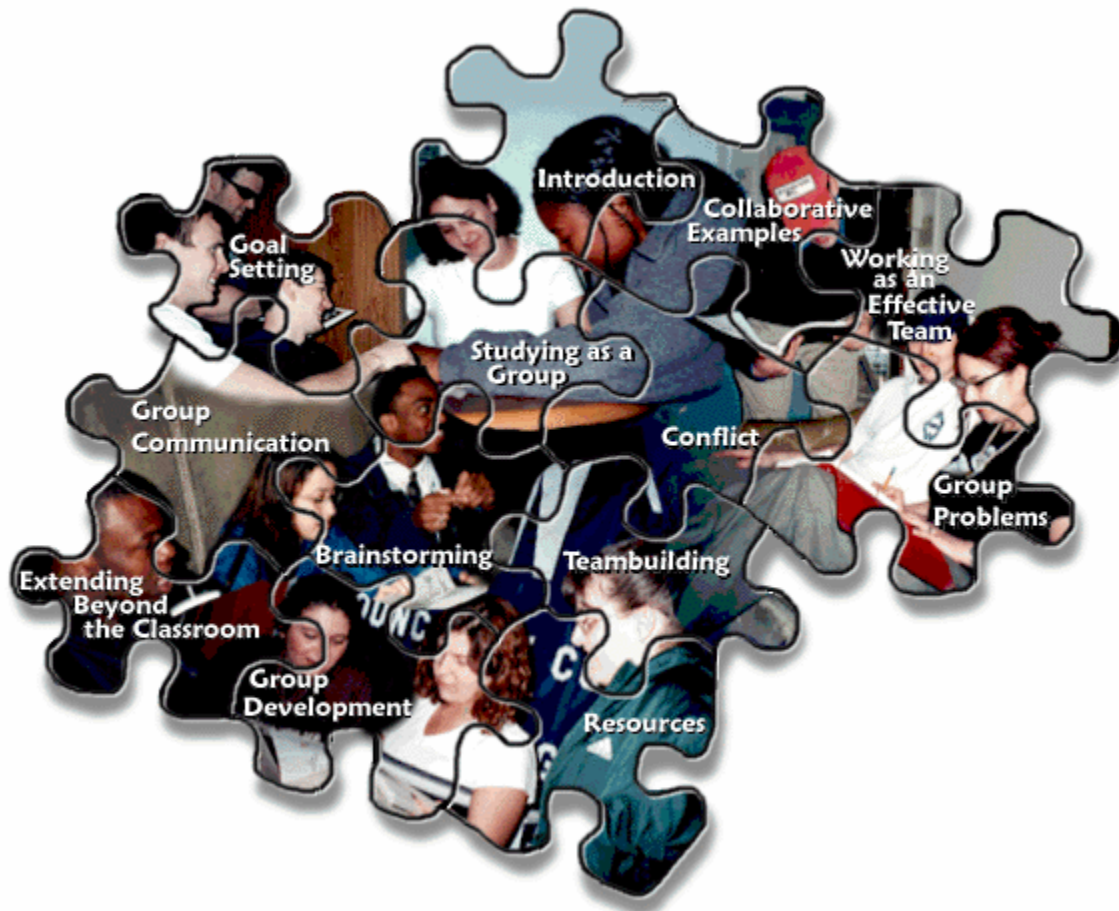


Puzzled about Teams

This handbook has been developed as a resource for you. Separately, each piece focuses on a specific aspect of collaboration. Taken as a whole, the pieces can help you develop the collaborative skills you will need to succeed in the academic, professional and social worlds. You can begin by looking at the introduction and reading each section, or tailor the handbook to your individual needs by heading straight to a specific area.



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Foreword

The Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence is happy to provide you with this electronic version of *Puzzled about Teams*. This electronic handbook has been widely used by Penn State faculty and graduate instructors, as well as faculty members at other institutions of higher education around the globe. This handbook was originally designed and developed through the efforts of honors students working at the Schreyer Institute for Innovation in Learning in 1998; consequently, some references may be outdated. We offer this handbook as an electronic resource so that you can benefit from their advice and guidance. If you are at an institution other than Penn State and plan to use this piece in your class, in whole or in part, we ask that you credit the students, Penn State, and the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence as the source.

Angela Linse,
*Executive Director for the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence
and Associate Dean for Teaching Excellence*

Introduction

Have you ever found yourself in one of these situations?

You walk into class, sit down and prepare to take notes during a lecture, when your professor informs you that today you will begin working on a project. As your instructor hands out your assignment, she also tells you that you will be assigned to work in a group...

You walk into your interview for a position on a spirit committee. You are excited because you have always wanted to get more involved. Everything is going well until the committee chair asks you, so how do you feel about working with others?...

You finally get the internship of your dreams. You arrive on the first day, ready to work in the 'real world' and discover the first thing on your agenda is a meeting. You walk into the room and your supervisor introduces you to your group, with whom you will be working all summer...

Yes, teams are everywhere. It is almost certain that at some point of your academic or professional careers you will be asked to work in a group setting. Over the last two decades, corporations and universities alike have come to realize the individual and organizational benefits of collaboration. But just because group-work has become commonplace doesn't mean that teamwork skills are common knowledge to everyone.

If you are uncomfortable working with groups or with your abilities as a group member, don't fear. Teamwork skills are not impossible to acquire. With time, experience and dedication you can easily master the skills you'll need to thrive in any group situation.

