

Episode Ten – Analysis Transcript

I've just been looking over my notes for the groups that did the group presentations. A colleague and I, we saw twelve groups that day, so it was quite a long day, and a very typical pattern of results. There's always *one* group that think they can do it at the last minute: they don't prepare; they try to put it together the night before; and they usually come a cropper. There's also groups that don't prepare for questions: they don't think about what's going to happen after they've sat down, and they sometimes find it quite a shock when you start asking them questions.

Shireen's group: they did pretty well, I thought. I thought they fell into some of the traps that just about *every* group does when they come to their first group project, first student group project: things like they don't read the brief carefully enough; they don't check the assessment criteria; they don't spend enough time at the very beginning really kind of working out what they're trying to do, and who's doing what; and I think as a group they had a bit of a leadership conflict right at the very beginning, and that's fairly common, and groups just need to sit down and work through that, and make sure they really know what they're doing, and also how they're gonna get on with one another. So those first few meetings are really important.

I also thought that that group demonstrated that there's no *absolute* one way of doing things. For example, they were the group that put in the role play, and that worked really well, and you can get really good marks if you do a bit of innovative practice like that. The only thing to beware is that you must make sure that innovation really gets your message across; so you really have to have a very clear message. And demonstrate to your audience and your other students as well, that you really know what you're saying and what you're trying to get across.

I think one other issue that *that* group flagged up for me was that if you're working in a project group and something goes wrong, you have to decide when you're going to involve the tutor. So for example, that group had the problem with Liam - now I don't know quite what happened there, we need to check that out and work out whether perhaps as tutors we didn't give correct information to everybody - but the problem was that when I mentioned Liam to them, they said "oh well, fair enough," and they just seemed to sort of take it and get on with things, and we didn't realise it was a big problem until the day of the presentation itself, and that's too late to do anything about it. You know, if problems come up like that, then groups should really go to the tutor – obviously talk it through with the individual first – but you need to go to the tutor with the evidence and say "well, student X just really isn't contributing, and we don't know what to do," and we can try and work it out: *don't* leave it till the last minute.

Erm...I think the final thing is about the assessment. We're trying to bring in peer assessment, and self assessment, because these are really valuable skills that students will *have* to have in later life. And students can't just get away with giving everybody a fair mark- or rather a high mark – these days; they really have to work out who's good at what, because that's a really important part of teamwork, and all these skills are transferable.