LEARNER GUIDE

Unit 11 – Working as A Team

RSAS Training Strategy Project 2018

Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS)

A message from our CEO, Sally Sinclair.

Dear colleague

Welcome to the NESA Remote School Attendance Strategy Training Project. We recognise the importance of the role that you are doing and we are committed to supporting you throughout this role with a range of training offerings.

We appreciate the positive impact of your role within your local community and the opportunities you create every day by supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to engage in school. We also understand that your role will be both rewarding and challenging, and we are confident that the training we are offering will assist you further in your role.

NESA's RSAS Training Strategy Project will involve a blended training approach that includes the following:

- Face-to-face forums with each forum running for three days in your local community

- Online training that will offer short courses that you are able to select

- Individual coaching and mentoring throughout your training

- The option to complete accredited units that will count towards a formal qualification

Our team are here to support you and we are available if you have any questions about this programme or the training you are completing. Our office number is (02) 9119 3090 and our email address is rsas@nesa.com.au. We are available Monday – Friday between 9.00-5.00pm (Sydney time) - please feel free to give us a call or pop us a line; we are more than happy to discuss any questions you may have.

We wish you all the best in this important role and we look forward to working with you throughout this project.

Yours sincerely

Sally Sinclair
CEO

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11

Developing our children and young people

Objectives

This unit explores the key meaning of team work and how this can be applied in a RSAS setting. Participants will learn how to implement the tools required to work together as a team to ensure the RSAS program is a success. The session is very interactive where participants will complete a series of individual and group activities, including role plays and case study discussions.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the unit, participants will be able to:
- Demonstrate strong understanding of team work and how this applies to a RSAS setting
- Identify the main aspects of team work and how these apply within their current team
- Understand the value of team work and how to maintain a healthy working team

Resources

The resources provided are a Learner Guide, Workbook and Trainer Guide.

This Learner Guide provides a resource to support the activities in the Unit 8 Workbook. It is designed to help trainers, RSAS officers and members of the community better understand how to work effectively with others.

 This icon represents action when an individual task needs to be completed. You will find instructions on how to complete these tasks in the Unit 11 Workbook

 This icon represents action when a task is to be completed as a group. You will find instructions on how to complete these tasks in the Unit 11 Workbook

Part 1: What makes a team?

If you have already completed *Unit 6: Working With Others,* you will understand that we work with a lot of different people in our role as a RSAS worker, but not all of them are on our team.

A team is a very special group of people. What makes them a team rather than just people who work together or play sport together is:

- They have a sense of group identity. Sports teams and some work teams wear uniforms as a way of showing this.
- They have common goals and work towards them. For example the goal of a sports team is always to win the match for their side.
- They depend on each other to achieve more than they could achieve alone.
- They have a leader whose role it is to keep the team working together. He or she assigns various jobs to members of the team, resolves any problems on the team and keeps everyone's eyes on what they need to achieve.
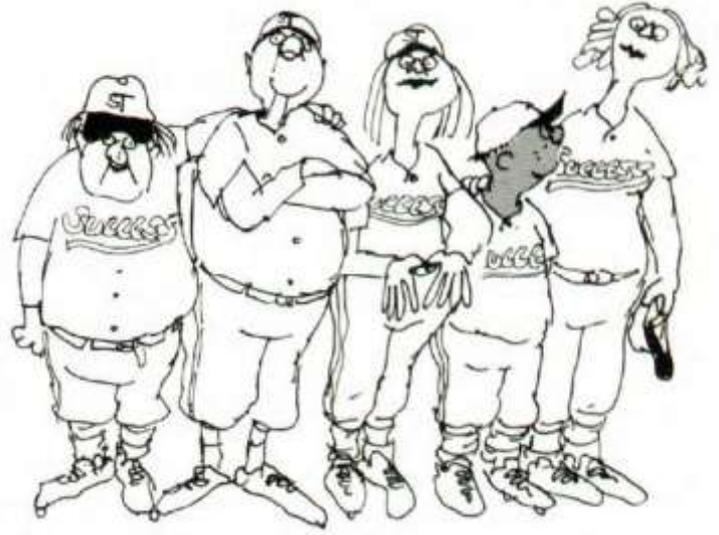
The role of the team leader is both challenging and rewarding. It is a topic in itself. While we do not cover it in this unit, it is discussed further in *Unit 8: Leadership*

What makes a team?

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11

Part 2: Teamwork

LET'S WORK TOGETHER
T E A M W O R K

designed by freepik.com

Is your RSAS team a new team, or have you been together for a while? And how well do you work together as a team?

Anyone who follows a team sport knows that becoming a winning team is not easy. It is the same for a work team. Winning teams need:

- A common goal that each team member understands

- Shared targets to achieve the goal. Unless we have targets, we don't know how far we have come.

- All members contributing to the workload

- The right resources and skills

- A system of communication set up to ensure that team members are talking to each other and are working towards the common goal. Communication may take different forms including emails, meetings, communication book etc. Interaction means the team can keep checking their progress towards the central goals.

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11

- A focus on the interests of the group as a whole, rather than "me" and "what I think".

- Mutual trust which means that members listen to each other, respect contributions, help each other to clarify ideas, and show interest in each other's views.

- Processes that ensure work runs smoothly so members know what they have to do and when.

Activity 1: Discussion

- What is the common goal of your RSAS team?
- How do you work as a team towards that goal?
- What are your targets?
- How do you communicate with each other to ensure you are meeting targets?

See The Unit 11 Workbook for instructions

Using Individual Strengths to Build a Team

Working as a team does not mean we all have to be the same. Tapping into the individual strengths of team members is important in your RSAS team, the same as it is in a sports team.

In the 1970s, Dr Meredith Belbin and his research team came up with a model for making the most of individual differences. He identified various ways that team members behave and called these "Team Roles"

Following are the nine roles Belbin discovered are common to effective teams. You will notice that every role has strengths and weaknesses. The weaknesses are said to be "allowable" because we are all human and everyone has some weaknesses that balance their strengths.

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11

PLANT (PL)

The first Team Role to be identified was the Plant. The role was called this because one individual was "planted" in each team.

Strengths: Creative, imaginative, free-thinking. Generates ideas and solves difficult problems.

Allowable Weaknesses: Ignores small things and detail. Too preoccupied to communicate effectively.

MONITOR EVALUATOR (ME)

The Monitor Evaluator is needed to provide a logical eye, make impartial judgements where required, and to weigh up the team's options in an unemotional way.

Strengths: Sees all options and judges accurately.

Allowable Weaknesses: Lacks drive and ability to inspire others. Can be overly critical.

CO-ORDINATOR (CO)

Co-ordinators are needed to focus on the team's objectives, draw out team members and delegate work appropriately.

Strengths: Mature, confident, identifies talent. Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively.

Allowable Weaknesses: Can be seen as manipulative. Offloads own share of work.

RESOURCE INVESTIGATOR (RI)

Resource Investigators provide inside knowledge on the opposition and make sure that the team's ideas are communicated outside the team.

Strengths: Outgoing, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores opportunities and develops contacts.

Allowable Weaknesses: Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.

IMPLEMENTER (IMP)

Implementers are needed to plan a practical, workable strategy and carry it out as efficiently as possible.

Strengths: Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work that needs to be done.

Allowable Weaknesses: Somewhat inflexible. Slow to respond to new possibilities.

COMPLETER FINISHER (CF)

Completer Finishers are most effectively used at the end of a task, to "polish" and scrutinise the work for errors.

Strengths: Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects.

Allowable Weaknesses: Inclined to worry unduly. Reluctant to delegate.

TEAMWORKER (TW)

Teamworkers help the team to gel, using their flexibility to identify the work required and complete it on behalf of the team.

Strengths: Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens and averts friction.

Allowable Weaknesses: Indecisive in crunch situations. Avoids confrontation.

SHAPER (SH)

Challenging individuals, known as Shapers, provide the necessary drive to ensure that the team keeps moving and does not lose focus or momentum.

Strengths: Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles.

Allowable Weaknesses: Prone to provocation. Offends people's feelings.

SPECIALIST (SP)

The value of an individual with in-depth knowledge of a key area is another essential team contribution.

Strengths: Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated. Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.

Allowable Weaknesses: Contributes only on a narrow front. Dwells on technicalities.

See more at: http://www.belbin.ie/the-nine-team-roles/#sthash.p5sbiubI.dpuf

Activity 2: Appreciating our differences

This is a fun activity where you can see if you can identify who in your team fits the Belbin Roles.

Use a flip chart and put the names beside each role with a note as to what that person is particularly good at doing.

See the Unit 11 Workbook for instructions

Activity 3: Scavenger Hunt

How well do you work as a team? Put your strengths into practice and find out …

Your trainer will give the team a list of items they need to locate and bring back. The ultimate goal is to find the most items on the list in a 15 minute period. Your trainer may give you some clues but it is up to you to use your individual creativity and strengths as a team member to get the job done in the time you have.
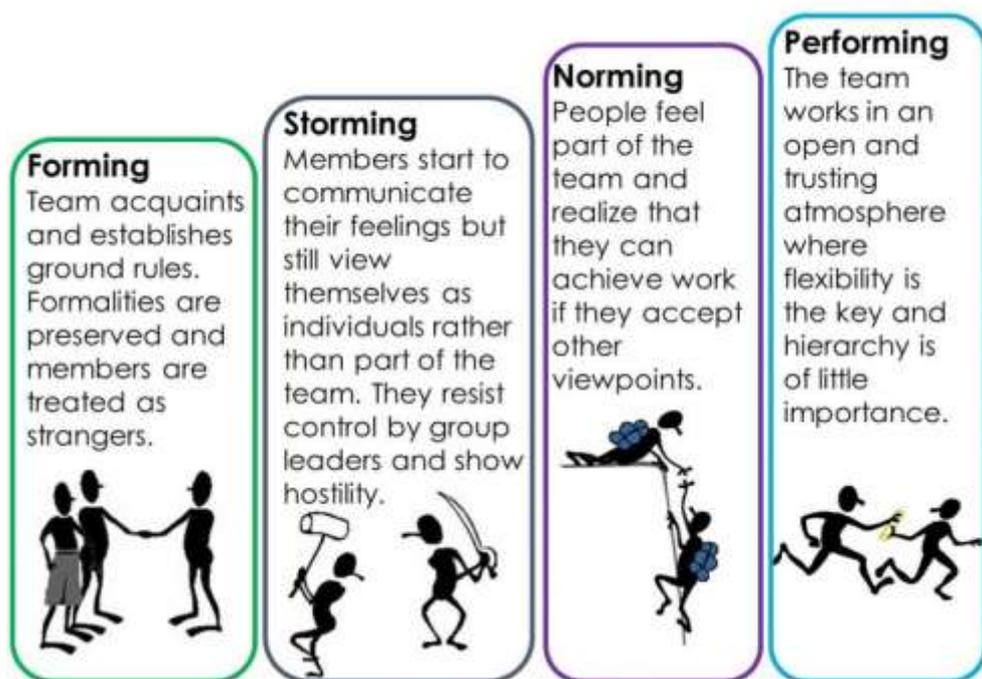

See the Unit 11 Workbook for instructions

Part 3: Maintaining a healthy team

Stages of Team Development

If you have completed *Unit 6: Working with Others* you may remember the stages of team development.

Forming

Forming is the beginning of any new team as new team members come together for the first time. As a new team, you will all look to see how other team members act, how they talk and what skills they bring to the team. At the same time this is happening a new team will start to set their new goals, new rules and set roles within the team.

Storming

As roles within a team start to be set it is quite common for team members to question their role or the role of other people on the team. For example a team member may want to work a part of project which is given to another team member. This can create confusion, jealousy and sometimes resentment.

Nobody likes bickering, and it is really important to be patient through this stage as team members can struggle with confidence and confusion.

Storming unfortunately is part of developing strong teams and can be worked through with good communication, good problem-solving processes, and good leadership.

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11

However, if it goes on too long, you may need to seek some help to move forward. Calling on a mentor or supervisor to come in may help. Team training also helps when the problem is lack of some key skills or a lack of good processes.

Norming

Norming is the stage where the roles of each team member is understood and the rules of the team are settled. The team itself will feel more coordinated as the team will know the direction it is taking and what their roles are. Norming could be described as becoming a bit more automatic in approach – you know what to do and how to do it.

Performing

This is a great place to be as a team. The team focuses entirely on the task and its completion. To reach this stage, team members need to communicate effectively and be willing to listen and negotiate.

Creating a Good Team Culture

Not all performing teams are the same. Every team is slightly different. They do things in a slightly different way. They communicate with each other differently. The expectations are different.

For example some teams like to tease each other and this is part of the team culture. Other teams are more serious.

Some teams are very social. They like to mix business with fun by celebrating birthdays, visiting each other out of work, and doing things together socially. Other teams are more focused on business and don't socialise much.

There is no right or wrong team culture, so long as the team works effectively together.

Activity 4: Your Dream Team - Discussion

Share your idea of a "dream team". You can use examples from TV, sport, or your own team.

Explain what you think makes a "dream team".

See the Unit 11 Workbook for instructions

Settling in a New Team Member

Every time someone leaves your team and someone new joins, you are forming a whole new team. This can be very disruptive unless it is handled well.

Your new member will need help to orientate to the new team:

- to understand the team culture
- their role in the team
- how other team members operate
- what is expected of them

There are many ways that team members can help them.

- Get to know your new team member and what their strengths are
- Make them feel welcome
- You can explain the team goals and how you work together
- Where you are up to in your targets
- Ask how they think they can help or what help they will need
- Set some standards for them and some clear processes to follow
- Follow up with them regularly in the first few weeks to see how they are settling in

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11

Activity 5: Scenario Role Play

Consider the following scenario.

Rosy joined the team a while ago.

The team had been working well until Rosy joined them, but every time they meet, Rosy has a complaint. She says she doesn't know what is happening. She complains that she is always left out. She doesn't like the decisions made and often says things like, "I'm not going to do that. You can if you want to." Sometimes she says nothing at all then goes and does her own thing.

Everyone is sick of it.

Step1: Discuss what you think might be the underlying problem. Should you ignore it or do something about it?

Step 2: Assuming you decide to do something, as a team decide the best way of getting the team back on track and out of the "storming" phase.

Step 3: Choose a spokesperson to speak to Rosy and someone who will volunteer to act the role of Rosy.

Step 4: Role Play the conversation you might have with this "difficult" team member using the SAFE[1] conversation format.

Having a *SAFE* conversation

*S*et a quiet time and place to talk

*A*sk questions to find out what might be wrong and listen to the answers.

*F*rame or draw a picture of the results of the conflict

*E*xplore options to solve the problem and explain what changes you would like to see

---

See the Unit 11 Workbook for instructions

---

[1] Shakiba, Eleanor, *Difficult People Made Easy,* 2016

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11

Part 4: Developing the team

Every team needs to continue developing to do a good job. Expectations change and we meet new challenges. This means no matter how good we are now, we need to continue working on ourselves and our team

Activity 6: Team development plan

- Identify all the skills that your team has.
- Beside them, make a list of skills you need for the challenges you are facing, but you don't already have.
- With the help of your trainer, put together a team development plan.

See the Unit 11 Workbook for instructions

Learning Guide: WORKING AS A TEAM, unit 11