

# Episode 1 -The first meeting

## Observation points:

1. **First impressions** - Imagine that you are a member of this group, what is your first impressions of each fellow student? What did they say or do to give you this impression?
2. **Barriers to communication** - What are the barriers to communication experienced by this group? How would you suggest they overcome them?
3. **Reading body language** - Watch the video clip again and make a note of instances of body language that give some indication as to how the students might be feeling.
4. **Group composition** - This group was selected by the tutor. In your opinion what are the benefits and disadvantages of the group being selected in this way.
5. **Assumptions and opinions** - What assumptions are the group members making about each other and what opinions are they forming? At the close of the meeting how do you think the students feel about each other?

## Observation points II (the analysis video clip):

1. **Your experience** - Think about your own experiences as working as part of a group. How did the first meeting go? How did you contribute to the group? Did you act in a similar way to any of the students in the group?
2. **Managing the discussion** - In what ways do various group members encourage discussion? What additional strategies do you suggest?
3. **Ground rules** - Identify the group rules the group suggest to help them work together. Can you see any problems with the rules and how they have been agreed? What are the benefits of having ground rules

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- First impressions
- Reading body language
- Group composition
- Assumptions and opinions

### Sub topics:

- Barriers to communication
- Managing discussion
- Ground rules

## Episode 2 - Getting started

### Observation points:

1. **Inclusion** - Without consultation, Shireen has produced a document allocating tasks and in general the reaction is negative. Why do you think this is?
2. **Democratic planning** - This group move on to plan the tasks that are needed to meet their objectives. Is their planning process democratic? How would you ensure a democratic and inclusive planning process?
3. **Failing to listen** - Consider the interaction between Shireen and Muzz towards the end of the clip. How does their failure to listen to each other impact on the discussion?

### Observation points II (the analysis video clip):

1. **Democratic allocation** - How does Vikki handle the meeting? How does this differ from Shireen's approach?
2. **Contributing to the discussion** - What examples of good practice does each member of the group demonstrate in contributing to the discussion?
3. **Checking understanding** - Following Shireen's explanation, does Muzz understand what an action point is? Have the group checked his understanding and clarified?

### Learning outcomes:

#### Main topics:

- Planning
- Allocating of tasks
- Facilitating discussion

#### Sub topics:

- Contributing/inclusion
- Listening without interrupting
- Checking understanding

## Episode 3 -What is our approach?

### Observation points:

1. **Democratic decision making** - The students vote on using PowerPoint or role-play. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this method of decision-making in this situation?
2. **Loss of Focus** - The group have become engrossed in details, such as the colours used for the slides, and have lost the focus of the project. What are the dangers of getting side-tracked and what interventions would you suggest?
3. **Discord within a group** - Why did Vikki lose her temper towards the end of this clip? Was it justified? How did Shireen respond? Was it an appropriate response?

### Discussion points (the analysis video clip):

1. **Managing difficult situations** - Uncharacteristically it is Rob who attempts to calm the situation between Vikki and Shireen. Consider ways in which everyone could have used their interpersonal skills to smooth the situation or to have prevented the outburst.
2. **Individual view points** - Consider the individual reviews; how do the view points differ between the students? Why do they have different outlooks?
3. **Politics and hormones** - Competitiveness, gender and moods were all mentioned in these video clips. What impact do you think these issues have on group work?
4. **Intercultural communication** - There are several comments about Muzz and what he can contribute to the group. How could you make group work more inclusive for international students and students with English as an additional language?

### Learning outcomes:

#### Main topics:

- Decision making
- Maintaining focus

#### Sub topics:

- Discord within a group
- Managing difficult situations
- Intercultural communication

# Episode 4 -Managing conflict

## Observation points:

1. **Conflict within the group** - What do you think caused the conflict between the students? Is conflict always a bad thing? How might the group have managed this better? In their situation what would you do to overcome the conflict and move on?
2. **Checking for understanding** - The group misunderstood the brief. How could the group have ensured they all had a common understanding of the task?
3. **The need for a leader** - Do you think this group would benefit from having a leader and if so, who would you nominate as the leader and why?
4. **Managing conflict** - How might the students have used their interpersonal skills to avoid the underlying conflict throughout the episode? The role of group work Rob's view of group work has changed. Why do you think group work plays an important role within student development?

## Discussion points (the analysis video clip):

1. **When conflict happens** - Why does conflict happen within a group situation and how can it be managed?
2. **The effects of conflict** - If you have experienced conflict in a group situation did you consider it to have a positive or negative effect on the group, and why?
3. **The need for a leader** - When you have worked within a group has there been a nominated leader? How was the leader chosen? What was his/her role? Did the presence of a leader improve the productivity of the group?

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- Causes and effects of conflict
- Managing conflict
- Leadership and roles

### Sub topics:

- Importance of communication and interpersonal skills when managing conflict
- Misinterpreting information

# Episode 5 -Meeting the tutor

## Observation points:

1. **Reluctance to seek help** - Why do you think the students are so reticent to talk through their issues with the tutor?
2. **The no show** - One of the students has failed to turn up for any of the meetings. What implications might this have for the group? Student/tutor interaction The tutor doesn't seem to respond to any tension in the group. What are the signs of tension and deflection?
3. **Tutor response** - What could the tutor have done to encourage the group to open up and discuss any issues?
4. **Improving productivity** - The students are clearly not impressed by the meeting. How do you think the meeting could have been more productive for both the students and the tutor?

## Observation points II (the analysis video clip):

1. **The tutor role** - What role do you think the tutor should take in a group work situation and why?
2. **Clip 1 discussion** - In the first clip the tutor struggles to get an open response from the students on their group dynamics. Do you think the tutor gave up too soon and how could he have found out more?
3. **Clip 2 discussion** - In the second clip the students try to engage in discussion with the tutor - what verbal and non-verbal clues do they give to indicate discontentment?
4. **Clip 3 discussion** - The third clip shows a two way discussion. How did this improve the meeting for everyone involved? What techniques did the tutor use to promote discussion?

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- Seeking help
- The tutor's role
- Student and tutor interaction
- Productive discussion

### Sub topics:

- Spotting the warning signals
- The 'no show'

# Episode 6 -Shaping the presentation

## Observation points:

1. **Productive discussion** - The group are now getting on well together sharing ideas and communicating much more. What do you think has led to this change?
2. **Delivery style** - The group has decided to use a role play and a PowerPoint presentation. How else might they present in a way that would engage the audience?
3. **Defining roles** - The group decide who's doing what on the presentation day. How do they do this? Is this an effective way to define roles?
4. **Inclusiveness** - Rob suggests that Muzz's accent should discount him from delivering 'the important parts' of the presentation. How would you respond to this suggestion if you were a member of this group?

## Discussion points (the analysis video clip):

1. **Group presentations** - What makes an effective presentation?
2. **Contingency plans** - What contingency plans would you make when delivering a presentation?
3. **Transitions** - When a number of group members are presenting the change over can cause problems. What steps can be taken to ensure smooth transitions?
4. **Evaluating presentation style** - Based on your experience of being a member of the audience at presentations what are the other errors that presenters commonly make? What examples of good presentation style have you seen?

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- Productive discussion
- Delivery style
- Defining roles

### Sub topics:

- Presentation techniques
- Contingency plans
- Inclusion

# Episode 7 -Participation and sub-groups

## Observation points:

1. **Participation** - Vikki volunteered to take on a lot of additional work. What do you think her motivation was for doing this?
2. **Sub groups** - When Vikki doesn't arrive, the group react in different ways; some questioning commitment and others feeling concern. Why do you think the reactions are so different?
3. **Attitudes and assumptions** - Rob and Shireen's attitude to her late arrival provokes a response from Vikki. Why do you think she responds in this way?
4. **Contingency** - There appears to be no contingency for a group member not showing up. What could the group have put in place to manage this better?

## Discussion points (the analysis video clip):

1. **Attitudes and assumptions** - Knowing the facts about why Vikki was late, do you think group members were justified in their reactions? How would you have reacted to this situation?
2. **Sub-groups** - In some group situations sub-groups may form. Why is this and how might it affect the group dynamic?
3. **Personal relationships** - Personal relationships may exist before the group is formed or may develop during the group project. How might this alter the dynamics of the group?
4. **Blame culture** - What examples have there been of group members' blaming others for the challenges faced? What examples of blame culture have you come across in group situations? How might this be handled in a group situation?

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- Participation
- Sub-groups
- Attitudes and assumptions

### Sub topics:

- Contingency
- Personal relationships within groups
- Blame culture

# Episode 8 -Assessing group work

## Observation points:

1. **Individual contribution** - How might each member of this group evidence their contribution to the project?
2. **Group assessment** - The groups involved in this project have to assess each other. What do you think are the benefits and disadvantages of groups assessing each other in this way?
3. **Peer assessment** - The group have mixed views on peer evaluation. How do the group see this working?

## Discussion points (the analysis video clip):

1. **Peer Assessment** - What is the value of peer assessment and what difficulties might it cause? What approach might you take when assessing peers and their individual contributions?
2. **Own contribution** - The students are concerned about how they are perceived by others. How have you ensured that your individual contribution has been acknowledged in group situations?
3. **Self assessment** - The students have been asked to write a reflective evaluation of their own performance in the group. What do you think the value of this is and what can be learned from it?
4. **Group dynamic** - How might these individual assessment methods affect the group dynamic?

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- Individual contribution
- Group assessment
- Peer assessment
- Self assessment
- Tutor assessment

### Sub topics:

- Group dynamics

# Episode 9 -Support and Feedback

## Observation points:

1. **Group discussion** - How did the group discuss the rehearsal? Was this productive? How would you organise this discussion process and what outcomes would you hope to see?
2. **Giving feedback** - Delia is given feedback about her reliance on notes. How was this feedback given and was it useful for Delia? Consider your experiences of being given feedback. What makes useful feedback?
3. **Peer support** - Did the group offer Delia any support? How could they have supported her? Do you have any issues when presenting? If so how have you been supported by your peers?

## Observation points II (the analysis video clip):

1. **Supporting group members** - The rest of the group have empathy with Delia's nervousness. What other incidences of group support has there been throughout the project?
2. **Group coherence** - The group are getting on well and appear to enjoy working together. If they had not formed a coherent group by this stage what might the consequences be?
3. **Intercultural communication** - Rob is surprised how clear Muzz does the conclusion. Why may people negatively stereotype people who speak English as an additional language? How can these stereotypes be challenged?

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- Group discussion
- Giving feedback
- Peer support

### Sub topics:

- Group coherence
- Intercultural communication

# Episode 10 -Evaluating the experience

## Discussion points:

1. **Group issues on the day** - What challenges were the group faced with on the day and how did they manage them? Consider a time when you have been working in a group, what were the main challenges and how did you help the group to overcome them?
2. **Group dynamics** - The group developed throughout the project. What steps did they take to ensure that the project would have a successful outcome?
3. **Analysis** - On the whole the group were happy with their performance although some identified areas of weakness. On reflection what do you consider to be the main strength and weakness of this particular group? Do you consider this to be reflective of the majority of groups?
4. **Lessons learned** - The ten week project proved to be a learning curve for them all. What do you consider to be the most important thing that each student learned? What is the most significant thing you have learned through watching the progress of the group?

## Discussion points II (the analysis video clip):

1. **Assessment methods** - Some of the students considered this project to be over assessed. What methods of assessment would you use to evaluate a group project and why?
2. **Tutor input** - Episode 5 showed a range of levels of tutor input. How important is tutor input when considering the success of a group project and why?
3. **Group dynamics** - The tutor could clearly identify those groups that had worked well together. Do you consider that this group worked well and if so what made them a successful group?

## Learning outcomes:

### Main topics:

- Group dynamics
- Analysis
- Lessons learned

### Sub topics:

- Group issues on the day
- Tutor input
- Assessment