ABSTRACT

Teamwork is essential to the success of any organization, as well as to the success of employees. Particularly in multidisciplinary professions, individuals from different backgrounds must be able to effectively work together. Teaching students how to work well on teams in a variety of roles is vital. There is increasing emphasis in university settings for students to be required to work in teams, however, instruction on how to succeed at teamwork is rarely given. This often results in conflict within teams and poor productivity. Within the Human Resources and Organizational Behavior domains, reducing conflict and improving productivity through successful teamwork are important concepts that students must learn. It is not sufficient to simply place students in teams and instruct them to work together. Students need to be taught the skills they will need to function successfully in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to work effectively in teams is essential in the business world and therefore is a skill that should be taught in universities. Despite their significance, it is well known that students have a general dislike of group and team-based projects due to conflict within groups stemming from teamwork (Connerley & Mael, 2001). Students prefer to work autonomously, and express discontent with their grade being dependent on another student’s contribution (Pfaff & Huddleston, 2003). However, while individuals in the workforce may complete work autonomously, they must
also work effectively in teams and be successful at collaborating with others. Thus, team-based projects are particularly important in the development of interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, and leadership abilities. Students must remember that groups exist not only to carry out tasks, but also to provide individuals with distinct opportunities to grow as a person (Adair, 1986).

Collaborative learning is increasing in importance, it is not a new teaching strategy (Ku, Tseng, & Akarasriworn, 2013). Collaborative learning is defined as “an instructional method where students work together in small groups to pursue a common goal” (Prince, 2004, p.1). Cooperative learning is a specific type of collaborative learning in which particular techniques are used to emphasize student interactions, rather than learning as an individual or private activity (Prince, 2004). Higher education continues to place emphasis on experiences in the classroom that are conducive to active learning rather than passive learning (Machemer & Crawford, 2007).

Healthcare is an example of a discipline that is dependent upon collaboration, thus poor teamwork can have grave consequences. Lack of teamwork can lead to threats of patient safety and adverse events. In 2010, the World Health Organization Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice called for strengthening inter-professional teamwork in educational settings (Aase, Aase, & Dieckmann, 2013). Many universities have responded to this by encouraging inter-professional collaboration between students in different disciplines in order to practice working with individuals of varying professions, as one would in the healthcare environment. Teaching students how to work effectively in teams is needed, not only in healthcare programs, but in programs across all disciplines.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the importance of teamwork
- Identify the role of individuals in teams
- Describe personality theories and their view on teamwork
- Define how to create successful teams
- Describe the role of ethics in teamwork

BACKGROUND

Teaching students about teamwork is not a new concept, however, students are often left to figure it out for themselves (Snyder, 2009). Prior research has shown that other universities have had success with teaching teamwork (Aase, Aase, & Dieckmann, 2013). In a study by Missingham & Matthews in 2014, the authors discussed a course that was implemented to teach students critical analysis and teamwork skills. The
Rationale and Challenges of Technical Vocational Education and Training in Uganda
www.igi-global.com/chapter/rationale-and-challenges-of-technical-vocational-education-and-training-in-uganda/176886?camid=4v1a