

Equipped for the Future Cooperate With Others Performance Continuum

PERFORMANCE LEVEL 1

Cooperate with Others

How adults at Level 1 Cooperate with Others:

- Interact with others in ways that are friendly, courteous and tactful and that demonstrate respect for others' ideas, opinions and contributions.
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions.
- Offer clear input on own interests and attitudes so others can understand one's actions and reactions.
- Try to adjust one's actions to take into account the needs of others and/or the task to be accomplished.

Level 1 Indicators

Use Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies

Adults performing at Level 1 can:

- Demonstrate some basic understanding of cooperation as a process of “doing my share”, “being polite”, and balancing giving input with seeking input in interactions with others
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions by use of some simple strategies such as “taking turns”, asking questions, waiting for and attending (demonstrating that one is paying close attention) to responses
- Offer some input when asked, using eye contact and/or other elements of body language, giving some information and expressing some opinions as appropriate to help others understand one's actions and reactions
- Define the goal of the cooperative activity and take some simple actions based on the input of all members of the group

Show Fluency, Independence, and Ability to Perform in a Range of Settings

Adults performing at Level 1 can cooperate with others, with noticeable effort and aided by significant outside prompting and direction, to accomplish very simple, well defined and highly structured tasks in a few comfortable and familiar settings

Level 1 Examples of Proficient Performance

Adults performing at Level 1 can Cooperate with Others to accomplish a variety of goals, such as:

- Agree on and write sentences to be included in a short oral presentation
- Figure out how to play an unfamiliar computer game
- Create a simple book to read to young children at home
- Create posters illustrating appropriate and inappropriate clothing for a job interview

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PERFORMANCE LEVEL 2

Cooperate with Others

How adults at Level 1 Cooperate with Others:

- Interact with others in ways that are friendly, courteous and tactful and that demonstrate respect for others' ideas, opinions and contributions.
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions.
- Offer clear input on own interests and attitudes so others can understand one's actions and reactions.
- Try to adjust one's actions to take into account the needs of others and/or the task to be accomplished.

Level 2 Indicators

Use Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies

Adults performing at Level 2 can:

- Demonstrate understanding of cooperation as a process of balancing personal initiative and "helping out" with willingness to defer to and encourage the participation of others; some basic understanding of group process and negotiation of goals and groundrules for cooperative efforts; and some awareness of cultural protocols
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions by use of strategies such as eye contact and body language to indicate attending, encouragement, agreement and acceptance; asking for information, suggestions and opinions; questioning to clarify meaning and intent; and restatement to confirm accurate understanding of the input of others
- Offer input clarifying one's own position as well as reflecting on the positions of others and on progress being made in cooperative work, by use of such strategies as giving information, suggestions and opinions and repeating and confirming that input as necessary
- Define the goal for cooperating, and prioritize and take some simple actions based on the negotiated agreement of all

Show Fluency, Independence, and Ability to Perform in a Range of Settings

Adults performing at Level 2 can Cooperate with Others with effort and with some initial assistance from outside the group, but taking some initiative and being guided by group members, to accomplish simple, well defined tasks in a range of comfortable and familiar settings

Level 2 Examples of Proficient Performance

Adults performing at Level 2 can Cooperate with Others to accomplish a variety of goals, such as:

- Plan and prepare for a short recognition ceremony
- Check in a shipment of recently-ordered office supplies
- Agree on rules for use of computers
- Agree on contents and produce a catalogue of infant/toddler/preschool items
- Plan and carry out 2 different parent/child activities during PACT time
- Agree on a set of classroom groundrules

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PERFORMANCE LEVEL 3

Cooperate with Others

How adults at Level 3 Cooperate with Others:

- Interact with others in ways that are friendly, courteous and tactful and that demonstrate respect for others' ideas, opinions and contributions.
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions.
- Offer clear input on own interests and attitudes so others can understand one's actions and reactions.
- Try to adjust one's actions to take into account the needs of others and/or the task to be accomplished.

Level 3 Indicators

Use Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies

Adults performing at Level 3 can:

- Demonstrate understanding of key components of cooperation necessary to complete a task, such as playing assigned role within a group; self-awareness and self-monitoring of cooperative behaviors; empathy, negotiation and compromise; awareness of group dynamics and the varied roles of group members; and understanding of the appropriate role of leadership in a cooperative group setting.
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions by use of strategies such as asking for, attending to, and repeating information, opinions, suggestions and direction from others, and summarizing others' contributions to confirm acceptance and understanding of their input
- Offer input clarifying one's own position by use of a range of strategies such as appropriate initiation and termination of interactions, statement of information, opinions, suggestions and direction; restatement, explanation and use of examples; and rewarding (with positive verbal comments or nonverbal expressions) the input of others as appropriate
- Identify the goal of cooperation, play an agreed-upon role, monitor one's own positions and behaviors, and adjust them as necessary to assist the group in evaluating, prioritizing and taking cooperative actions

Show Fluency, Independence, and Ability to Perform in a Range of Settings

Adults performing at Level 3 can Cooperate with Others with little effort, taking initiative and maintaining focus with minimal assistance from outside the group, to accomplish well defined but fairly complex tasks in a range of comfortable and familiar settings

Level 3 Examples of Proficient Performance

Adults performing at Level 3 can Cooperate with Others to accomplish a variety of goals, such as:

- Agree on and carry out learning activities for a class session
- Agree on and make scale drawings of the selection and placement of furnishings in a group activity room
- Develop a group role play so that participants can practice buying and selling clothing
- Discuss and create questions about affordable housing, and then plan group members' participation in an interactive presentation on the subject
- Collaboratively compose a letter of thanks to a local business for its financial support
- Collaboratively compose letters to legislators concerning cuts in Even Start funding

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PERFORMANCE LEVEL 4

Cooperate with Others

How adults at Level 4 Cooperate with Others:

- Interact with others in ways that are friendly, courteous and tactful and that demonstrate respect for others' ideas, opinions and contributions.
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions.
- Offer clear input on own interests and attitudes so others can understand one's actions and reactions.
- Try to adjust one's actions to take into account the needs of others and/or the task to be accomplished.

Level 4 Indicators

Use Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies

Adults performing at Level 4 can:

- Demonstrate understanding of most key components of cooperation necessary to complete a task, such as contributing to group consensus, maintaining awareness of needs of others, and balancing personal assertiveness with respect for the positions of others
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions by use of strategies such as asking for and attending to information, opinions, analyses, suggestions and direction; respectfully confronting and requesting change in behavior in uncooperative group members; using humor to release tension; and summarizing others' positions to confirm acceptance and understanding of their contributions
- Offer input using a range of strategies such as appropriately initiating and terminating interactions; giving information, analyses, suggestions and direction; stating and moderating opinions in order to contribute to consensus; praising the efforts of others; and choosing words and tone of voice based on desire to be both straightforward and polite
- Identify, and balance one's own motivations with, the goal for cooperating, monitor one's own positions and behaviors, and adjust them as necessary to assist the group in evaluating, prioritizing and taking cooperative actions

Show Fluency, Independence, and Ability to Perform in a Range of Settings

Adults performing at Level 4 can Cooperate with Others with comfort, ease, patience and little hesitation, often taking leadership in cooperative efforts without assistance from outside the group, to accomplish complex tasks with little structure or definition in a range of comfortable and familiar settings

Level 4 Examples of Proficient Performance

Adults performing at Level 4 can Cooperate with Others to accomplish a variety of goals, such as:

- Plan and create a yearbook for a community education program
- Develop a set of math games to use at a Family Fun Night at school
- Research and present (in multiple formats) information on the ingredients and nutritional value of selected snacks/fast food

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PERFORMANCE LEVEL 5

Cooperate with Others

How adults at Level 5 Cooperate with Others:

- Interact with others in ways that are friendly, courteous and tactful and that demonstrate respect for others' ideas, opinions and contributions.
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions.
- Offer clear input on own interests and attitudes so others can understand one's actions and reactions.
- Try to adjust one's actions to take into account the needs of others and/or the task to be accomplished.

Level 5 Examples of Proficient Performance

Use Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies

Adults performing at Level 5 can:

- Demonstrate understanding of complex components of cooperation necessary to complete a task, such as balancing the participation of all group members; interdependence (balancing individual motivations of self and others with common goals for cooperating, and relying on others to achieve group goals); synthesis of multiple opinions; mediation of conflict in order to facilitate group consensus; and applying prior experience with cooperative work to the current task
- Seek input from others in order to understand their actions and reactions by use of strategies such as asking for, attending to and consistently summarizing and confirming information, analyses, evaluations and suggestions of others; interpreting/integrating the opinions of others; asking others to express their feelings and showing accurate understanding of those feelings; and releasing tension through humor or other positive means
- Offer input using a wide range of strategies such as appropriately initiating and terminating interactions; giving information, analyses, evaluations and suggestions; self-disclosing feelings and potentially unpopular opinions; respectfully praising or confronting group members as appropriate, moderating opinions or politely refusing to do so as appropriate, and admitting shortcomings and accepting constructive criticism as appropriate, in order to contribute to consensus
- Identify the goal for cooperating, play agreed-upon role in cooperative effort, monitor one's own speech, behaviors and positions, predict and understand the likely responses of others, and adjust speech/ behaviors/ positions as necessary to assist the group in evaluating, prioritizing and taking cooperative actions

Show Fluency, Independence, and Ability to Perform in a Range of Settings

Adults performing at Level 5 can Cooperate with Others with comfort, ease, patience, flexibility and no hesitation, independently initiating and facilitating cooperative efforts, to accomplish a range of complex tasks in comfortable and familiar as well as some unfamiliar settings

Level 5 Examples of Proficient Performance

Adults performing at Level 5 can Cooperate with Others to accomplish a variety of goals, such as:

- Explore issues and come to agreement regarding placement of a child in a bilingual education program
- Use information from current event editorials and the standard format for test items to create a "mock GED exam"

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How to Read the EFF Performance Continuum for *Cooperate with Others*

Each performance level of the EFF Performance Continuum for each EFF Standard is divided into four sections:

Section 1: The Definition of the Standard

Section 1 is the definition of the Standard. The definition of the standard in the components of performance is a useful tool for communicating to adult learners and their teachers the essential features of the construct for each standard. By “unmasking the construct” in this way (making it clear how the skills of cooperating with others are defined), adult learners are better able to articulate their own learning goals for improving proficiency and teachers are better able to focus learning and instructional activities that build toward the goal of increasing ability to Cooperate with Others to accomplish everyday activities.

The definition of the EFF Standard Cooperate with Others is repeated in the same form at each level of the continuum. This repetition serves as a reminder that the integrated skill process defined by the components of performance for this standard is constant across all levels, from novice to expert levels of performance. Thus, the standard does not change from level to level. It remains a consistent focal point for learning and instruction. What changes from level to level is the growth and complexity of the underlying knowledge base and the resulting increases in fluency and independence in using the standard to accomplish an increasing range and variety of tasks. These changes are reflected in the descriptions of key knowledge, skills, and strategies at each level (Section 2); descriptions of fluent and independent performance in a range of settings at each level (Section 3); and the examples of real-world activities that can be accomplished at each level (Section 4).

Section 2: Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies

Section 2 of the performance continuum for Cooperate with Others contains descriptions of some of the key knowledge, skills, and strategies that form the basis for proficient performance on the standard at each level. This listing of key knowledge, skills, and strategies is specific to each level and is the foundation for designing assessments to measure performance at that level. Beyond serving as guide for assessment development, the key knowledge, skills, and strategies described at each performance level can also be used to identify instructional objectives or can be included in the criteria used for placement of learners in instructional levels.

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Cooperate With Others Performance Continuum

Knowledge about the Process of Cooperation

The first bullet under Key Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies related to ability to Cooperate with Others addresses behaviors that demonstrate some level of conceptual understanding of “cooperation” as a dynamic process by which a group of individuals can work together to achieve a common goal. At level 1, that understanding is basic and rudimentary, but sufficient to enable participants in a group to accomplish very simple, highly structured cooperative tasks. Through verbal and non-verbal communication, and by means of other observable behaviors, learners at level 1 exhibit this kind of basic understanding: “We want to do something together, so I need to do my share and be polite to others who are trying to do their share so that we can get this thing done.”

Development along the Continuum of Performance is marked by an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the complexities involved in the process of cooperation. That evolving understanding includes such elements as the level and quality of participation by individuals; the level of willingness among individuals to play expected roles and to rely on others to do the same; and the ability to integrate the positions and expertise of all participants. Thus, as learners move toward level 5, they increasingly appreciate cooperation as an effort that takes into account the challenges of balancing and integrating multiple motivations for cooperating and multiple, often divergent positions on the best course of action. At level 5, their communications and interactions reflect this deeper understanding: “We want to do something together. To be successful we will need everyone to contribute in some way. So we will need to listen to and respect everyone’s opinions even if we don’t agree with them, and understand what each person wants to get out of this, even if those things are different. That way we can figure out together what each of us can contribute. And if each of us feels respected and heard, we’ll be able to rely on each other to do what we say we’ll do. And if we don’t agree about something really important, we’ll need to find some way to resolve our differences so that we can move on together and reach our common goal.”

As learners engaged in a cooperative activity demonstrate at first basic, and then increasingly sophisticated knowledge about the process of cooperating, it becomes possible for them to hold similar schemas related to the goals and most effective process for cooperation. And their ability to cooperate with each other is likely to be sharpened when they can accurately describe, and find agreement in, each others’ schemas.

Strategic Knowledge for Communication, Consensus-Building and Teamwork

Shared understanding of, and similarity in schemas among learners in a cooperative group requires them to be able to externally represent and communicate their schema. And that brings us to the second and third bulleted categories under Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies at each level of Cooperate with Others. We treat these bullets together, as they collectively address the give-and-take process of

- proactively eliciting the input of others in order to understand their opinions and what they can contribute toward reaching the goal of cooperating, and
- willingly providing one’s own input so that others can do the same.

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In its most basic interpretation, development along the continuum is characterized by movement from communication/representation with the goal that everyone understands everyone else's input, toward communication/representation with the goal of effective synthesis of multiple positions, negotiation of conflict, and risk-taking that leads to a consensus position. But there are also some other key indicators of effective cooperation that are enabled by clear communication/representation of schema and so merit additional attention as we look at these second and third bullets together.

Behaviors that relate to the quality of "teamwork" among learners in a cooperative group appear in the second and third bullets and develop across the EFF continuum from novice toward expertise in Cooperating with Others. So these bullets refer not only to communication with the goal of finding "common ground", but to the quality of participation in the process of consensus-building, when learners are attempting to cooperate with each other. In developing expertise, learners in cooperative activities increase the range and sophistication of strategies they can call on to effectively engage in "team reinforcing behaviors" such as encouraging group members to work together, giving and seeking help, accepting constructive feedback, and offering positive support. Learners increase their ability to use these strategies flexibly and in combination. Moving toward level 5, individual participation becomes increasingly intentional and thoughtful, marked by more active and complex attention to others, and by increasing willingness to take initiative linked with decreasing tendency toward either domination or withdrawal in interactions.

Interdependence is another critical component of EFF's definition of the dynamic process of Cooperating with Others as described in the second and third bullets at each level of the continuum. Movement along the continuum is marked by an increasingly greater degree of willingness among individuals to rely on other group members (when seeking input) on the one hand, and the level of each individual's ability to perform acceptably well (when providing input) on the other.

At the novice stage of development along the EFF continuum, the highly structured and directed process of "taking my turn" to offer input, and listening politely as each participant gets to do so, provides opportunities for participants to exhibit interdependence at a very basic level. Movement toward expertise along the continuum involves interdependence of an increasingly complex nature – willingly and reliably offering useful input in forms such as analysis, evaluation and opinions even when controversial; depending on, actively encouraging, and integrating the analyses, evaluations and controversial opinions of others; and doing all this in ways that are self-directed and that respect and support all participants. Development is marked by increasing strength of the group goal relative to individual motivations for cooperating, increasing willingness to take risks and negotiate differences, and an increasing sense of the importance of team, as opposed to individual, performance.

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Meeting the Need to Cooperate with Others

The fourth bullet under Knowledge, Skills, and Strategies used at each level of Cooperate with Others refers to behaviors that are largely enabled by the shared conceptual understanding, communication/consensus-building, and quality of teamwork discussed earlier. Here, the focus is on the ability to recognize the need for, and define the goal of, cooperation; on the individual's ability to play an appropriate role in the cooperative effort; and on the metacognitive functions of self-monitoring behaviors and adjusting those behaviors as necessary so that the cooperative effort will more likely be successful. Movement from novice toward expertise along the performance continuum is marked by the increasing need and ability to integrate individual positions and individual roles, and to adapt and change positions and role as necessary, in order to achieve the goal of cooperation.

Section 3: Fluency, Independence, and Ability to Perform in a Range of Settings

Section 3 is the description of fluency, independence, and ability to perform in a range of settings expected for proficient performance on the standard at each level. Like the description of key knowledge, skills, and strategies in Section 2, the descriptions in Section 3 are specific to each level and are intended to serve as a basis for guiding assessment, learning, and instruction that is appropriate to that level.

With regard to Cooperate with Others, a key feature of this section is the description of the sources and amounts of structure and direction guiding group interactions. At the novice level, performance is described in terms of very highly structured, externally (not from the learners in a cooperative group) defined activities. Further, these activities are supported by external (again, not from group participants) direction like direct questioning by a teacher, or by a highly structured process such as “taking turns”, which is designed to help minimize the effects of the learners' lack of comfort or familiarity with cooperative processes. In the movement toward expertise, performance is enacted in increasingly complex and less structured cooperative activities, depending less and less on guidance external to the cooperating learners. A growing level of comfort and familiarity allows learners at the upper levels to define, initiate, and ultimately facilitate processes for cooperation on their own.

Section 4: Examples of Proficient Performance

Section 4 of the performance level descriptions provides a short list of examples of the purposeful applications of the standard (activities) that can be accomplished by an adult who is proficient at each level. This list of examples is illustrative and not exhaustive. Like Sections 2 and 3, the descriptions of activities in Section 4 are specific to each performance level. These examples of things that adults can accomplish in the real world at each level of performance on the continuum are useful to adult learners and to their teachers as ways of making concrete the purpose and need for attaining increasing proficiency in performance on the standard. By making it clear what can be accomplished at each level, the descriptions of activities in Section 3 also provide motivation for higher levels of learning. The listing of real-world accomplishments also

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provides guidance for selecting and designing the content for instructional materials and assessments.

At level 1, learners are expected to cooperate with each other in the context of tasks that are very simple and feature a high level of externally-defined structure. They need to accept and include limited input of each group member in order to collect the parts of a simple product (like a very brief oral presentation) or define the steps of a simple process (like playing a simple computer game). Level 2 tasks are still fairly simple and externally defined, but require of learners some degree of initiation and ongoing negotiation of the process of reaching the goal for cooperating. At levels 3 and 4, cooperative tasks become increasingly complex, external direction significantly decreases, and learners exhibit both increasing leadership capacity and greater willingness/ability to engage in team- and consensus-building processes necessary to complete the task. Finally, by level 5 the tasks are complex and designed to achieve fairly high-risk goals (like deciding whether or not to place a child in a bilingual education program); thus, they may engage learners with contentious issues and strong differences of opinion. Cooperation in achieving the goals of these tasks requires a high level of commitment to teamwork and consensus-building.

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Background to the EFF *Cooperate with Others* Performance Continuum

The EFF standard *Cooperate with Others*, one of the four interrelated and sometimes overlapping EFF standards that are categorized as “Interpersonal Skills”, highlights one domain of adult knowledge and skills that is critical for adults to be able to draw from in order to carry out their responsibilities in their roles as family members, workers, and citizens. In particular, cooperation is often cited by employers and practitioners in workforce development – along with such skills as problem-solving and leadership capacity – as a critical “behavioral skill” for successful and productive employees. And much of the research we have found related to adult cooperative behaviors (called by various names such as “teamwork” or “collaboration”, or in psychological terms, an aspect of “social intelligence”) has come from the workforce development field. Yet “cooperation” is not a skill that is often found in the traditional, academics-focused adult basic skills curriculum. So teaching and assessing cooperation in adult basic/literacy/ESOL education is a fairly new endeavor. That has made our job -- to develop a Performance Continuum for the standard that will support valid and reliable assessment of individual performance on the standard within a process of social interaction -- a challenging one, and our understanding of competent adult performance in cooperating with others continues to evolve.

The empirical basis for the five performance level descriptions for the Cooperate with Others Performance Continuum was data on adult learner performance collected by EFF field researchers who developed and piloted activities and performance tasks based on this EFF standard in their ABE, GED, and ESL classes. We are particularly grateful to the teachers and learners who “trod new ground” with this standard in order to provide rich descriptions of learner performance of the standard in their instructional contexts. Our current data does not support definitions of performance levels below or above the five levels we have described. In the future, research to support the description of higher performance levels or of “pre-Level 1” performance levels for more beginning level learners may be developed.

The EFF approach to defining performance levels for *Cooperate with Others* depends on a conception of cooperation as a dynamic results-oriented process that requires of each individual

- a shared conceptual understanding of the process of cooperating and of the demands of a cooperative task;
- willingness/ability to represent and communicate one’s knowledge, experience, and positions that may contribute to effective cooperative activity, and equal willingness/ability to integrate the representations and communications of other members of the cooperative group;
- consistent participation in team-reinforcing behaviors; and
- effective interdependence.

In addition to analysis of EFF field research data, we conducted a review of available research regarding cooperative behaviors in problem-solving and teamwork. In the background resources we studied, we found broad agreement that the development of cooperative proficiency is demonstrated through progressively more effective, fluent, and independent teamwork and collaborative problem-solving in increasingly demanding contexts.

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Underlying this conception of *cooperation* (and of all the EFF interpersonal skills) is a developmental perspective on changes in adults' sense of self/identity that result in increasingly complex ways of making meaning of, and interacting with the world. This perspective has been articulated in the research of Robert Kegan (Kegan, 1994; Kegan et al, 2001). Kegan's research identifies three progressive levels of identity and ways of knowing. We list them here with selected descriptors: Instrumental (where individuals self-define by personal self-interest, and concrete needs, purposes, and plans); Socializing (where individuals self-define by the opinions and expectations of others); and Self-Authoring (where individuals self-define by their own internal authority).

The Transformational Learning Project (Portnow et al, 1998) found that development from instrumental toward self-authoring behaviors is aided by participation in a learning cohort. The project identified specific developmental descriptions of the ways that adults work together. An Instrumental knower might cooperate by arguing or persuading others to agree to follow the rules. The Socializing knower seeks to build agreement and to minimize conflict. The Self-Authoring knower cooperates by compromising and ensuring that everyone's voice is heard, regardless of perspective. This developmental picture of movement toward a more complex and mature engagement in cooperative activity is reflected in the Performance Continuum for *Cooperate with Others*.

The following is a brief discussion of additional research that supports key elements of the EFF definition of *Cooperate with Others*.

Finding "Common Ground"

One important feature of behaviors that demonstrate developing understanding of cooperation is what McNeese and Rentsch call *team member schema similarity*. They argue that cooperation is likely to be enhanced when people's schemas (distillations of acquired knowledge and experiences that direct one's intents, activities, expectations and joint planning with others as to how to address an emerging situation) related to the goal for cooperating are similar. Conversely, lack of such "common ground" in the understanding of a situation may increase interpersonal conflict and lead to unintended consequences, faulty decisions, and erroneous action. Each participant in a cooperative activity has a schema, the individual's basis for assimilating and making sense of the cooperative situation and the way the individual organizes her/his thoughts about how cooperation works; that schema guides the individual's assumptions, expectations and behaviors regarding the process of working together with others in a cooperative enterprise.

Cooperation is enhanced, then, when

- the participants in a cooperative activity can accurately describe each others' schemas, and
- participants' schemas are similar – the greater the similarity, the more effective the cooperative efforts.

Promoting understanding and agreement of schemas in a cooperative group requires participants to externally represent and communicate their schema.

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Fostering Positive Team Interactions

In defining “interpersonal skills” as one of six categories of skills to be addressed when measuring teamwork processes, O’Neil (1995) discusses cooperative behaviors, or “team reinforcing behaviors” as indicators of the quality of team member interaction. He says, “Perhaps the most powerful index of team performance is the extent and character with which team members interact with each other.” He suggests that effective team member interaction will be marked by individuals engaging in such activities as encouraging each other to work together, helping to resolve dissent among team members, seeking help, giving help, making positive, motivating statements, praising others for a good job, and thanking others for catching mistakes.

In his work, O’Neil further suggests that members of effective teams foster team interdependence; that is, individuals exhibit commitment to team performance. They believe that each member is critical to the overall success of the team, and that helping others helps the team. They value team performance over individual performance, and view themselves as part of a team and not simply as individuals working together.

Interdependence

One of the great challenges of cooperative work is that individuals bring their individual motivations and goals to any task with a common goal. According to Bertcher (1994) in his treatment of group participation, the relative strength of individual goals compared to the group goal in a cooperative effort will affect both each individual’s motivation to cooperate and the overall success of cooperative efforts to achieve the group goal. Different motivations to meet a common goal mean that all participants need to be able to trust and depend on each participant’s interests and expertise. This is what we mean by interdependence, what O’Neil calls “commitment to team performance” – the degree of willingness among individuals to rely on other group members (when seeking input) on the one hand, and the level of each individual’s ability to perform acceptably well (when providing input) on the other.

Bertcher also argues that successful interdependence requires all participants to have fairly accurate role expectations for themselves and each other; in other words, “I need to behave in the ways that others expect, and I need to be able to predict the likely behaviors of others”. Further, participants in cooperative efforts need to be interdependent for performance of two different kinds of behaviors related to cooperation: task behaviors (related to what we need to do in order to achieve our goal) and socioemotional behaviors (related to what we need to do in order to maintain harmonious relations among us.)

In a discussion of interpersonal competencies that are critical to productivity in the workplace, O’Neil, along with Allred and Baker (1997) stress the importance of interdependence among members of work teams, and identify “integrative negotiation” as a key indicator of effective interdependence.. In other words, team interdependence will likely produce positive results

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(cooperation will be most effective) when each individual in the group engages in integrative negotiation, defined as the ability to

1. articulate the common goals and interdependence of group members;
2. communicate one's interests, values, knowledge, priorities underlying suggestions (does this mean something like hidden priorities underlying participant's suggestions- wasn't sure what this meant, opinions and decisions, as well as understand and appreciate such communications from others in the group; and
3. work with others in integrating the valuable information gained from this communication to generate creative solutions to problems.

Descriptions of behaviors much like those outlined in this key indicator of effective interdependence appear on the EFF Performance Continuum as signs of developing expertise in cooperating with others.

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Includes research articles looking at the dynamics of team activities in various task domains and based in the cognitive sciences.

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Reviews five theoretical frameworks of workforce readiness skills and identifies some common and sometimes overlapping features across those frameworks: higher order thinking skills, interpersonal skills, teamwork skills, problem solving skills, and conflict resolution skills.

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