Teamwork in Business and Academic Environments

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Abstract

This report assesses the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration or teamwork as it relates to both business and academic environments. The author explores teamwork as an instructional approach for cooperative or collaborative learning in academic settings and reflects on articles including *Effective top teams : Five strategies for success* (2002) by C. Mulrooney & J. Snow as it describes and evaluates the components and benefits of teamwork. Collaboration in business and educational environments promotes success through coordinating efforts.

Keywords : collaborative learning, cooperative learning, teamwork

1. Introduction : Establishing a Clear and Compelling Direction

Teamwork is an important part of both academic and employment environments. The success or failure of teamwork is determined by many factors. When each member of a team has clear vision of a goal, this provides security and helps preserve group unity. Individual efforts are based upon the concept of competition whereas groups work in unity for

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a single goal. Having vision and an understanding of this goal is essential for the group to have passion for the work. Having ambition or passion for the work is also important for motivation. Without work or the endeavors of the team nothing would be accomplished. Vision provides the focus for the team's endeavors and brings purpose to the ambitions of the group. A proper balance of vision and passion embedded in each team members' mind and manifested through the team's work are the characteristics of highly successful teamwork（Kane, 2002）.

Providing vision through clear direction to the team members is an important task for team leaders. Without such direction, motivation would decline and productivity would also be crippled. Team members, through clear directive, work most effectively when the vision of the group is supported and shared by everyone in the group（Mulrooney & Snow, 2002）. Group members who work hard and take action without vision tend to feel stressed and over-worked. Such individuals in extreme cases are referred to as "workaholics." However, if there is a lack of effort or actual productive work or active output from group members, regardless whether such members share the group's vision, such group members become a cancer to the productivity of the group. Group members who work enough to get by and have little passion to achieve the group's goals are just "going-for-average." Proper balance of action and passion with a focused vision are important for effective teamwork. If everyone in the team shares the same vision and takes action and has passion for the work, then the team task becomes more easily accomplished, productivity increases, and team member feelings of unity is strengthened.

1.1 Creating Appropriate Structure

Whenever a group of people comes together as a team, there are bound to be some chaos. In an effort to form a cohesive team, there must be some form of structure to eliminate the chaos. Structure establishes rules and guidelines for team members to follow, and set standards to achieve outlined goals. Goal clarity must be precise and effective communication lines must remain open－everyone must be supportive of each other and be respectful of team members. It is imparitive that the group adheres to the rules put in place to help the team achieve the objectives.

Goal clarity is where the team has to establish rules, a timeline and select a team leader. The team leader should reconfirm rules and explain team member's job assignments, so that there won't be any doubt in their minds that would create confusion about what is required of the team to be successful. The leader should also inform the team on the significance of the assignment, communicate with the team, and keep all team members knowledgeable of anything that involves the team, respect and be supportive of team member's ideas, and understand that everyone is working together to achieve the same goal.

Structure is essential in-group work－without rules and guidelines goal achievement would be almost impossible. In this author's opinion, groups that lack structure are less focused, and tend to demonstrate little competence in their ability to accomplish goals. According to DeCenzo & Silhanek (2002), "team members must have the necessary technical skills and abilities to achieve the desired goals, and the personal characteristics required to achieve excellence while working well with others."

Creating appropriate team structure is the cornerstone of the success of the team. The structure should consist of a Sponsor, Leader, Technical Support, and cross-functional members of what problem the team is trying to solve. This is a usual team make up but the most important position is the Trainer. According to Irwin L. Goldstein (1993), "Probably, one of the most important items is the role of the trainer, who typically makes the difference between a successful or unsuccessful learning experience."

The Trainer is the person whom not only conducts training, but also helps set up the Team's Code of Conduct. The position of leader must be considered carefully as that person truly possess the power. According to Warren Blank (1995), "Position power refers to the degree of control the leader has over important resources, the degree of flexibility the leader has, the extent to which the leader has visibility, the relevance of the leader's position, and the level of formal authority in an organizational hierarchy." Many of the teams that are successful have a leader who has definite power in the organization to be able to overcome the red tape. Many successful leaders are comfortable enough to rotate the leadership position so all team members feel important.

The Sponsor is someone who is usually in high level position in the organization that a leader can use to accomplish projects that are expensive in capital and/or labor. Sponsors also represent teams in high level meetings so all team voices are heard. Technical support can be an Engineer, Computer Expert, or Accountant who are able to handle issues that require more expertise. Cross-functional team members are the ones who do the day-to-day activities. They have valuable input because they deal with the problems/issues that teams are trying to solve.

1.2 **Selecting the Right People**

Selecting appropriate members is important to consider in both academic and business environments. Selecting the appropriate team members to work together is essential to performing well. This includes members who work well with one another, do not have dominate personalities or personal demands beyond reason, and are trustworthy and honest with all members of the group. When team members are selected who meet all these criteria, the team will excel and perform to standards.

In order for team members to get along, it is essential that they "understand how their behaviors affect the team's performance by having a high level of emotional intelligence or empathy to separate high-performing teams from less-performing teams" (Snow & Mulrooney, 2002). Being able to empathize with other team members is critical because all the team members need to feel that they are all equally important and needed in the group. If this does not happen, then some members may start to slack in their work because they feel that they are not needed. Furthermore, situations may arise with a team members' personal life that prevents them from completing assignments on time. This could happen to any member in the group at any given time, so it is very important to support team members when they are going through a difficult period. This will help them get back on track faster when they are ready to return to their assignments. Selecting members with a great deal of empathy for other team members is very important for a team to function smoothly.

It is also important when selecting team members to ensure that no one in the team has a dominant personality that could take over with-

out consulting other team members. There are usually a couple of team members that are more outspoken and task-oriented than other team members. This is acceptable as long as those personalities do not overtake the weaker personalities in the group.

> "One CEO at a major healthcare company recalls an executive team member who dominated team meetings with his persona demands and rarely listened to the needs of other team members. According to the CEO, this team member's need to dominate the meeting showed poor self-management, and he demonstrated weak social skills, eroding relationships with is peers and limited the groups ability to work as a team" (Snow & Mulrooney, 2002.)

Another extremely important aspect of selecting team members is selecting members who are trustworthy and honest with the members in the group. Most relationships are based on trust. This is true for work relationships too. If team members cannot depend on one another, then the group will not function as a whole. "In teams characterized by outstanding integrity, members recognize that they must put the interests of the group before their own"(Snow & Mulrooney, 2002). By establishing trust in the beginning of the formation of a group, the team will feel more comfortable and confident with each other and themselves.

In the case of the English communication courses at Nagasaki University, the author has experimented by both delegating the team membership and letting the students determine their own Learning Teams. Experience dictates that students that collectively decide their own team members have fewer inter-personal problems and are less likely to seek intermediation to resolve Learning Team issues. Nevertheless, results of final performance do not show a notable discrepancy in the quality of

the work on the final presentation suggesting that students are merely interested in completing the task no matter how their Learning Team membership is delegated.

1.3 **Providing Opportunities for Development**

Every team needs competent team members in order to be successful. When a person joins a team, usually, he or she is not a fully trained, experienced member. In order to develop competent team members, opportunities for development must be provided by the team. These opportunities include "holding meetings to discuss how the team is performing, what it is doing best, what it is doing poorly, what its members have learned,"(Snow & Murooney, 2002) and evaluating the team members on a regular basis. The former four are all essential for the development of a team. However, this author would like to focus on the latter. When discussing evaluation examples of companies will be used to represent teams. Executives and managers will represent team leaders and peer/employee will represent other team members.

When companies perform evaluations two basic types are used. One is the more traditional downward evaluation. This evaluation comprises of executives or managers evaluating their subordinates. The second is upward evaluation－also known as 360-degree feedback. The latter will be discussed.

360-degree feedback is employee feedback that comes from all around the employee. The feedback would come from subordinates, peers and managers in the organizational hierarchy, as well as a self-assessment. Carruthers (2003) states, "360-degree feedback was used by 90% of Fortune 500 companies last year."

This is achieved through a simple process. First, a manager informs an employee of an upcoming evaluation. Next, the employee is asked to choose members form the organization to fill out surveys on his or her performance. After the evaluations are filled out the employees receive feedback. Some of the pros of 360-degree feedback are obvious. This type of evaluation puts everyone on the same playing field. It gives the employees an opportunity to help develop the abilities of their superiors. If taken in a positive way, the managers can take the results from their evaluation and learn from them. This will help the company grow. However, as with anything there are also negative results. Some examples include an employee choosing only his closest friends to do the survey leading to inaccurate results, and managers not willing to listen to subordinates and not willing to change. This could have a negative effect on the growth of company. In order to limit negative effects of 360-degree feedback, in my opinion, the following should be considered. The organization has to provide an environment that allows growth, feedback should be confidential, surveys should be distributed randomly, feedback should have no effect on compensation, results from feedback should be seen as a chance to develop and not taken personally, and training and instructions should be provided to help foster the skills needed to develop.

360-degrees feedback can be applied in a learning team as well. This could take place by having the team make a survey, having each member write surveys about each other, sending the surveys to personal e-mail box, and writing comments and giving advice on methods of development This could not only assist with the development of the team, but it could also help with the development of the individual's studies, and

possibly with their professional development as well.

1.4 **Rewarding Team for Good Work**

Amanda Nelson（2005）states, "We actually find that about seven out of 10 people who leave—and many times these are talented and productive people—they don't leave the company, they leave a relationship that has gone bad with a manager" said Coffman, co-author of *First, Break All the Rules—What the World's greatest managers do differently*." With this information one might assume that managers would obviously understand the importance of praise, and positive feedback. However, Bob Nelson（1995）states in his article in Canadian Manager that "One of the most pervasive problems I encountered in working with managers is getting them to find time to do employee praising and recognition. Nelson further explains, "Managers are often too busy focusing on what's urgent—such as dealing with daily crises in their jobs." This isn't a sufficient reason because simply saying thanks via e-mail isn't time consuming（Nelson, 1995）further explains, "The most important form is a personal thank you for a job well done." Giving positive feedback is a vital part of managing. Some of the advantages of positive feedback and praise include that it provides employees with a positive incentive other than money to aim for, and it provides a sense of pride in employees. When these two occur the company will have positive thinking people working, which leads to high moral, and this is a key factor in the success of any company.

In a learning team this is also important. After completing a project it is important to thank other members of the team. This social reinforcement through appreciation is essential for team success and although

simple, it remains an often overlooked element for creating a successful and effective team experience. After receiving a simple message of appreciation and acknowledgment, one may become more motivated to work harder on the next project. And, this will lead to better quality of projects, more respect for each other, and a sense of not wanting to disappoint ones teammates. The outcome of the above is a better overall score in the course.

Teams must establish a clear and compelling direction to be successful. Teams set their goals by what is important to them and the success of their organization. Teams become successful because members support one another, and offset team member's weaknesses. Getting people to work toward a common goal is what teamwork is all about. This is why proper team structure is so important and having strong organizational support.

Strategy is one of the main ingredients to a successful team, so when creating structures to enhance the cohesiveness of the group, rules and guideline are implemented to assist in the development and success of the team. Only through structure can a team achieve its objectives, and there must be no misunderstanding what is expected of the team.

2. Teamwork as an Instructional Strategy : The Development of Cooperative Learning

Socio-cultural theory impacted education for decades. Vygotsky, as early as 1962, concentrated on socio-cultural ramifications and development. Vygotsky maintained that socio-cultural interaction developed cognition for the individuals in peer groups (Dillenbourg et al., 1996).

Vygotsky's internalization process reinforced that activities, which are social, developed and supported intellectual expansion（Ormrod & Rice, 2003）. Internalization assists children in developing the capacity to view problems from a multitude of perspectives. Vygotsky's work inspires educators to develop situations whereby students can perform problem solving with the help of peers who contribute lesser and greater abilities to the problem solving tasks（Ormrod & Rice, 2003）.

In the 1970s educators began to understand the importance and value of interaction among the students. Suchman & Lave, in the 1980s, stressed that the social environment strongly impacted cognition（Dillenbourg et al., 1996）. This focus on social constructs reconstituted the drive to collaborative learning. Ryan & Patrick（2001）assert that

> "Interaction among students is a critical component of student-centered instructional approaches. When students are encouraged to interact and exchange ideas with each other during academic tasks they have opportunities to justify their own position and gain exposure to other possibilities"（p. 441）.

Collaboration, particularly at the stage of adolescence, supports higher-level thinking through development of open-mindedness, reflective behavior, and evaluation of options（Ryan & Patrick, 2001）.

Some debate surrounds the differentiation between cooperative learning and collaborative learning. Cooperative learning delivers instruction while the students share the work in solving a problem. During cooperative assignments, students work on different tasks that support the discovery of a solution to the problem or project. Cooperation occurs as the students connect the various parts of the assignment that they develop individually（Dillenbourg et al., 1996）.

Collaborative design engages the students to solve the problem by coordinating their efforts. During collaborative work, the pupils do not work independently of each other. The workers strive to address the problem with shared comprehension. In both scenarios, the social aspect of learning comprises the educational situation (Dillenbourg et al., 1996).

"It is above all through interacting with others, coordinating his/her approaches to reality with those of others, that the individual masters new approaches"(as cited in Dillenbourg et al, 1996, p. 46). Studies identify that the social-cognitive aspect of instruction develops higher levels of performance among the students. The interaction among the participants of the group sheds light on the problem, the thinking process, and cognition. Acquisition of skill, peer group planning, categorizing tasks, and memory typically derive from collaboration as purported by Vygotsky and other socio-cultural theorists (Dillenbourg et al, 1996).

The involvement of peers in collaborative, student-centered instruction creates situations that stimulate motivation and strengthen performance. Students model the learning behaviors of the group members and undergo reinforcement from this emulation (Morrison, Ross, & Kemp, 2007). Stronger performances and development of skills earn recognition by the team members. Acquisition of aptitudes occurs vicariously while the group members observe each other. These influences build high level thinking skills and develop mastery for solving problems (Morrison, Ross, & Kemp, 2007).

These considerations require that educators develop a constructivist and cognitive approach that guides the collaborative activities. Teachers need to face new challenges as they provide assorted learning experi-

ences that include a variety of opportunities and higher level thinking challenges (Kane & Harms, n.d.)

2.1 Benefits of Cooperative Learning

The website for Cooperative Learning (2013) defines cooperative learning as a "successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject" (p. 1). The entire team promotes learning among all members. This helps in "creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it" (Cooperative Learning, 2013, p. 1).

Cooperative learning benefits all involved. Teachers assume the role of a facilitator, which allows them to move around the classroom and interact with small groups while the other groups engage in their work. The students benefit from the knowledge of their classmates during the group task as the classmates in the team learn from them. The students work together to accomplish a common goal or task. Cooperative learning gives students a sense of importance, which helps to increase self-worth, self-confidence, and self-motivation. Lloyd, Crowley, Kohler and Strain state that "students work in small, heterogeneous groups to accomplish tasks by modeling correct academic responses, practicing skills and providing feedback, sharing in reinforcement contingencies, and engaging in social interactions" (Bryant & Bryant, 1998, p. 41).

The five basic principles of cooperative learning illustrate the importance of this teaching strategy : (a) positive interdependence, (b) person to person communication, (c) individual and group accountability, (d)

interpersonal relationships, and (e) debriefing as a group (Cooperative Learning, 2013). A review of the five basic principles of cooperative learning substantiates for educators how this process enhances the students' learning, self-confidence, and motivation.

Positive interdependence allows students in the group to be successful. When one student does well, others in the group see the positive side of working together and model the positive behaviors. This motivates the students in the group to work toward additional successful events. Positive interdependence requires students in the group to demonstrate strong participation, if this does not occur, the occurrence of success diminishes. Dr. Kagan states that "positive interdependence occurs when gains of individuals or teams are positively correlated"(Special Connections, 2013, p. 1. Students are more apt to give their input and remain actively involved when each student has an assigned task, which increases his or her personal accountability.

Person to person communication allows for students to express answers to each other to help solve a problem or task. This connection encourages students to teach each other, tie current learning to previous learning, and check for understanding of the task with their partner. Individual and group accountability assures that all students are learning. Giving individual tests to the group or having different group members give a report for the group helps to assure that the students actively participate with their group. Because the teacher acts as a facilitator, he or she can monitor each student's participation. The group assigns each member a role and his or her personal accountability increases and helps students to gain confidence. When team members check one another's work, the behavior raises accountability. One of the most impor-

tant parts of person to person communication results when students teach each other. Children enjoy showing someone else what they know－collaboration allows for this process to take place.

Many students do not know how to have interpersonal relationships without constant conflict, lack of trust, and poor communication skills (Cooperative Learning, 2013). When working cooperatively, interpersonal relationships help to develop student's social skills. Problem solving, trust, communication, resolving conflicts, making decisions, and learning about leadership are the additional benefits of working with others.

Debriefing as a group is probably one of the most important parts of learning to work cooperatively with others. The opportunity to (a) discuss what went right, (b) analyze what the team could change for the next collaboration, or (c) determine how the team could improve their communication with each other must exist. Using cooperative learning and group discussions after a project will help the students to develop the ability to use prior knowledge and apply it to the current situation. According to Kagan (2008), using cooperative learning "no student can hide, no student can fall between the cracks. Every student is an active participant in the learning process. Structures optimize active engagement. When structures are in place, we can truly say, no child is left behind" (p. N : 14).

2.2 Ideas for Applying Cooperative Learning

Jacobs and Hall (1994) state "Cooperative learning is more than just putting students into groups and giving them something to do. Cooperative learning principles and techniques are tools that teachers use to en-

courage mutual helpfulness and the active participation of all group members"(p 2). These principles and techniques are found in a variety of learning activities that can be implemented into various classroom lessons. Many structured activities created by Dr. Spencer Kagan include these techniques. Dr. Kagan's Think-Pair-Share, Numbered Heads Together, Three Minute Review, and Team-Pair-Solo exhibit the techniques (Kennesaw State University, 2012).

The Think-Pair-Share activity asks students independently to answer a question that the teacher presents. The students take a partner and compare answers and ideas. In the sharing portion of this activity, the paired students present their answers and ideas to the class.

In the Numbered Heads Together activity, the instructor groups students into teams of four people. The instructor gives each member in the team a number. The teacher then asks several questions and the students work cooperatively to answer the questions. The teacher stresses that each student must discuss the questions and answers thoroughly enough that each member could respond to any given question. The teacher then calls a number and asks the child with that number to respond to the question for their group. While the teacher asks questions, he assures that each member gains an opportunity to answer one of the questions.

The Three Minute Review activity allows the students to work together to review their recent acquisition of knowledge and information. During a lesson, the teacher stops at a given point and asks teams to review what they have just learned, ask questions to each other and write questions to ask the teacher. At the end of the three minutes, teams may ask these questions for clarification from the teacher.

The Team-Pair-Solo activity helps students accomplish problems that they may seem impossible when they work alone. Students work as a team first, to answer a problem posed by the teacher. Then they work on similar problems paired with one other student, and finally they answer a third problem individually. This activity motivates students to go above and beyond their ability by allowing them to first work with a group then with a partner and finally on their own (Kennesaw State University, 2012).

Each of these cooperative learning activities implements easily into different classroom settings, incorporating inclusion, self-contained and gifted and talented classrooms. When using cooperative learning activities, grouping is important. Two forms of grouping are heterogeneous and homogeneous groups. Homogeneous groups are teams of students who possess similar learning abilities and styles. An example of homogeneous grouping is Guided Reading Groups. Heterogeneous grouping forms teams of students separated by different learning abilities and styles. The most common form of heterogeneous grouping includes one student from the higher level, two students from the middle level, and one student from the lower level. An advantage of heterogeneous grouping exists in the ability to include a mixture of ethnicity and gender within the groups. The benefit of heterogeneous grouping is "opportunities for peer tutoring and support as well as improving cross-race and cross-sex relations and integration"(Dotson, 2007, ¶ 10).

2.3 **Obstacles to Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning builds on socio-cultural learning theories. Educators need a foundation of knowledge in the basics of learning theories in

order to implement cooperative learning in the classroom properly. Moreover, educators must understand that differences exist between the individual learning styles of students. Differences in learning styles explain varied results of student testing. Students excel when subject content and the instructor conform to their individual learning style (Caridas & Hammer, 2006). Learning must also consider the individual learning styles of the students.

Course curriculum that caters to students through a cooperative learning atmosphere may not provide the best learning environment for every student. Instructors should not consider cooperative learning an absolute necessity, but rather as a possible teaching and learning strategy. Students exist as complicated individuals with a variety of difficulties that affect learning, performance, and cognition. The instructor perseveres in assessing each difficulty that pertains to the students (Carey, 2006). Student behavior often conforms to environment ; therefore, student attitude and individual disposition might be subject to what is being instructed, who is instructing, and the environment of the classroom.

Cooperative learning challenges traditional teaching paradigms by empowering students. Educators must adapt and change individual instruction paradigms in order to conform to cooperative learning's role specifications. For cooperative learning to be effective, instructors need to build and maintain student ambition and interest. Students need to have an understanding of performance expectations as the teacher describes in detailed tasks.

Cooperative learning advantages and challenges parallel each other. Obvious advantages of cooperative learning include an atmosphere of se-

curity and strength for the class as the instructor encourages the students to *own* their education（Morrison, Ross, & Kemp, 2007）. Diversity that exists in a cooperative learning environment provides dimension to understanding and processing information. Cooperative learning also provides new perspective on information being studied as students collaborate to learn and assimilate new concepts. An instructor may neglect this perspective in a teacher-centered environment. Collaborative learning promotes accessibility of knowledge, easy acquisition of knowledge, and retention. Education becomes more enjoyable as students are more involved in the learning process of cooperative learning.

The advantages of cooperative learning may be debatable in the case of certain students who perform better as individual learners. As in sports, a team is only as strong as its weakest member—meaning that cooperative learning might limit class potential based upon the individual strength of the students who compose the class. Likewise, different dispositions and personalities compose students, as individuals. Some students work as team-players whereas others tend to work better individually. Individuals who are charismatic tend to take the lead and those students who are less outspoken remain less motivated and achieve less success.

Cultural and regional variations also affect cooperative learning. Some societies foster competitive individualism over unity. Group conformity and cooperation are socially endorsed in some cultures perhaps adding to the effectiveness of a cooperative learning environment. Educators must ask themselves if cooperation goal structures produce greater achievement than either competitive or individualistic structures. Students who perform better academically through individual

learning may find incentive stifled by the group instead of encouraged. Cooperative learning methods may use cooperative incentive structures that also promote individual learning. As an example, instructors may reward a class or group based upon the composite performance of the group.

Individuals make decisions faster ; therefore, students working alone are able to move faster than a group. This mobility might be difficult for some students to surrender. Preserving any cooperative environment depends on compromise. Individual competition encourages and motivates some students and these students may find the collective goal in a cooperative learning environment limiting. Having vision and an understanding of goals and working collectively toward a goal are important in professional environments whether business or academic (Mulrooney & Snow, 2002). Students must possess an understanding of their educational goal, individually or collectively, to have a passion for their study.

Moreover, a question concerning the fairness of grading a cooperative learning environment raises a potential issue. Students being graded as a group instead of individually may lead to concerns. Grading of cooperative learning projects need to be fair to the individual student. Measures that confirm equal participation need to be properly established and the facilitator must monitor the participation carefully. Facilitators cannot predict the moral character of the students. Students who are honest and endeavor to the best of their ability may be unfairly graded due to the lack of cooperation or the dishonesty of the student's group. Discernment and proper measure of individual student performance within cooperative learning groups are imperative for preserving a fair learning environment.

Nevertheless, cooperative learning environment maintains a social element that enables students to confirm ideas and concepts while learning from each other. Students are able to learn social skills as well as conflict management and how to make acceptable compromise. Improved study habits may also be socially reinforced in the cooperative learning environment.

Students with learning disabilities have a disadvantage when cooperative learning takes place－the student is unable to function as well as the other students within the inclusive classroom. Bryant & Bryant (1998) suggest that the teacher implement materials that will enhance these special education students' learning opportunities. "Assistive technology device (e.g., pencil grip, etc.) is defined as 'any item, piece of equipment ... that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities'" (Bryant & Bryant, 1998, p. 42).

During cooperative learning, each student must take responsibility for his or her own learning and "not rely solely on their peers for solving problems and completing tasks" (Bryant & Bryant, 1998, p. 44). The authors introduce a lesson plan template to allow the teacher to implement technology into his or her classroom cooperative learning environments (p. 45). Bryant & Bryant (1998) also incorporate ideas to allow the teacher to view sample adaptations for learning disability children and children who are below grade level (p. 48). Many of these differentiated methods are effective teaching practices within themselves.

3. Conclusion

This author avidly supports collaborative learning for the reason that its intrinsic value extends beyond the classroom. This author sincerely feels that students benefit through cooperative learning and that this model of instruction is appropriate for classrooms of any age group or academic institute. Teamwork also continues to be an essential component of business environment. Teamwork experienced in an academic setting serves to introduce students to teamwork in future business and employment environments. Teamwork and collaboration have benefits that have the potential of improving both academic and business environments.

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