

# *Employability Skills:*

## #3 Teamwork

**Standard 1 Demonstrate employability skills required by business and industry.**

*Modified from “Teamwork.” Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor,  
[www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/Teamwork.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/Teamwork.pdf).*

### **Warm-Up:**

- What is teamwork?
- What does functional teamwork look like?
- What does dysfunctional teamwork look like?
- Why can teamwork be effective?

### **Opening:**

Scan the QR code to watch a video while responding to the following prompts:



1. What worked well on the example of teamwork on this video?
2. How was teamwork effective?
3. How does teamwork affect productivity (how much work gets done)?

While you read, highlight (at least 3) sentences that seem important or catch your attention.

## Teamwork

Teamwork is an essential part of workplace success. Like a basketball team working together to set up the perfect shot, every team member has a specific role to play in accomplishing tasks on the job. Although it may seem as if one player scored the basket, that basket was made possible by many people's planning, coordination, and cooperation to get that player the ball. Employers look for people who not only know how to work well with others, but who understand that not every player on the team can or will be the one who gets the ball. When everyone in the workplace works together to accomplish goals, everyone achieves more.

Teamwork involves building relationships and working with other people using a number of important skills and habits:

- Working cooperatively
- Contributing to groups with ideas, suggestions, and effort
- Communication (both giving and receiving)
- Sense of responsibility
- Healthy respect for different opinions, customs, and individual preferences
- Ability to participate in group decision-making

The ability to work as part of a team is one of the most important skills in today's job market. Employers are looking for workers who can contribute their own ideas, but also want people who can work with others to create and develop projects and plans.

When employees work together to accomplish a goal, everyone benefits. Employers might expect to "see" this in action in different ways. For example, team members in the workplace plan ahead and work cooperatively to assign tasks, assess progress, and deliver on time. They have professional discussions during which differing approaches and opinions might be shared and assessed in a respectful manner. Even when certain employees end up with tasks that were not their first choices, jobs get done with limited complaints because it is in the spirit of teamwork and with the overall goal in mind. A leader or manager may often serve as the teamwork facilitator. In this case, team members participate respectfully in discussion, carry out assigned tasks, and defer to the leader in the best interest of the goal. Consensus is wonderful, but not always possible, and an assigned leader will often support and facilitate the decision-making necessary for quality teamwork to exist.

### Comprehension Questions:

1. What important skills and habits are involved with teamwork?
2. How does everyone benefit from teamwork?
3. Why do employers consider teamwork one of the most important skills in the job market?

## Work Session:

### *Activity 1: Teamwork of the Job*

**JUST THE FACTS:** The purpose of this activity is to help participants understand how teamwork is managed on the job - both from the perspective of the boss and from the perspective of the employee.

**Directions:** Read the scenario and answer the comprehension questions.

#### **Scenario:**

Shawn works in a library. She and three other co-workers have been tasked to work together on a project. Shawn turns in the completed product, but she completed it without input or help from the others. Shawn said it was really tough to find time to meet together. She did text the others (asking about working together), but got no responses. Her supervisor, Nathaniel, knows that she is a promising young librarian who wants to advance to a leadership position. Nathaniel also believes that Shawn has the potential to be a good leader, but feels she is impatient when it comes to working with others.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

1. What did Shawn do well?
2. What could she have done differently?
3. How might she handle herself in the future?
4. How should Nathaniel handle this situation? Consider the fact that he probably wants to help Shawn to improve and not necessarily punish her.

## **Activity 2: Elements of Teamwork**

Part of being a good team member is learning how to understand your personal strengths (what you have to offer) AND where you might need to draw assistance from others. Listed on this sheet are 10 of the characteristics that make a productive team member. Rate your level of confidence in each skill (HONESTLY).

### **Rate yourself for each skill below:**

SKILL #1: RELIABLE This means: You can be counted on to get the job done. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #2: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR This means: You express your thoughts and ideas clearly and directly, with respect for others. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #3: ACTIVE LISTENER This means: You listen to and respect different points of view. Others can offer you constructive feedback – and you don't get upset or defensive. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #4: PARTICIPATES This means: You are prepared – and get involved in team activities. You are regular contributor. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #5: SHARES OPENLY AND WILLINGLY This means: You are willing to share information, experience, and knowledge with the group. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #6: COOPERATIVE This means: You work with other members of the team to accomplish the job - no matter what. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #7: FLEXIBLE This means: You adapt easily when the team changes direction or you're asked to try something new. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #8: COMMITTED This means: You are responsible and dedicated. You always give your best effort! Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident Skills to Pay the Bills 64

SKILL #9: PROBLEM SOLVER This means: You focus on solutions. You are good about not going out of your way to find fault in others. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

SKILL #10: RESPECTFUL This means: You treat other team members with courtesy and consideration - all of the time. Rating: \_\_\_\_ Not so confident \_\_\_\_ Sort of Confident \_\_\_\_ Really confident

**Consider your answers:**

Did you have mostly “not so confident” checked off? If so, you are still developing your confidence as a team player. These skills often take some time to develop – so don’t worry. It might be helpful to reach out to someone you know and trust to help you focus on developing a plan for working on some of the skills in which you would like to be more confident. Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Asking for help when you need it is another great skill of a productive team player.

Did you have mostly “sort of confident” checked off? If so, you are pretty confident in your teamwork skills – but could probably use a little extra support or development in a few areas. Invite someone close to you (someone you know and trust), to work with you on the areas you would like to improve. Most people would be really happy to help you! Learning the strategies to become a good team member takes time, energy, and dedication.

Did you have mostly “really confident” checked off? If so, you are truly confident in your ability to be a good team player. That’s great! Figure out an area or two where you would like to continue to see improvement (since we should always be striving to be the best we can be) and develop a plan for how to further grow those skills. Also try to offer support to someone you know who might be struggling with building his or her own level of teamwork confidence.

**Now consider your teamwork skills confidence levels:**

I am most proud of my ability to:

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I want to improve my ability to:

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I will reach out to some of these people for guidance:

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**Closing/Formative Assessment:**

Create your own personal quote about teamwork. Why is it important? What can be accomplished? The quote should be one that encourages peers to gain a better understanding and perspective on the importance of teamwork AND why it is often a core value shared by many different cultures, populations, and groups.

**Extension/Enrichment:**

Read this article

[https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/increase\\_youth\\_employability\\_through\\_teamwork\\_skills](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/increase_youth_employability_through_teamwork_skills)

How can teenagers build teamwork skills?

