

Teamwork Makes the Dream Work: Building Effective Teacher/Paraeducator Teams

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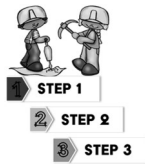


1

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to identify:

- Effective communication styles
- Problems with communication
- Listening skills
- Steps for resolving communication/team problems



2

Teaming Defined

- Teaming involves:
 - Two or more persons (*We...*)
 - Cooperation (*Together we will...*)
 - Shared problem-solving (*We will take steps to...*)
 - Planning (*We need to accomplish...*)
 - Finding solutions for a productive and meaningful outcome (*When we are finished, we will have...*)
- Can be formal or informal.
- Communication is a key.
- Cannot exist in isolation

3



4

Historical Perspective

- Teachers have been used to working alone in their classrooms. In the past, asking for assistance would have been viewed as incompetence.
- Hired in the 1950s to support teachers with clerical type duties.
- Roles have shifted, becoming more instructional.
- Still performing original types of responsibilities.



5

“We did then what we knew how to do”.

“When we knew better, we did better.”

- Maya Angelou



6

An example of BAD TEAMING!

7

An example of GOOD TEAMING!

8

WHY BUILD a TEAM?

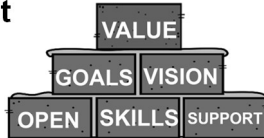
- Foster professional and personal growth and learning through sharing knowledge and skills.
- Create unique, flexible solutions to problems.
- Support each other & maximize each other's potential.
- Reduce the feeling of isolation.



9

WHY BUILD a TEAM?

- Practice open/honest communication, make an effort to understand and accept each other's points of view.
- Establish goals together.
- Share a vision of what needs to be done to accomplish goals.
- Feel input is valued.



10

Teaming for Student Success



67% of teachers
and
78% of principals
think effective
teaming has a
major impact on
student
achievement.

*Survey of the
American Teacher MetLife*



11

Critical Elements of Good Teams

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Coordination
- CARING!



12

What Makes a Good Team?

- Effective Team Leaders
- Effective Team Members
- Good Communication
- A Common Goal



13

What Makes a Good Team Member?



How well do you know your colleagues?
How well do you know yourself?

14

Good Team Members:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Are present and punctual. | • Come prepared. |
| • Prioritize meeting times. | • Are positive. |
| • Listen to and respect others. | • Stay on target. |
| • Practice WIN-WIN. | • Follow through. |
| • Pay attention and contribute. | • Ask quality questions. |
| | • Use HUMOR! |



15

Good Team Members

- Know themselves – strengths and weaknesses.
- Can depersonalize situations by:
 - Avoiding negative comments/character assassinations.
 - Emphasizing students/goals.
 - Being aware of nonverbal *and* verbal actions.
- Put needs of students before the needs of the adults.

16

Good Communication is the KEY to Building Relationships!

Comm → un → i → ca → tion

17

Negative Comments:

- Have you heard these?



18

Have You Heard These Negative Comments In Meetings?

- “That doesn’t matter right now! Let’s stay on the topic.”
- “Unfortunately, that’s wrong!”
- **YOUR TURN:** Write down a couple of your own.



19

Positive Comments

- Have you heard these?



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Have You Heard These Positive Comments In Meetings?

- “That’s a really good idea! Let’s talk more about it.”
- “Thanks for your suggestion. It helps when everyone provides input.”
- **YOUR TURN:** Write down a couple of your own.



21

Strategies for Effective Teaming & Communication



- Work together.
- Create a climate of trust.
- Ask for clarification or assistance when needed.
- Develop a system of verbal and non-verbal cues.
- Respect individuality.
- Be receptive to others.



22

Listening Skills



Don't...

- Tune out or become distracted.
- Interrupt.
- Make off-topic comments.
- Immediately discount others' ideas.
- Make assumptions or jump to conclusions.
- Think about your reply while the other person is speaking.
- Send negative messages through body language.
 - Eye rolls 
 - Folded arms 
 - Side conversations 

23

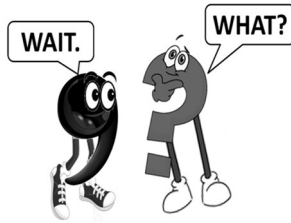
Listening Skills

Do...

- Be an active listener.
- Be receptive to new ideas.
- Become involved.
- Ask quality questions.
- Show the speaker respect.
 - Establish eye contact 
 - Wait for a break to have a conversation with a neighbor
 - Acknowledge with nods 

24

We speak at a rate of about **150 words per minute**, but we can hear at a rate of about **1,000 words per minute**.



25

Communication Shutdowns

- "That's not my job/responsibility."
- "We don't have time for that, now."
- "We've never done that before."
- "That's not the way we do things here."
- "That will never work."



26

A difference of opinion doesn't mean that someone is right and someone is wrong.



27

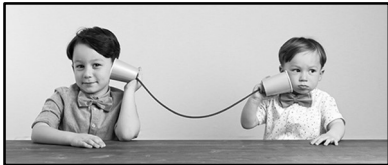


**The biggest
communication
problem is that we do
not listen to
understand.
We listen to reply.**








28

**Good communication
is the KEY to building
positive relationships!**



29

Understanding Is. . .

- ..the gift that comes from listening to each other. 
- ..asking questions rather than having the answers. 
- ..allowing differences to fade and similarities to come forth. 
- ..naturally acknowledging and appreciating the other person. 
- ..shifting from issues to visions. 
- ..moving from stalemate to solutions.

- Kent Gerlach

30

What's Your Process?



**Understanding yourself
AND your colleagues.
What do you bring to the
table?**

31

Shakers

**Go for it!
Let's give it a try!
We'll figure out the details later!**



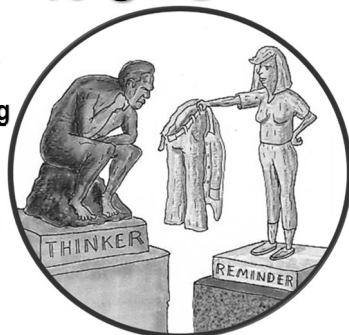
32

Thinkers

**Let's think about
this for a while. . .**

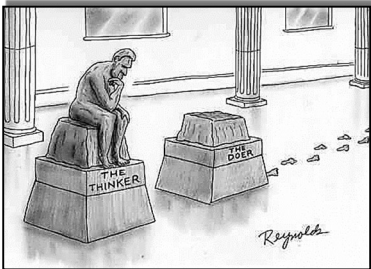
**I need to see the big
picture. . .**

**I can see the
possibilities, but I
would rather wait
and see. . .**



33

Doers



What are the details??

Who? ... What?
... When? ...
Where?
... How? ... WHY??

OK! Let's do this!

34

Feelers

I want everyone to be happy!

Let's not make anyone feel bad!

Don't take away her favorite...????



35

Which One Are You?



36

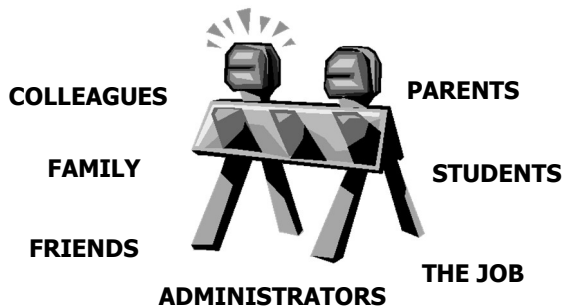
Keeping good teams good or...making them GREAT!

- Organization is essential.
 - Agenda
 - Notes
- Stay focused.
 - Common goal
 - Clear understanding
- Stay positive.
 - Don't let negativity take over
- Clear honest communication.
 - Trust
- Problem solve effectively and efficiently.
- Celebrate success!



37

Barriers to Successful Teaming



38



1 WHY RESIST?

Lack of defined roles and responsibilities

39

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Roles and Responsibilities

Teacher and Paraeducator Role Perception Activity

Directions: Discuss the following tasks with your group members. When the group reaches consensus about who performs each task, put an X in the appropriate box.

	Teacher	Para	Shared
1. Recording and charting data about learner performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Administering standardized tests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Scoring standardized tests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Grading tests and papers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Analyzing and interpreting results of assessment activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Evaluating learner performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Setting goals and objectives for classes and individual learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Planning lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Introducing new skills or concepts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Modifying or adapting instructional plans for individual learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Carrying out lessons plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Instructing individual or small groups of learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Developing behavior management plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Implementing behavior management programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Disciplining students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Developing instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Recording attendance and maintaining other records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Setting up and maintaining learning centers and adaptive equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Inventorying and ordering supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Participating in individualized program planning and other school based meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Meeting and conferring with parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Consulting with professional staff about learners' programs and behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Maintaining a clean, safe learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

40

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WHY RESIST?

Lack of training



41

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WHY RESIST?

- Fear loss of control and unknown.
- Low tolerance for change.
- Miscommunication.

42

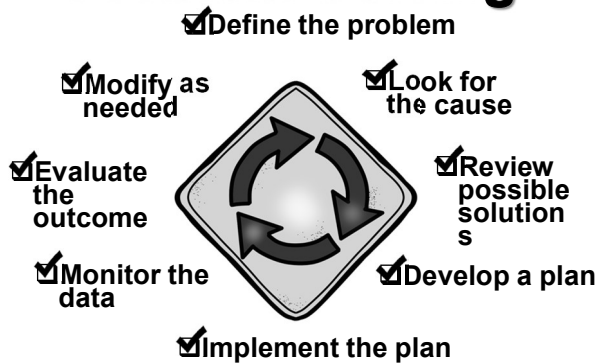
EXPECT RESISTANCE



PLAN FOR IT!

43

Problem-Solving



44

Define the Problem

- What does it:
 - Look like?
 - Sound like?
- Assuming?
- Vague?



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Look for the Cause

- When?
- Where?
- How often?
- Who is there?



46

Review Solutions

- Who knows the student?
- Best solution?
- Consensus?



47

Develop a Plan

- What are the steps?
- Who will be in charge?
- Write it down!



48

Implement the Plan

- Who needs to know?
- Schedules?
- Materials needed?



49

Monitor and Take Data

- What?
- How?
- Who?
- When?



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Evaluate how well the plan worked...

- Problem solved?
- Keep it going?
- Unexpected outcomes?
- Plan revised?
- New problems?

51

Sometimes problems catch you by surprise!



What should Ms. Jones do?
What would you do?

52

What should Ms. Jones do?

Ms. Jones, a paraeducator, has noticed that Johnny is not learning to read and has a hard time with writing.

- a. Work with Johnny in a small group.
- b. Try to determine how far behind he is in reading and writing skills.
- c. Talk to Johnny's mom about her observations. She lives down the street.
- d. Bring writing samples to a meeting with the teacher and work with her to create a plan for Johnny.

53

Gabby is a 3rd grade student. She had 10 absences in K and 1st grade, 15 in 2nd grade, and now 18 this year, in 3rd grade. Ms. Jones sees Gabby's mom at the local grocery store and mentions that she had missed seeing Gabby at school that day. Mom quickly explains that they've moved twice since she and Mr. Smith divorced when Gabby was in 2nd grade, and Gabby seems to be sick a lot. Shes wants to talk about it more

. . .and more. . .and more.

What should Ms. Jones do?

54

What should Ms. Jones do?

- a. Let mom talk until she feels better.
- b. Stop mom, excuse herself and leave.
- c. Stop mom, tell her she needs to talk to the teacher about the situation.
- d. Shake her head in disgust, turn around and walk away.
- e. Stop mom, tell her that you'll be happy to set up a meeting for her with the teacher. She will tell the teacher about the situation.

55

REMEMBER... BE PRESENT!



56

Remember to pick your battles!



57

Remember. . .

- It's easy to turn a meeting into a complaint session.
- Negativity is contagious.
- To make it work you **MUST** be committed to the team, and students...



Don't be a part of the problem, be the solution!

58



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**Don't sweat the small
stuff. . .**

**And it's all small
stuff!**



- Richard Carlson

70

QUESTIONS?

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**THANK YOU
FOR JOINING
US!**

72



73
