

Collaboration Skills

- Key business skill in the twenty-first century
- Distributed collaborative teams
 - becoming increasingly common
- Collaboration skills help project teams
 - become more productive
 - do better work
 - waste less time.

Collaboration

- Collaboration
 - Two or more people
 - Working together
 - Toward common goal, result, or product
- Requires:
 - Communicating
 - Sharing Information / Knowledge / Time
 - Combining Skills

Feedback & Iteration

Step 1 – One person produces something
Step 2 – Others review and comment
Step 3 – If changes needed, make changes
Step 4 – If changes made, go to Step 2; otherwise stop

- Remember:
 - collaboration takes several weeks, not a few hours or days
 - takes time to create a collaborative team

Collaboration

- Communication
 - Two key elements:
 - Communication skills and group member abilities
 - Availability of effective communication systems
- Content management
 - Changes: Who, What, When, Why
 - Privileges to create, edit, delete, and read-only
- Workflow control
 - Specifies order of tasks, processes for handling rejected changes and dealing with exceptions
 - Often not needed for one-time, short-term project

Effective Team

- A team:
 - small number of people
 - complementary skills
 - committed to a common purpose, goals, and approach
 - hold themselves mutually accountable

Effective Team

R. Hackman's (Harvard professor) three characteristics of team effectiveness:

1. Accomplish goals and objectives that satisfy sponsors and clients
2. Over time, working together is easier and more effective
3. Members learn and feel fulfilled

Effective Collaboration Skills

Team member behavior influenced by:

- Natural skills and abilities
- Childhood formative environment
- Past team experiences
- Attitude (and skill) of team leader
- Nature of the work
- Member's interests and abilities

Improve Your Collaboration Skills

- Show up . . . get involved
- Assess yourself
- Try new behaviors . . . and watch what happens
- Remember 3 characteristics of team effectiveness
- Engage in productive conflict
- Ask for feedback and listen to it
- Keep at it

Information Systems for Collaboration

- Makes things easier
 - Not necessary to meet face-to-face
 - Easier to track progress
 - Ability to track individual contributions
- Facilitates Communication: Meeting, Verbal, Written
- Creates better results
- (Marketable skill)

Information Systems Improve Team Communication

- Create groups (MS Office Outlook)
- Conference calls/multiparty chat
- Discussion forums
- Team surveys
- Virtual meetings
- Videoconferencing
- Email

Synchronous		Asynchronous
Shared calendars Invitation and attendance		
Single location	Multiple locations	Single or multiple locations
Office applications such as Word and PowerPoint	Conference calls Multiparty text chat Microsoft Groove Videoconferencing	Email Discussion forums Team surveys

Virtual meetings

IS Support for Communication

- E-mail
 - Electronic mail
 - Internet based on SMTP
 - Examples
 - MS Outlook, Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail, ...
- Instant
 - Real time communication
 - Text messages over the internet (cell phones)
 - Examples
 - Yahoo! Messenger, Skype, Facebook, MySpace, ...
 - [Live Messenger](#)

IS Support for Communication

- Phone
 - Conference calls
 - People connected on one phone call
- VOIP ([Voice over IP](#))
 - Digital Telecommunications over the Internet

IS Support for Collaboration

- Wiki
 - Shared knowledge management (collaborative website)
 - Repository of team knowledge (maintained by users)
 - System tracks creator and date of creation.
 - Affordable and effective
- Example:
 - [Wikipedia](#), [Wiktionary](#), [Wikibooks](#)
 - WebCT [Wiki](#)

IS Support for Collaboration

- Team portals
 - Website publishing team’s activities
- Contains:
 - Schedules, calendars
 - Links to websites
 - Access to Information Systems
- Example
 - [MicroSoft Sharepoint](#)

Collaboration Systems to Manage Content

- Three categories of content management and IT for sharing content: no control, version tracking, and version management.

Alternatives for Sharing Content		
No Control	Version Management	Version Control
Email with attachments Shared files on a server	Wikis Google Docs & Spreadsheets Microsoft Groove	Microsoft SharePoint



Version Control: Shared Content

- Each team member is given an account with a set of permissions
- “Libraries” permissions
 1. Read only
 2. Read and edit
 3. Read, edit, delete
 4. No permission to see
- Checking out documents prevents others from editing that document until it is checked back in

Information Systems for Content Management

- Configuration management systems
 - Process to control & tracks changes
 - Version management software, controls electronic versions of documents, designs, software and plans
- Examples:
 - [CVS](#)
 - [Subversion](#)
 - [Microsoft SharePoint](#)
 - [MasterControl](#)
 - [Document Locator](#)

Information Systems for Workflow Control

- Workflow control systems
 - Monitor team's processes
 - Ensures actions taken in proper order
- Knowledge management systems
 - Resource sharing system
 - Store and facilitate sharing knowledge

Information Systems for Project Management

- Team portals
 - share plans, calendars & schedules
- [Project management systems](#)
 - Schedules tasks & resources
- Databases
 - Track important issues and results

Relationship between Customers and Business

- Social media connect people, and when people get connected they talk, share, and let friends know what they think about the world
- When instant messaging (IM), web logs (blogs), wikis, video logs, podcasts, and social networking (SN) sites first became popular, many business organizations responded by simply passing them by
- Social media is changing the way small business connects with its customers and that is a message that businesses everywhere are listening to