

“Are We a Team?” Checklist

Facilitation Guide



Tool for

Performance Character



30 minutes



Educator-prep
Leader-prep

Materials

- "Are We a Team?" checklist

Making Connections

Principled Innovation asks us to work with others and recognize the limits of our own knowledge so that we can better understand and tackle the complex issues our communities face.

Connecting Character Assets:

[Reflection](#)
[Collaboration](#)

About this Guide

Teaching teams provide a key setting for developing Principled Innovation's Performance asset of collaboration. Use this activity to support both pre-service and in-service teachers in reflecting on important skills needed for successful collaboration in field experiences.

The Principled Innovation framework defines collaboration in the following way:

Collaboration is the act of working together toward a common goal.

Teacher teaming, in which teachers collaborate to collectively support and share responsibility for a group of students in a way that best maximizes each teacher's strengths, provides an opportunity to develop Principled Innovation in a learning community.

Employing the assets and practices of Principled Innovation within these settings support educators to **prototype innovative solutions** by engaging in team **reflection** on successes and failures, **perspective taking**, and **inclusive** behaviors. Through team collaboration, innovators can draw upon **multiple perspectives** and increased **cultural** and **systemic awareness** to **navigate uncertainty and mitigate unintended consequences**.

Many pre-service and in-service teachers, however, struggle to envision what successful team collaboration looks like. Use this checklist throughout the course of the year to help team members develop a clear, practical understanding of constructive team practice.

The checklist is not specific to teaching teams, allowing the practices described in the list to transfer to a wide range of team settings. Different from **a reflection on individual strengths for collaboration**, the “Are We a Team?” checklist approaches reflection on collaboration from a whole-team perspective.

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Instructions

1 Pre-teaming

As a group, at the beginning of the collaboration, have team members review the “Are We a Team?” checklist. In small groups, provide 10 minutes to discuss the statements that they think are most problematic in teams and why they believe that to be the case (be careful not to describe any potentially recognizable details in sharing prior experiences).

Explain that this checklist will be revisited mid-term and at end-of-term. Provide a copy of the checklist to all team members (both pre-service and in-service).

2 Mid-term

Halfway through the term, ask teachers to review the checklist and select one item which they think the team is doing well, and one item for improvement in the second half of the term. Identify one or two actionable ways in which the team can make progress toward improvement.

3 End-of-term

At the end of the term, have team members self-assess their own performance as team members on each of these points and identify one or two items to focus on for improvement in the next team setting.

“Are We a Team?” Checklist

- We all show equal commitment to our objective.
- We all take part in deciding how work should be allocated.
- We are committed to helping each other learn.
- We acknowledge good contributions from team members.
- We handle disagreements and conflicts constructively within the team.
- We are able to give constructive criticism to one another and to accept it ourselves.
- We all turn up to meetings and stay to the end.
- We are good at making sure that everyone knows what's going on.
- When one of us is under pressure, others offer to help him/her.
- We trust each other.
- We remain united even when we disagree.
- We support each other to outsiders.
- We feel comfortable and relaxed with one another.

Courtesy of "[Teamwork Skills: Being an Effective Group Member](#)" by [Centre for Teaching Excellence](#) at [University of Waterloo](#).