

Describing the Impacts of Group Work on Leadership Traits

Julia L. Ford & Dr. Jessica M. Toombs

California State University, Chico

Introduction

- Group assignments are commonly seen as a leadership training method in secondary education
- Group work provides the opportunity to experience what leadership qualities work in a specific setting
- The benefits of working with others taps into the students' natural motivations to communicate with their peers while benefiting from the strengths and knowledge of fellow team members (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012)
- Using functional leadership, team effectiveness is derived from the actions and attitudes of individual members (Zaccaro et al., 2001)

Findings

- Team members reported moderate to full contribution to the team in all components
- The similarities in scoring show that the experience strengthened all members' abilities in identified components of teamwork
- Standard deviation ranged from 0.36 to 0.83



Context of Study

- Chico State Field Day hosts over 20 different Career Development Event competitions
- Attended by over 1,000 SBAE students
- Field Day Leadership Team is selected from Chico State undergraduate students representing a wide range of majors
- Team is divided into eight different committees, all assigned specific tasks to complete by the event date
- Assess the contribution and leadership growth of team members from 2023 and 2024
- Describe the means and standard deviations of the participants contributions and growth in identified variables
- To compare the analyzed data from each year
- Compare and contrast the average of the findings by each year



Procedures

- Participants were asked to rank their contributions to the team and their perceptions of strengthened abilities as a result of their committee work
- Members of the leadership team were given an electronic instrument to self-reflect about their contributions the following week to the event concluding
- 93% of the members completed the evaluation in 2023
- 87% of the members completed the evaluation in 2024
- The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics



	2023 (n = 33)		2024 (n = 24)		Overall (n = 57)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Contributions to the Team*						
Adaptability	3.85	0.36	3.79	0.51	3.82	0.43
Coachability	3.67	0.48	3.79	0.51	3.72	0.49
Equitable Work	3.73	0.52	3.63	0.58	3.68	0.54
Determinism	3.85	0.36	3.75	0.44	3.81	0.40
Inclusiveness	3.85	0.36	3.92	0.41	3.88	0.38
Communication	3.85	0.36	3.63	0.49	3.75	0.43
Strengthened Abilities*						
Adaptability	4.48	0.80	4.63	0.49	4.54	0.68
Coachability	4.39	0.83	4.42	0.58	4.40	0.73
Equitable Work	4.48	0.83	4.33	0.56	4.42	0.73
Determinism	4.52	0.83	4.46	0.59	4.49	0.73
Inclusiveness	4.58	0.79	4.58	0.50	4.58	0.68
Communication	4.55	0.79	4.50	0.59	4.53	0.71

Note: * = Items on a 4-point scale. + = Items on a 5-point scale.



Conclusion

- The standard deviations were relatively low, indicating a tight range of scores
- All means reflected a high point for each scale
- Members reported both contribution to the success of the team, along with improving their own leadership skills
- The outcomes from 2023 influenced the committee structure and decrease in team size for 2024
- Educators are recommended to ensure group work tasks are relevant to the members and create more benefit for the team members
- It is recommended to continue further replication to evaluate the leadership development and growth of future teams