

Teamwork Skills

What is the definition of teamwork?

Teamwork is defined as the successful blending of knowledge and skills of persons working together towards a goal. Each worker's interests, opinions, knowledge, and skills are blended together for the success of the team (or company). Workers who work together can create better stores, better products, or better ways of doing things than one worker can do. Success is TEAMWORK — Together Everyone Achieves More!



What are the six steps in the teamwork process?

1. **Identify Project.** Team members discuss what is needed to solve the problem such as create a new product, increase customer sales, design a user-friendly store, improve the stockroom layout, or other project.
2. **Analyze Resources.** Team members think about: What do we now have? What do we need? How much money is in the budget? What are the skills of each team member?
3. **Brainstorm (think of) Solutions.** Team members think of ideas: How do we create a better product? What are pros (advantages) and cons (disadvantages) of each idea? What can each team member do to help? During this step, team members exchange ideas, listen, discuss, and blend ideas together.
4. **Select Goal & Objectives.** Decisions are made. Goal (or plan) is created. Objectives (steps to accomplish the goal) are listed. Team members form groups to work on objectives.
5. **Respectfully Work Together.** Team members are given tasks to do according to their skills. Time lines are set for finish dates. Team members respect and trust each other. Team members have positive discussions. Each team member does his or her task.
6. **Evaluate Outcome.** Team members evaluate the project: Did the idea and project succeed? Did the team succeed? Are adjustments needed? What is the next step?

The teamwork process is often described by the 4 words in bold:

- **Forming** — #1 Identify Project — #2 Analyze Resources
- **Storming** — #3 Brainstorm (think of) Solutions
- **Norming** — #4 Select Goal & Objectives
- **Performing** — #5 Work Together — #6 Evaluate Outcome

What are the different roles of team members?

- **Leader.** Plans meetings. Leads meetings. Checks team members' progress. Helps team members to perform to their best ability. Keeps team members focused on the tasks and goal.
- **Problem Solver.** Suggests new ideas and ways of doing things. Encourages team members to join in brainstorming solutions. Identifies action steps. Helps team members with problems.
- **Encourager.** Encourages each team member to try his or her best. Keeps enthusiasm (good positive attitudes) going during problems. Creates a supportive environment for workers to discuss ideas freely.
- **Mediator.** Figures out reason for conflict among team members. Thinks of solutions to keep peace in the team. Can work well with different types of people. Is sensitive to the feelings of others while resolving and solving any conflicts between team members.



- **Clarifier.** Listens to team members' conversation and ideas. Asks questions to clarify anything that is confusing. Helps team members clearly see the goal and tasks to do. Encourages team members to use their knowledge and skills.
- **Organizer.** Keeps team organized and focused on doing tasks. Takes minutes of the meeting. Maintains any documents needed for the project. Keeps track of time lines to finish each task. Organizers are the memory of the team.



What questions may an employer ask about my teamwork skills during an interview?

Q: Do you prefer working independently (on your own) or on a team? Suggested Answer: I am comfortable working as a member of a team and independently. I have experience in completing projects both as a member of a team and as an individual.

Q: Give an example when you were part of a team. What was your role in the team?

Suggested Answer: I worked as part of a team to help the Drama Department plan and produce the spring play. I also participate on the school's tennis team. My teamwork roles included problem solver, encourager, and clarifier. I enjoy thinking of solutions for the situation. I try to create a supportive, friendly environment for the team members to exchange ideas freely. And, I actively listen to team members, ask questions to clarify anything that is confusing, and help keep the team focused on tasks.

Q: What do you enjoy about teamwork?

Suggested answer: I enjoy working with different types of people and new ideas to reach a goal. I realize that today's work world requires many different people, ideas, skills, and talents pulling together to create the best product or solution



Q: Have you experienced disagreement among team members?

Q: What would you do if you did? Suggested Answer: There are usually some disagreements when working in teams. It is each person's responsibility to get along and perform their duties for the good of the team. I try to respectfully talk to team members with sensitivity to reach a successful (good) compromise.

QUICK CHECK:

1. Define teamwork.
2. Workers who work together create better what?
3. Describe what happens during the teamwork process: a) Identify Project. b) Analyze Resources. c) Brainstorm Solutions. d) Select Goals & Objectives. e) Respectfully Work Together. f) Evaluate Outcome.
4. Teamwork process is described by what 4 words?
5. List 4 things a team leader will do.
6. List 3 things a team problem solver will do.
7. List 3 things a team encourager will do.
8. List 3 things a team mediator will do.
9. List 3 things a team clarifier will do.
10. List 3 things a team organizer will do.
11. Write down your answer to the following questions about your teamwork skills that you may be asked during a job interview:
 - a) Do you prefer working independently or as a member of a team?
 - b) Give an example when you were part of a team, and what was your role in the team?
 - c) What do you enjoy about teamwork?
 - d) Have you experienced disagreement among team members? What would you do if you did?
12. Together what does Everyone Achieve?
13. a) Describe one team to which you belong or have belonged in the past. b) How many people on this team? c) What is (was) the team's goal? d) What was your role(s) on this team?