

Get the Right Team!

Teams can make or break a project. Some teams **gel** instantly and achieve great things, where others **flop**. So what makes a good team? In the 1970s, Dr. Meredith Belbin observed a number of teams to find out. He identified what separates unsuccessful groups from successful ones. In successful groups, the different team-members adopt one of nine different roles.

The Roles:

The Plant is a **creative** individual who solves problems in **unconventional** ways.

The Monitor Evaluator analyzes options and makes impartial judgements on the practicality of ideas put forward.

The Coordinator is good at focusing on the **objective**, and can **delegate** work appropriately.

The Resource-Investigator is good at reviewing information beyond the focus of the team's work.

Implementers are **practical**. They can plan strategies and carry them out efficiently.

As the project nears completion, Completer Finishers have the patience to **scrutinize** it for errors.

Team workers create a **harmonious** team atmosphere, keeping relationships within the team positive.

Shapers **thrive** on pressure. Their **passion** drives the team forward.

Finally the Specialist provides **in-depth** knowledge of one particular subject.

creative



scrutinize



Reading

2 Listen and read this magazine article about teams. Then, choose the correct answers. What roles can be adopted by members of successful groups? Tell the class.

- Which team-member is most likely to discover helpful information for a project?

A a Team worker C a Resource-Investigator
B a Coordinator D a Shaper
- According to the article, which of the following is NOT true?

A Team workers have good relationships with others.
B Plants are good at coming up with ideas.
C Coordinators have strong opinions and feelings.
D Completer-Finishers are good at finding mistakes.
- What can be inferred about Dr. Belbin?

A He was a Resource-Investigator.
B He studied groups for almost a decade.
C He observed groups that were not successful.
D He saw the nine roles in his own research team.

Vocabulary

3 Write a word that is similar in meaning to the underlined part.

- A good team is friendly and works well together.
_ a _ m _ _ _ _ u s
- Yolanda does her job quickly and well.
e _ _ _ c _ _ _ t _ _
- This project is going to be a disaster.
_ l _ _
- Be concerned with facts, not feelings.
_ _ j _ _ t _ _ _
- Ms. Kent's methods are unusual, but successful.
_ n _ _ _ v _ _ t _ _ _ a _
- A manager must learn to give work to other people.
_ e _ _ g _ _ _
- Paul is able to find possible solutions to problems.
_ r _ _ t _ _ _ l

Get ready!

1 Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

- What type of people work well in groups? What type of people do not?
- Describe a group project you were involved in that did not go well. What happened?

4 Read the sentence pairs. Choose where the words best fit in the blanks.

1 creative / in-depth

John has _____ knowledge of music.
Sally is _____ and enjoys painting and writing.

2 scrutinize / gel

_____ this document for errors.
A team needs the right people in order to _____.

3 strategy / passion

Helen has a strong _____ for making music.
Develop a _____ for us to save money.

4 review / thrive

Some people _____ under pressure.
Roger will _____ all the current documents.

Listening

5 Listen to a conversation between managers. Mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- 1 ___ The managers' previous project was successful.
- 2 ___ The man believes the group needs multiple coordinators.
- 3 ___ The woman suggests a team member based on his previous creative work

6 Listen again and complete the conversation.

Manager 1: I guess that's 1 _____. We need someone who takes charge. A coordinator.

Manager 2: I agree. But we 2 _____. We don't need two people arguing over what to do next.

Manager 1: Good call. Let's use Erica.

Manager 2: But Erica tends to be too focused on planning, don't you think?

Manager 1: So we'll 3 _____ someone who can get work done fast.

Manager 2: 4 _____. What do you think of Robert? He's pretty efficient.

Manager 1: I like him as an implementer, yes. So we have a leader and a hard worker – what else do we need?

Manager 2: 5 _____ a plan. Somebody creative. Our client wants a really attractive page.

Manager 1: You know, Bruce has designed some beautiful pages.

Speaking

7 With a partner, act out the roles below, based on the dialogue from Task 6. Then switch roles.

USE LANGUAGE SUCH AS:

We need to choose our team carefully.

Let's talk about personality types and roles.

We need someone who ...

Student A: You are trying to put together a team. Talk to Student B about:

- roles
- personality types
- project needs

Student B: Talk to Student A about the team and suggest members. Make up some team members details.

Writing

8 You are a project manager. Write a memo to your company manager stating who you want in your team (100-120 words). Make up the managers' personal details. Talk about:

- How many people you want
- Which skills are important for your project
- Who you want in your team and why