with complex issues that require considering multiple perspectives and coordinating a series of concerted actions. The diverse perspectives of team members may help teams solve complex problems effectively.

3

### MOTIVATION AND COMMITMENT

A good team facilitates team members' participation in making decisions and taking actions. Research shows that individuals who are part of the decision-making processes are more committed to the decisions made and are more engaged in the decision-related actions.

4

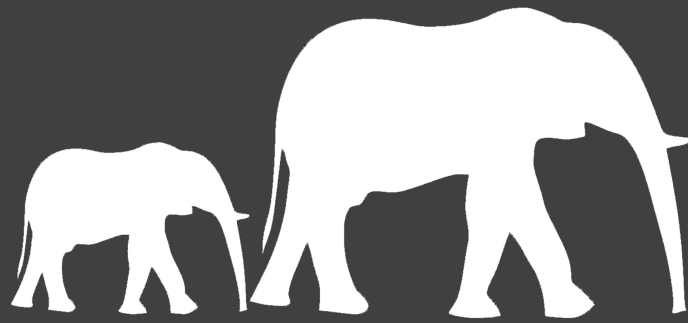
### CREATE SYNERGY

A good team facilitates the creation of a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Proper elaboration of information and perspectives foster new ideas, that may not be available when an individual works alone.



## PART III

# BEING A LEADER; BEING A FOLLOWER



### **BEING A LEADER; BEING A FOLLOWER**

- The Importance of Being a Follower
- How to Become a Good Team Leader
- Handling Conflict in Teams

# The Importance of Being a Follower

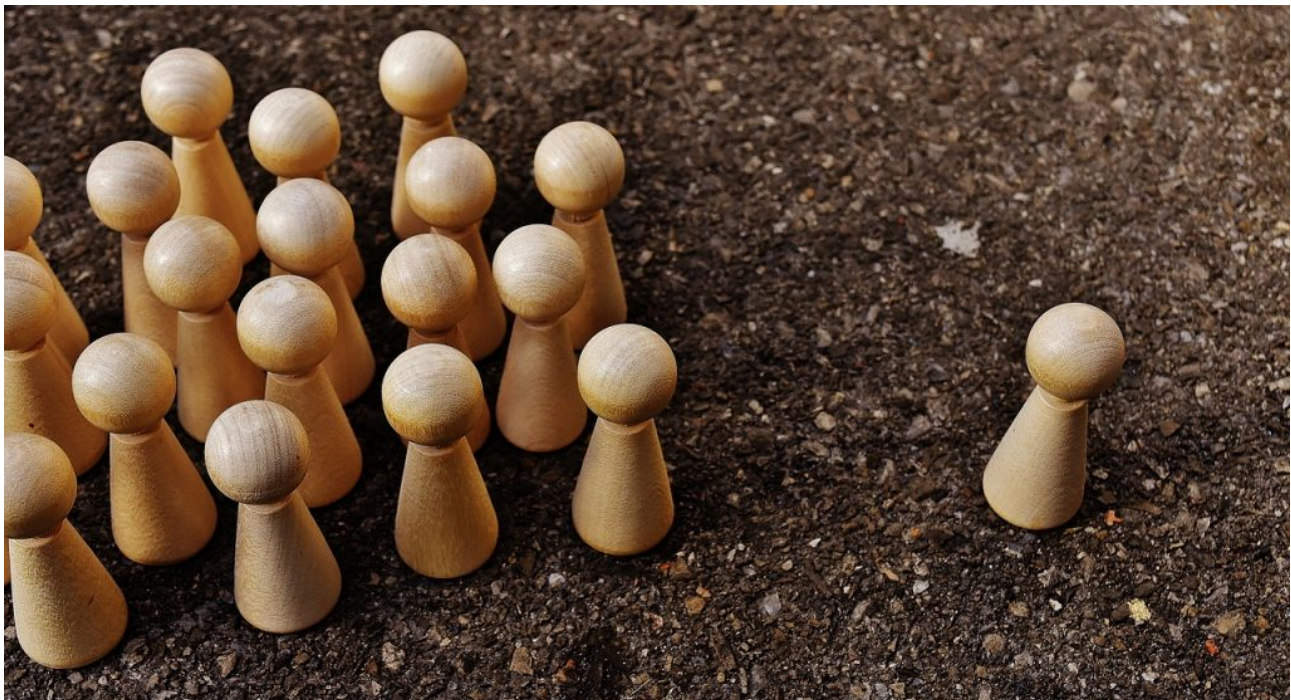


Figure 5.1

As we have mentioned, effective teamwork has many benefits. However, most of the work in teams is done by followers, and thus followership is vital to developing a strong team. According to Howell and Mendez (2008), there are three sets of tips for being an effective follower and thus an effective team member:

## Followership as an interactive role



As a team member and a follower you're encouraged to complement and support the leadership role. Followers are highly motivated to engage with their leaders to achieve organizational goals. In order to strengthen the team in a followership role, you're encouraged to:

- Demonstrate job-related knowledge and competence.
- Build collaborative and supportive relationships with colleagues and the leader.
- Support the leader in front of others.

## Followership as an independent role



Followership as an independent role reflects a trend for followers to act independently of their leaders as a leader substitute. When leadership substitutes exist, leaders can focus on other tasks that often go unattended, such as follower development, advocacy, and obtaining resources. Those who want to lead are well served by first endeavoring to follow. As a leader substitute you should:

- Influence the leader in a confident and unemotional manner to help the leader avoid costly mistakes.
- Show concern for performance as well as a supportive, friendly atmosphere.

## Followership as a shifting role



The role an individual takes in a team-based structure is often temporal and dependent on the requirements of a particular project or task. The same logic applies to student project teams. For example, leaders can emerge during the teamwork process, rather than have a professor appoint them. You may even be a follower at the beginning and find yourself taking a leadership position later in the project. Therefore, we recommend that you:

- Monitor and interpret the environment to identify needed changes in the team.
- Actively participate in the group's decision making while taking responsibility

for achieving its goals.

- Challenge the team when necessary and maintaining a critical perspective on the group's decisions.
- Role-model the team member prototype by observing and adhering to the norms of the group.
- Maintain an empathic relationship with rich communication among teammates.

# How to Become a Good Team Leader

Motivating other team members to commit and engage in collective teamwork is not an easy task. Here are some useful tips to being a good team leader:

## Facilitating psychological safety

Leaders play a key role ensuring that all team members feel safe to seek feedback, share information, experiment, ask for help, and talk about errors. Specifically, according to Edmonson (1999), leaders should:

- Frame the work as a learning problem, not an execution problem.
- Acknowledge your fallibility.
- Model curiosity and ask lots of questions.

## Developing a shared team mental model

Team effectiveness will improve if there's a shared understanding of the task, team, equipment, and situation (Kozlowski & Bell, 2012). As a team leader, you should:

- Set up a clear mission and vision for the team.
  - Establish a shared and cooperative team goal. Revisit them as needed.
- Focus on team planning before starting the job task (DeChurch & Haas, 2008).
  - Deliberate planning specifies a primary course of action.
  - Contingency planning specifies backup plans.
  - Reactive planning adapts plans to account for changing task conditions.

## Understanding team transactive memory system

Team transactive memory is a team-level shared system for encoding, storing, and retrieving information regarding who knows what in the team. Transactive memory fosters better team performance (Pearsall, Ellis, & Bell, 2010). As a team leader, we recommend that you:

- Encourage communication.
  - Appreciate each other's expertise and understand from whom you can seek aid when necessary.
- Communicate about roles and responsibilities.
  - This is especially important in the early stages of a team's development cycle.
- Encourage frequent and periodic face-to-face meetings throughout the project.
  - Virtual teams were found to have a hard time developing team transactive memory systems.

## Facilitating effective team coordination and cooperation

To facilitate effective team coordination and cooperation, you are encouraged to:

- Foster a trusting team environment.
  - Begin meetings with ice-breaker questions.
  - Team-building activities.
- Know each team member's expertise and personality. Invite contributions when necessary.
- Give feedback or rewards when team members contribute their ideas.

# Working With Difficult People

Sometimes, we have to work with difficult people. When a team member shows a bad attitude or does not put in real effort, social contagion may drag down a team's morale and productivity. Team members pick up on subtle social cues from other people. Over time, if nothing is done, the problem may be more acute and prevalent. Here are some tips to keep in mind before things get worse (O'Hara, 2017):



## **Don't judge the book by its cover.**

Before assuming someone is a slacker, try to understand the root causes of a person's behavior. It could be that the person is dealing with a stressful situation at home, or she is not sure how to best contribute to the team.



## **Start a dialogue and clarify individual and team mission.**

Take the lead and make sure you're not ostracizing the person.

Talk to the person in a less formal context (e.g., go for a coffee break together) and get to know them. Building a positive relationship helps foster a productive dialogue.

Revisit the team mission and clarify individual job tasks by reminding people what they should do in the team.

# Handling Conflict in Teams

We often need to express disagreement when working with our colleagues. How we express our disagreement is important. Here we offer some scientifically proven ways to express disagreement effectively.



## USE POSITIVES TONES

Frame your disagreement in terms of potential areas of improvement, rather than critical comments.



## LISTEN

Hear what others have to say about the issue and seriously consider others' suggestions.



## AVOID SAYING OTHERS ARE WRONG

Acknowledge the other person's opinion before you disagree. You may use phrases such as:  
"I see what you are saying but..."  
"I understand where you are coming from but..."

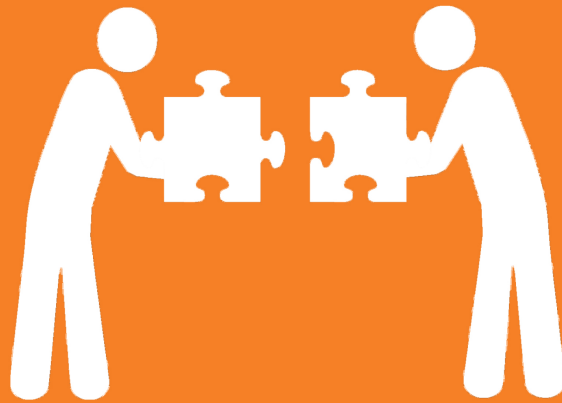


## ASK CONFLICTS VS. RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

Engage in task conflicts that foster creativity and improve team performance, avoid engaging in relationship conflicts. In other words, focus on the task, don't get personal.

## PART IV

# WHAT IS A TEAM AND HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?



## WHAT IS A TEAM AND HOW CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?

- Types of Teams
- The Process for Forming a Successful Team
- Understanding Yourself as a Team Member
- Evaluating Yourself and Your Team



# Types of Teams

## Project Team

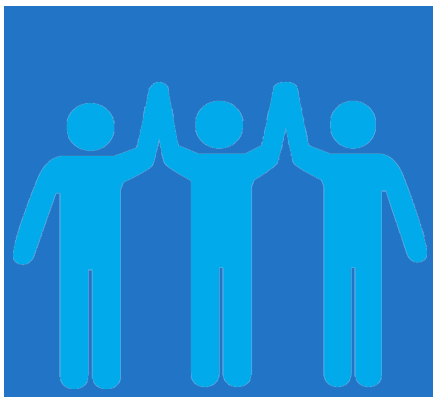
Project teams, or temporary work teams, are becoming very popular because they draw on people with different areas of expertise from different departments in an organization. These teams are assembled to accomplish time-constrained tasks and are also becoming frequent in the fast-paced business environment (Kozlowski & Bell, 2012; Savelsbergh, Poell, & van der Heijden, 2015). For example, a new product development team may consist of professionals who specialize in technology, design, marketing, operations, customer service, etc., and each of them is expected to contribute his or her unique expertise. In an academic setting, these teams may comprise people from different disciplines working together.

## Long-term or Stable

In this situation the team is assembled and work is brought to the team. Instead of a team being assembled for a one-off project, the stable team is designed to work on a continuous array of projects. Members may rotate off after a while giving management the opportunity to insert new members. This helps to create fresh ideas.

## Virtual Team

You can be part of a team even if you're not in the same, room, city, state, or even country as another person. Virtual teamwork is a desired skill.



Rawlings and Downing (2017) write: "Participating in virtual teamwork during the college experience provides students an opportunity to develop a skill set that employers routinely seek... almost two-thirds of U.S. organizations [integrate] virtual teams within their operating practice" (p. 117).

## How is a virtual team defined?

According to Mackay and Fisher (n.d.), "a virtual team requires minimal face-to-face physical interaction and is often scattered physically using telecommunications-based technologies (such as email, Skype, web conferencing, etc.)"

Rawlings and Downing (2017) define virtual teams as "teams whose members use technology to varying degrees in working across locational, temporal, and relational boundaries to accomplish an interdependent task" (p. 116).

The diagram below is a good illustration of how a virtual team might be organized. Everyone is connected either through software like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, or some other application, so they are able to work closely together even though geographically they are in many different places.



Figure 9.1

You can practice virtual teamwork while you're in school and it can be a skill that you can highlight on your resume and in an interview with an employer. The key is not just being part of a virtual team, but gaining an understanding of the benefits and challenges while going through the process.

As you're working with others, think about what works and what doesn't. In thinking about what doesn't work, think about how it could be better; if you had the authority what would you try and do to change things? Being able to communicate these things to a future employer will go a long way to show them that you have initiative and are someone who wants to be part of a solution.

# Evaluating Yourself and Your Team



Figure 12.1

As we have seen there are many roles that someone can play in a successful team. It's not just about leading or following. The following surveys (adapted from Chen et al., 2002; Eby & Dobbins, 1997) may help you understand who you are and some of the strengths and weaknesses of your team.

## Evaluating Yourself for Teamwork

**Response scale:** 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree.

1. I can work very effectively in a team setting.
2. I can contribute valuable insight to a team project.
3. I can easily facilitate communication between people.
4. I am effective at delegating responsibility for tasks.
5. I can effectively coordinate tasks and activities of a team.
6. I am able to resolve conflicts between individuals effectively.
7. I feel I can take on a leadership role in a team and be effective.
8. Integrating information and suggestions from individuals into a plan is something I am very good at doing.



Figure 12.2

## Evaluating Your Team

**Response scale:** 1 = not at all confident; 2 = a little confident; 3 = somewhat confident; 4 = pretty confident; 5 = extremely confident

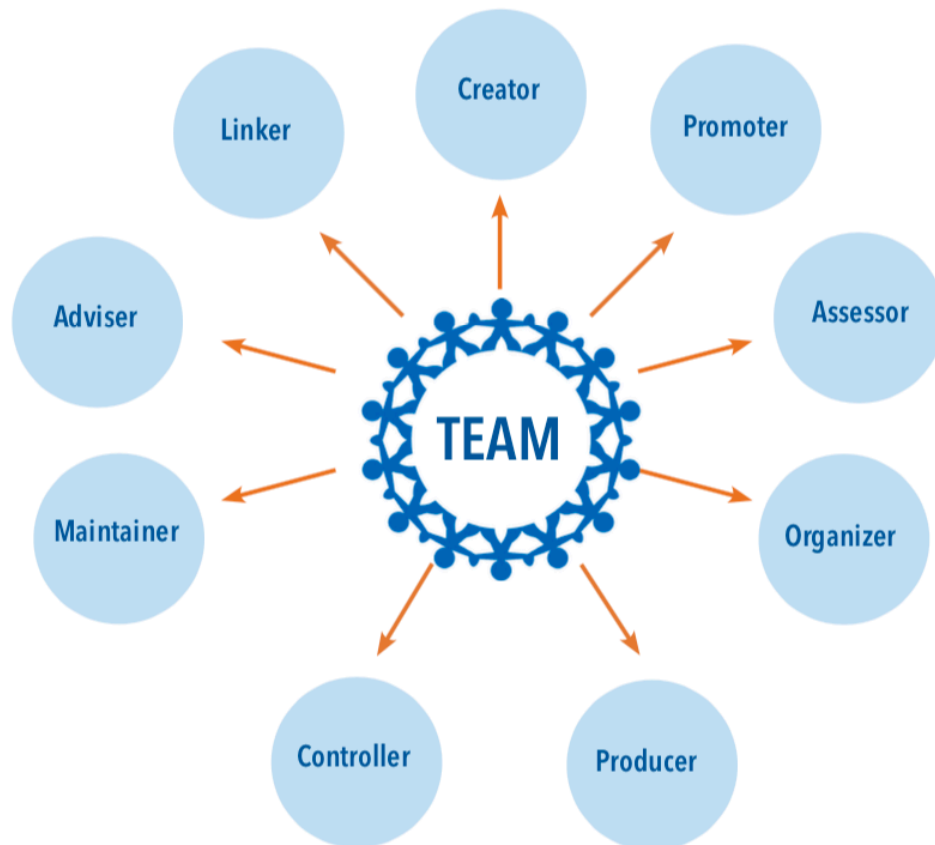
How confident are you in YOUR TEAM'S ability to do the following actions:

1. Successfully coordinate among team members.
2. Work together as one unit.
3. Successfully follow the team's game plans.
4. Respond appropriately to unexpected situations.
5. Maintain the team's poise, even when things go wrong.
6. Perform effectively.
7. Communicate well with each other.
8. Effectively adjust to any adverse situation.
9. Make proper changes in the team's game plan if necessary.
10. Cooperate well with each other.
11. Provide moral support for team members.
12. Perform better than most other teams.



# Understanding Yourself as a Team Member

A team is made up of individual members with different strengths and skills. Look at the diagram and list below to see where you think you fit. The survey on the next page will also help you. Remember this is not designed to put you in a box, or define you, but to help you think a little more about how you might contribute most effectively to whichever team you may belong.



Linker

- Coordinates and integrates

Creator

- Initiates creative ideas

Promoter

- Champions ideas after they're initiated

Producer

- Provides direction and follow-through

Adviser

- Encourages the search for more information

Assessor

- Offers insightful analysis of options

Organizer

- Provides structure

Controller

- Examines details and enforces rules

Maintainer

- Fights external battles

# The Process of Forming a Successful Team

## TEAM NAME

Every team needs an identity and that identity can be as simple as coming up with a name. A name encourages cohesiveness and a sense of belonging.

## TEAM VISION AND MISSION

Vision is essential for any team. It provides a clear direction for the end result and should be the guide by which all decisions are made.

## PROJECT AND PERSONAL GOALS

What outcomes and results do you want to accomplish? What do you want to learn from the project and each other? How will you measure success?

## SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES OF TEAM MEMBERS

What are the unique skills each team member brings to the table? This can include majors, internships, computer skills, foreign languages, and interests/activities.

## OPERATING PRINCIPLES

How will you work together to manage conflict and value each other's differences? In particular, how will you maximize cognitive conflict while minimizing affective conflict?

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Who outside of the team do you need to pay attention to and influence? It could be your professor, manager, or clients.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Consider each team member's strengths and expertise. Will there be a designated or rotating leader? Who will take notes? Who will be responsible for contracting all the team members, and who will reach out to the instructor?

## COMMUNICATION NORMS

How will the team communicate with each other? How often should team members expect to receive and respond to communication? Will you meet in person outside class? Include team members contact information -email, cell phone, etc.

## WORKING NORMS

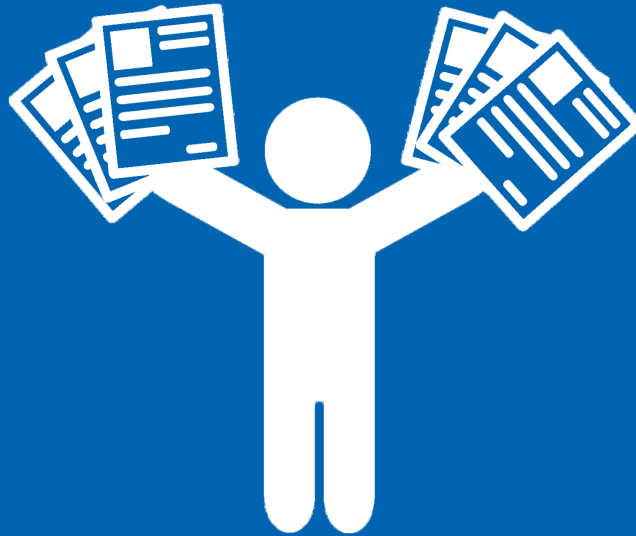
How will work be divided? By whom and how will work be received? How firm are your standards and deadlines? What are consequences for members who do not follow through on their commitments.

## MEETING LOGISTICS

When, where, how often, expectations in terms of attendance, timeliness, preparation, etc.

PART V

# MARKETING YOUR TEAMWORK EXPERIENCE

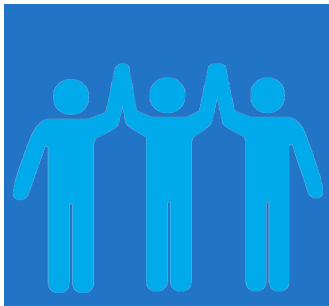


## MARKETING YOUR TEAMWORK EXPERIENCE

- Importance of Teamwork Skills on a Resume
- Preparing for the Interview

# The Importance of Teamwork Skills on a Resume

Teamwork skills in the workplace are essential for the vast majority of jobs and careers. Employers expect their employees and any potential employees to be able to work together effectively with others to achieve team goals.



Being able to understand what teamwork means and how important this skill is in the workplace can set you apart from other candidates.

## Articulating your teamwork skills and experiences

Your ability to articulate your teamwork skills and experiences will be a vital element on your resume. Prospective employers will usually want to see examples of effective teamwork and ask you about your teamwork experiences, skills, knowledge and abilities around teamwork when they are considering you for a job. In particular, they want to know about your ability to work effectively with an intact team or a group of individuals to reach a common goal.

On a resume, employers will want to see examples of effective team behaviors. Below is a list of behaviors associated with effective teamwork. As you read through the list, think of personal examples of when you exhibited these teamwork behaviors in either working through a group project in a class, a full or part time job, an internship, participation in an on-campus organization, or your contribution as a team player on any sport or athletic team.

Also, think about other behaviors not listed that might also demonstrate effective team membership behaviors. For example, effective teamwork behaviors often:

- Involve others by listening to and fully involving others in team decisions and actions.
- Model commitment by understanding and following team expectations and guidelines.
- Fulfill team responsibilities and demonstrates personal commitment to the team.
- Work to achieve team goals with quality results.
- Value individual differences and talents on the team.
- Inform others on the team by consistently sharing important or relevant information.
- Participate proactively in the development of team goals or plans or task lists.
- Maintain or enhances the self-esteem of other team members.
- Check for understanding from team members to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- Cooperate with team members to resolve problems to ensure team goals are achieved.



Figure 13.1



- Ask for feedback or input from other team members to ensure all comments are heard.
- Communicate effectively with all team members ensuring everyone has up to date information.
- Encourage trust and makes efforts to be trustworthy.
- Cooperate actively and participates on the team.
- Avoid divisiveness and always strives to create team unity.
- Take time to manage and work through team differences.
- Build on others' ideas and not just your own.

## Teamwork and Leadership

If you were a team leader, think about your experiences as a team lead. Be sure to add that to your resume. Again, review the list of effective team leadership behaviors and think about times and examples where you might have exhibited these behaviors. For example, an effective team leader often:

- Selects team members aligned to meet the team outcomes for a project or program.
- Clarifies team roles and responsibilities for all team members.
- Involves team members in clarifying the team roles and responsibilities necessary to achieve program success.
- Encourages the team by looking for opportunities to encourage and motivate successful team performance.
- Establishes team expectations and goals and communicates those to team members.
- Helps to keep the team on track by monitoring team performance and adjusts when necessary.
- Collaboratively works with other team members to establish team performance expectations.
- Applies best practices to team development including actions like building a mission, a charter, meeting norms, and developing ways of working among team members.
- Provides team support providing ongoing feedback and appropriate amount of guidance.
- Looks for opportunities to reinforce, reward, and celebrate accomplishments of the team.
- Consistently helps to build trust among team members.



*Figure 13.2*

## Finding the Right Example

Being able to articulate your specific teamwork skills and abilities through examples, both in person and on a resume, can give you an edge in the job market. You should support all of your workforce skills with distinct instances. Be concise, use action verbs, and if possible, use any results to illustrate your examples.



Figure 13.3

Led a school project team. Roles and responsibilities included:

- Ensuring all participants knew due dates to meet all deadlines and complete with high quality work. On average, project deliverables were turned in three days prior to the deadline.
- Preparing a collective calendar to help the team with scheduling.
- Preparing a Google Doc account to ensure everyone collaborated in an effective manner.
- Designing the template for the team presentation.

Member of a team as a student athlete

- Participating on an athletic team and taking on coaching and mentoring roles with other team members to help them stay motivated and ensure they understood their value on the team.



Figure 13.4



Figure 13.5

Worked with six other teammates at a local restaurant. Responsibilities included:

- Preparing the shift schedules on weekly basis to ensure work was evenly distributed among the team members.
- Checking inventory daily.
- Creating agendas for meetings and keeping time at meetings to ensure the team stayed on track.

Graduate Assistant on a UTA athletic team. Responsibilities included:

- Preparing work out schedules for all team members on a weekly basis.
- Assigning roles to all the team members for road trips and competitions.
- Ensuring all team members had all their paperwork submitted for each competition.
- Coaching team member in gap areas prior to the competition.



Figure 13.6



Figure 13.7

Worked on a school project team for five months.

- Clarifying team roles and responsibilities.
- Creating professional templates and ensuring consistency in presentations.
- Achieving the project goals and meeting all the criteria for the project.

Interned at a local business for two semesters.

- Leading a team of five interns for eight months.
- Generating new ideas, pitching those ideas to managers, and helping to increase production by 15%.



Figure 13.8

## Teamwork Lessons and Team Leadership

When describing your teamwork abilities, it is also important to highlight specific examples that point to why your participation was effective. Your ability to share what you learned from being on a team is also important and will set you apart from other potential candidates.

## Example:

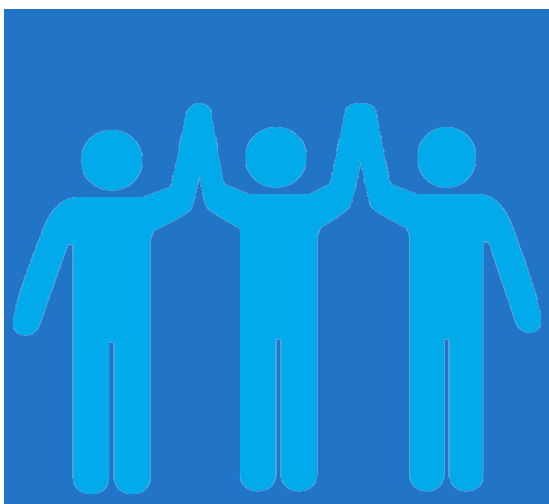
Participating in a team-based class project, which enabled an understanding of the importance of communication.

- Working with a team of five other communication students to develop a comprehensive approach to marketing and communication of a product.
- Holding weekly status meetings, which helped the team to stay connected and to understand weekly deliverables.

## Team leadership role in FLOC (Freshman Leaders on Campus)

- Responsibilities included:
  - Scheduling activities for the group.
  - Preparing a team charter and mission statement for the group to make sure the team had a unified purpose.
  - Designing three team-building activities for team yearly off-site to support the team's growth and development.

In addition, if you have ever received any form of recognition for your teamwork skills make sure you share that in your resume. If you have ever received a team member award, led or had a team leader position, took the lead and coordinated a project, or have been given a special team role, make sure you share those examples on your resume. Remember teamwork skills are among a bigger set of a workforce skills desired by employers.



Teamwork in particular is one of the workforce skills that ensures a prospective employer that you will be able to get things done with others to reach the organization or functional group goals. Take time to think about your team experiences and make sure to include these examples clearly on your resume.



# Preparing for the Interview



*Figure 14.1*

During an interview, the interviewer(s) will ask you questions geared towards assessing your past experiences and how close those experiences and skills match the open position or job. The interviewer's role is to identify the candidate that best exhibits the workforce skills, culture fit, and motivational fit to the position posted.

It is important to highlight your team and teamwork examples on your resume, but it becomes even more important to be able to articulate those in an interview. As you prepare for a phone interview or a face to face interview, be sure to review your resume first and ensure that you are able to discuss and clearly talk about the team examples you have provided.

As you prepare for your interview, have at least three to four examples of teamwork (and other workforce skills) ready to share. Employers will typically focus on the information provided on your resume, but you should also prepare additional examples, not on your resume. This is especially important if you will be participating in interviews with several people. You will want to provide different examples to different interviewers if possible.

### Questions:

The key to a successful interview is to prepare and practice how you will share your past experiences and examples. Your ability to now “tell your story” is critical to helping the employer assess you as the best candidate for the role. Some typical questions employers ask to focus on teamwork include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1 How would you define an effective team?
- 2 Tell me about a time you worked on a team, what did enjoy or not enjoy and why?
- 3 What is the best part of working on a team and why?
- 4 What is the most challenging thing about working on a team and why?
- 5 Give me an example of the last team you were on a team. What went well what did not go well?
- 6 Give me an example of when being on a team did not go well.
- 7 What happened and what did you learn?
- 8 Why is working on a team different than working autonomously?
- 9 What role do you typically take on a team?
- 10 What are the characteristics of an effective team?
- 11 Have you ever led a team? Did you enjoy that role? If yes why?
- 12 What was the impact of working on a team on you and your career?
- 13 Give me an example where you had to help team members get through a conflict. What was your role?

## The Behavioral Interview

Many employers will use a behaviorally structured interview process. A behavioral interview process focuses on your past experiences, including the specific context and actions that took place.

Structure your teamwork examples, and all the examples you share, following the behavioral interview process. This methodology will also help you be concise and focused in your response.

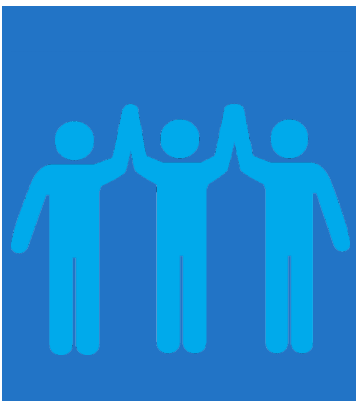
Below is an example of a behavioral interview response around teamwork that includes the situation or example, what you said and did in the situation or example, and the result.

- **Situation:**

I worked at a restaurant and I was on the server team for six months my junior year. That team was responsible for bringing customers their food and ensuring good customer service.
- **My role/actions:**

On that team, I prepared shift schedules on weekly basis to ensure work was evenly distributed among the team members, I checked inventory on a daily bases and I created agendas for meetings to ensure the team stayed on track.
- **The result:**

The result was there were no scheduling gaps for six months while I was on the server team in that role. As a result, my team won the most customer-focused team every month for those six months.

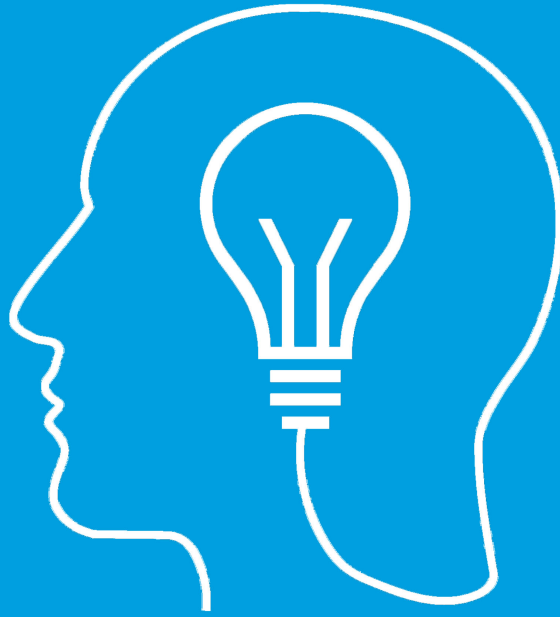


Each employer will have a specific interview format. No matter how the question is asked, use a behaviorally structured example. This will set you apart from other candidates and ensure you provide an in-depth and complete example.



PART VI

# TESTIMONIALS, REFLECTIONS, AND RESOURCES



## TESTIMONIALS, REFLECTIONS, AND RESOURCES

- Testimonials from Employers
- Reflection and Survey
- Resources
- References

# Testimonials



Figure 15.1: Janelle Casey

## Janelle Casey

Senior Talent Acquisition Partner, TD Ameritrade



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://uta.pressbooks.pub/teamworkstudent/?p=160#oembed-1>

### Janelle Casey Transcript



Figure 15.2: Keith Lott

## Keith Lott

Manager of Recruitment, Uplift Education



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### Keith Lott Transcript



Figure 15.3: Susan Schrock

## Susan Schrock

Communication Coordinator, City of Arlington



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### Susan Schrock transcript



## Dr. Jennifer Edwards

Professor of Communication, Tarleton State University

Figure 15.4: Dr. Jennifer Edwards



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### Jennifer Edwards Transcript

# Reflection and Survey

## Reflection

Now that you have gone through this guide, it is time for you to reflect on what you have learned about teamwork.

1. What does effective teamwork look like to you?
2. In what ways has your attitude toward teamwork changed as a result of what you have learned through this guide? If you do not believe it has changed please tell us why you think that is so.
3. Based on the material in the guide, what are some ways that you will apply what you have learned about teamwork in the classroom?
4. What are some ways that you will apply what you have learned about teamwork in your occupation?

Please use the QR code or click the image below to complete the reflection.



## Post-Survey

If you are a current UTA student that used this guide in a course or for personal growth, we invite you to complete this brief post-survey using the QR code or click the image below.



# Resources

## On-campus help

The Lockheed Martin Career Development Center

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS ARRLINGTON | DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT | HANDSHAKE LOG IN / SIGN UP

THE LOCKHEED MARTIN CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Search

ABOUT | STUDENTS | ALUMNI | EMPLOYERS | MENTORSHIP | FACULTY & STAFF | PARENTS & FAMILIES | EVENTS

**Navigate your future**  
Every major. Every level. Every week.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Career Spot Drop-in hours	Job Search Strategies Workshop	Career Spot Drop-in hours	Resume & Cover Letter Workshop	Resume & Cover Letter Workshop
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

See a complete schedule, or schedule an individual appointment with a Career Consultant on any weekday  
[uta.joinhandshake.com](http://uta.joinhandshake.com)

**EXPERIENCE A WEEKLY WORKSHOP**  
Every week we offer Career Spot drop-ins and workshops designed to help you prepare for your future profession.

## Books/websites/other material

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N/A

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N/A

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## THE PROCESS OF FORMING A SUCCESSFUL TEAM

N/A

## UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF AS A TEAM MEMBER

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## EVALUATING YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM

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## TESTIMONIALS

N/A

## REFLECTION AND SURVEY

N/A

## RESOURCES

[“The Lockheed Martin Career Development Center at UTA Homepage”](#) by The Lockheed Martin Career Development Center at UTA adapted by Paulina Fonseca

# Transcript

## Janelle Casey Transcript

What does teamwork looks like to me? I would say teamwork has a lot of different definitions on a level here at work. It's me working with my teammates obviously on the campus team. We work together. We have each other. We give each other ideas. You know we shoot down people's happiness. We don't think they're very good. We can be very honest with each other. And we collaborate on projects on events that type of thing. In a larger version of what I think teamwork looks like is I also work with people outside of T.D. Ameritrade to do things like campus visits from campus. They could come to TDA they could check out our building. We can have panel discussions tell them what we're about. Give them ideas about opportunities and also work with campuses to to just get in front of the students more. To me I believe it's a real partnership and it's teamwork together working with career services and with our campus team so that we can get out there in front of the students and just be visible to them and have that opportunity to tell them about what we offer.

## Jennifer Edwards Transcript

My name is Jennifer and I'm from Tarleton State University as well as a former LEAP Texas fellow. I want to tell you guys that teamwork is so important. So teamwork is important in industries because especially if the industry is in a city rural or urban environment. Teamwork is especially important to make that happen. If you think about the technology that's utilized to connect environments domestically and also internationally it's very important to get everyone on the same page and engage everyone's ideas. And teamwork helps to make that happen. Helps to make very creative products and also very creative processes in industry. Also if you think about how important teamwork is without teamwork we wouldn't have a robust military like we do in the United States. We also would not have the the capacity to create products integrate the Googles and the Microsoft's of the world. So teamwork is an effort domestically that helps make that happen. And it's important to help our students realize how important teamwork is by applying teamwork in the classroom. So teamwork can be applied in a variety of different ways including with group projects with undergraduate research with the group speeches. It's important to integrate that into each sector of our student's careers. So that is from freshman all the way to senior and even graduate and their graduate years. So to incorporate teamwork into your classrooms I just say do it do it and do it well. And even if you step out there and something doesn't work try it again. And also I challenge all of you work with your colleagues either in your department or across campus to come up with different and innovative ways to embrace teamwork. All right. So have a great school year. Embrace teamwork and make it happen. And you're making a difference in the lives of students there at UT. Arlington as well as across the state of Texas and beyond because you're producing the leaders of tomorrow.

## Keith Lott Transcript

My name is Keith Lott and I am a talent recruitment strategist with Uplift Education here in Dallas Fort Worth. Teamwork. What does teamwork look like? At uplift teamwork looks like collaboration. It looks like helping one another out in the classroom as well as at our central management office. We could not do the work that we do every single day for the scholars that we serve. If there was no teamwork from everyone from the receptionists to the teachers to the parents to the scholars to the directors who are principals everyone that is involved every stakeholder plays a key role in getting scholars to college. Public education gets one hundred percent of its scholars to college and by no means can that be done by any single one person. Students have to have their counselors. They have to have the cafeteria workers. They have to have the facilities people. So it all comes together and just really works to make sure that our scholars have every single thing that they need every single day to make the dream

happen for them to go to college. Teamwork is important. And what does teamwork look like within the curriculum and possibly within the classroom for the students and maybe for the teachers. Yeah. So in the classroom it looks like teachers working collaboratively with each other. That could be working with their teacher's aides. It could be working with special education staff. It could be working with ESL staff with our students. That English is not their first language. It's lots of different people that help to make education really work. Teachers have to collaborate for lesson planning. They also do horizontal planning. They also do teaming. They do vertical planning. All of those pieces the PLC's the professional learning communities all of those things are really critically important to make sure that our scholars are growing and that our instructional staff are going as well.

### **Susan Schrock transcript**

Teamwork is really important in this job because we can take an idea or a project and we can talk about it and make it much a stronger project bringing in our different experiences and what we know about the city. And so by working together I think our projects are so much stronger. I think it brings a lot of value. You get a lot of value by working with your colleagues and your peers. So you may have your mind set and your idea of how the world works. But when you you collaborate and you work together you can really gain from their experiences and their education. I think it's through its educational experience will be a lot richer if they do collaborate with their peers and on a team. You can take an idea and make it just so much more fool and richer by working together and not just using your perspective. So here at the city and every day we come together and we talk about our projects and the things that we want to do and we bounce ideas off each other. And I think that's the true value of of working on a team is knowing that you have somebody that has your back and is looking out for your your best interest and for the interest of your work.