

**“No Social Loafers Here!”**  
**Strategies for Designing**  
**Effective Group Work**

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Karen Appleby

Department of Sport Science and Physical Education

College of Education

# Group Work

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## What we would like

“More hands make for lighter work”

“Two heads are better than one”

“The more the merrier”

## What often happens

“Too many hands make the load heavier”

“One head can get the job done faster”

“The more...well...the less merry”

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**Why do we assign group  
work in class?**

# Why is Group Work Important for Students?

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- **Development of professional skills**
  - ✓ Work in a team structure
  - ✓ Make decisions and solve problems
  - ✓ Plan, organize, and prioritize work
  - ✓ Provide and receive feedback

(NACE, 2014)
- **Development of interpersonal skills**
  - ✓ Communicate
  - ✓ Cooperate
  - ✓ Delegate

(Taylor, 2011)



# The Top Professional Skills Employers Value in New Employees

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- The ability to work in a team setting
- Proficiency in problem solving and decision making
- Adept organizational abilities
- Ability to skillfully communicate

(National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2014, p. 4)

# When Groups Fail!

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## The Dreaded “Social Loafing”!

- Individual output is less than 100% in a group due to losses in:
  - Motivation
  - Coordination

### Group Project

*(noun)*

Time to relax while you watch someone who cares do all the work.

## Why is Group Work so Challenging for Students?

- *I would rather do it myself, that way I know it will be done (or done right)!*
- *I don't like the people in my small group.*
- *It's too hard to coordinate our busy schedules.*
- *I get stuck doing all of the work!*
- *There is no accountability! We all get the same grade.*

# Five Strategies for Effective Group Work

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1. Create a meaningful assignment
2. Strategically assign groups
3. Clarify roles and responsibilities
4. Scaffold assignments
5. Allow for student input and feedback

# Context: *The Group Sport Marketing Project*

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- Develop a marketing plan for one ISU Athletic Event
- Implement the plan
- Create a professional marketing plan portfolio
- Present your outcomes in a professional context
- Reflect on this experience

# Step #1: Create a Meaningful Assignment

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- Novel application to a real-life situation
- Professional opportunity
- Specified professional outcomes

# Example: Group Sport Marketing Assignment

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## Skills of Effective Sport Managers

- Communicate and solve problems effectively (Martin, West, & Bill, 2008)
- Effectively oversee a budget (Barcelona & Ross, 2004)
- Successfully engage in various aspects of program planning (Barcelona & Ross, 2004)
- Understand organizational issues to make wise decisions (Lussier & Kimball, 2009)

## Activities in this Assignment

- *Market and Promote* one ISU Athletic Event
- Create a professional *Marketing Portfolio*
- Give a professional *Marketing Presentation*

## Step #2. Strategically Assign Groups

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- Instructor chosen (random assignment)
- Consider number of people in the group
- Assign groups early (Proximity)
- Role Clarity and Acceptance

## Step #3. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities

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All members are responsible for specific TASKS (Clarified Roles)

- *Group Work Task Sheet*
- *Mini Project lead authors*
- *In Class Work Day Participation sheets*

## Group Work Task Sheet

On the lines provided, please name the group member who will be responsible for the completion of this task. **The person responsible for each task will be docked an extra 10 points if this assignment or part of the overall presentation is not turned in correctly, completely, or on time.** Please note, while you may all work together on each assignment, this person is ultimately responsible for preparing documents, typing, proofreading, and turning in the assignment for which he/she is responsible. Please include a copy of this with your final portfolio:

<b>Group Communications Liaison (1 person):</b>
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<b>Mini Project A (1 person):</b>
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<b>Mini Project B (1 person):</b>
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<b>Mini Project C (1 person):</b>
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<b>Mini Project D (1 person):</b>
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<b>Midterm Project Presentation (1 person per section):</b>
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<b>(note: you will be responsible for both gathering and preparing the PPT for your section)</b>
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- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mission Statement:</li></ul>                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Description of the Sport Product:</li></ul>                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing Timeline:</li></ul>                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing Techniques:</li></ul>                                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation Proofreading, Preparation, and Submission:</li></ul> |

<b>Final Project Presentation (1 person per section):</b>
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<b>(note: you will be responsible for both gathering and preparing the PPT for your section)</b>
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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mission Statement and Marketing Goals:</li></ul>                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Description of the Sport Product:</li></ul>                             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SWOT analysis:</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing Timeline:</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial Aspects:</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing Techniques:</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consumer Survey:</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Presentation Proofreading, Preparation, and Submission:</li></ul> |

<b>Final Project Portfolio (1 person per section):</b>
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<b>(note: you will be responsible for gather and preparing the written document for your section)</b>
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- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Table of Contents:</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mission Statement and Marketing Goals:</li></ul>                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Description of the Sport Product:</li></ul>                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SWOT Analysis:</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing Timeline:</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial Aspects:</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marketing Techniques:</li></ul>                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consumer Survey:</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event Evaluation:</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Portfolio Proofreading, Preparation, and Submission:</li></ul> |

## In Class Work Day Participation Sheet (Individual)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**List 3 group goals to accomplish by the end of this class period (these should be the same for all members):**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**List your individual responsibilities in relation to completing each of these goals:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Did you complete your individual responsibilities during this class period?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**If you chose "Yes," briefly describe how you individually completed your responsibilities.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If you chose "No," briefly describe what inhibited your ability to accomplish your individual responsibilities.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If you chose "No," briefly describe the steps you have planned to accomplish your responsibilities before the next in-class work session.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Group Member Signatures:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Step #4. Scaffold Assignments

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➤ Mini projects

➤ Midterm presentation

➤ In class work days

# Example: Group Mini Projects

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- Rough drafts of specific assignment sections:
  - Description of Sport Product, SWOT Analysis, Marketing Techniques, Financial Aspects, Consumer Survey
- Rubric for each assignment
- In Class Work Day for each assignment
- Consider a “completion” grade

# Step #5. Allow for Student Input and Feedback

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- Clear expectations and outcomes:
  - Rubrics
- Evaluation of group members:
  - Teamwork Rating Sheet
  - Midterm presentation
- Individual component:
  - Individual reflection and description of major tasks

## *Teamwork Rating Sheet for PE 3366*

Ratee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rating Scale: 3 = Always, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Never**

How often did the Ratee...

1. Attended team meetings \_\_\_\_\_
2. Met deadlines \_\_\_\_\_
3. Produced high quality work \_\_\_\_\_
4. Took a leadership role \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did her/his fair share of the work \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did more than her/his fair share of work \_\_\_\_\_
7. Volunteered to help another team member \_\_\_\_\_
8. Improved the morale of the team \_\_\_\_\_
9. Helped to resolve conflict in the team \_\_\_\_\_
10. Cheerfully volunteered for non-preferred tasks \_\_\_\_\_

# General Strategies for Creating Successful Group Work

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- Provide a RATIONALE – **make it meaningful!**
- Promote SHARED RESPONSIBILITY– **create accountability!**
- Provide specific STEPS and OUTCOMES – **create clear expectations!**
- GUIDE the instruction and provide FEEDBACK - **scaffold assignments!**
- Grading should be CLEAR and provide an opportunity for STUDENT INPUT – **give students a voice!**

(Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1993; Scardamalie, 2002; Williamson, 2010)

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