

*SEN-SRN Conversion Course*  
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Study Skills Module

# Studying & Working in Groups



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# Lecture Overview

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- 📄 Definition of groups
- 📄 Group size and composition
- 📄 Why join groups?
- 📄 Group leadership
- 📄 Benefits of group work
- 📄 Useful hints to succeed
- 📄 Group meeting process
- 📄 Conclusion



# Definition of Groups

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**A group is a collection of individuals who share a common set of norms, who generally have differentiated roles among themselves, and who interact with one another to jointly pursue common goals.**

N.B. Norms are informal rules of behaviour shared and enforced by group members



# Group size and composition

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📄 Most effective: *5 to 7 members*

📄 *Problems with larger groups:*

- Members will contribute less of own potential
- Low satisfaction
- Higher absenteeism & turnover

📄 *Requisites:* Members should be:

- Taking the same course
- Able to avail themselves to meet on agreed time, on regular basis (feasible venue, compatible etc.)

# Why join groups?

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1. ***Security***: Groups provide social support
2. ***Proximity***: Because they are located together
3. ***Group goals***: To pursue goals that cannot be accomplished alone
4. ***Economics***: To pursue economic interest
5. ***Social needs***: Need to belong or be needed, or want to lead
6. ***Self-esteem needs***: To increase confidence

# Group Leadership

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## *Nominate a leader*

- Who can motivate
- Has team building skills
- Adopts a participative style not Dictatorship



## *Main Responsibility:*

- **To influence group processes towards the attainment of the group's set objectives**

# Benefits of Group Work

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**May be costly in terms of time and energy but .....**

- 📄 Greater strength in group than individual
- 📄 Provides mutual support, keeps up revision momentum
- 📄 Help gain understanding of obscure areas
- 📄 Enhance better decisions through brainstorming, discussions, expertise etc.
- 📄 Provide support and discussion of problems
- 📄 Could share resources
- 📄 Ideal for brainstorm approaches to exam questions

## **Benefits (Cont'd)**

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*Groups can provide learning opportunities by increasing:*


- 1. Individual skills and abilities*
- 2. The range of resources available*
- 3. Ability to function effectively as a group in changed circumstances*





# Few guidelines to ensure success (1)

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 **Nominate Chair:** To ensure correct method and foster co-operation within group

 **Agenda:** This should be prepared before every meeting, with individuals identified to brief others regarding reading or answers

 **All members** should do their assigned task before meeting

 **Each member** should understand the whole problem/assignment and how to contribute in solving the problem

## Few guidelines to ensure success (2)

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- 📄 ***Participation:*** This should be encouraged. A ‘silly’ suggestion could become the solution
- 📄 ***Recognise others’ problems:*** Individual needs should be put aside to meet group goals
- 📄 ***Everybody should be given adequate time*** to express himself but avoid idle talk, or excess ‘air time’
- 📄 ***Supportive atmosphere:*** trust, honesty, easy, relaxed, sense of belonging, self identification
- 📄 ***Promote Innovation and Creativity:*** involves taking risks. Successful team depends on performance

# Group Meeting Process

- 📄 Group meeting *should cover all the reports* planned
- 📄 Each person's presentation: *so good to teach others*
- 📄 *Time to discuss* and question each presentation, all members to jot important notes
- 📄 At the end of session: Spare 5 minutes to *discuss method and ways to ameliorate* process
- 📄 Final step: *Prepare agenda* for next group meeting and *assign tasks*
- 📄 Finally: *Reward yourself, socialise*



# Conclusion

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## *Common Belief:*

~~Students are in direct competition with each other as if only a certain number of marks have to be divided~~



## *Truth:*

If you work **with** others you will do better than working against them.

**TRY IT...IT WORKS!!**