

# Teamwork Skills



## Teamwork Lesson

*Teamwork is an important part of university study and usually you will have to work in a team on projects, presentations and/or seminars. These skills are fully transferable to future careers so it is important to learn strategies to develop a productive team atmosphere.*

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## Teacher's Notes: Team Work

**Time: 1:30 – 2:00 hours**

**Level: \*\*\*\*** [B1/B2/C1]

*Aim: to develop the students' ability to understand the key problems of working in groups and develop collaboration techniques.*

### 1. Lead in

- Handout **Teamwork skills#1** sheet. Ask students to work in pairs or small groups and discuss questions: 1. Experience. 2. Issues. 3. Solutions. Put ideas on the board.
- **Possible Issues:** *dominating, quiet, lazy, disorganised, unreliable, late students. Disagreements / fall outs / off-topic / missing deadlines / discrimination.*

### 2. Reading

- Give out reading sheet **Creating a Good Team#2**. Ask students to read down through key skills of creating a team and note any points that were not discussed in the lead in. Feedback as a class.

### 3. Activity Marshmallow challenge

**Note:** Teacher should watch the TED Talk video before doing the activity – this will help you understand and organise the activity. [https://www.ted.com/talks/tom\\_wujec\\_build\\_a\\_tower/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_wujec_build_a_tower/transcript)

**Materials:** 2 packs of spaghetti ( ), a roll of tape ( ), a ball of string ( ), a pack of marshmallows (1 per group), scissors (4pairs), a ruler.

- Follow the instructions **Teamwork Activity: The Marshmallow Challenge#3**.
- Emphasise that the marshmallow must go on **the top**.
- Stop after ( ) and see which team has the highest structure. It must be standing holding the marshmallow to qualify. Measure the heights and record on the board.

### 5. Listening [Build a tower, build a team#4]

Two choices:

| <b>Choice 1:</b> Listening & note-taking (no PPT)  | <b>Choice 2:</b> Listening & note-taking (with PPT)  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pre-teach / check vocabulary.</li> <li>2. Listen once – take notes.</li> <li>3. Answer question sheet (5 mins).</li> <li>4. Listen again – answer the questions as they listen.</li> <li>5. Check answers [ <b>ANSWERS#6</b> ]</li> <li>6. Listen again to check answers.</li> <li>7. Critical thinking discussion.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pre-teach / check vocabulary.</li> <li>2. Give out PPT.</li> <li>3. Listen once – take notes on PPT.</li> <li>4. Listen again – add to notes.</li> <li>5. Answer the questions.</li> <li>6. Check answers [ <b>ANSWERS#6</b> ]</li> <li>7. Listen again to check answers.</li> <li>8. Critical thinking discussion.</li> </ol> |

Download PPT: <https://www.academic-englishuk.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Build-a-tower-TED-PPT-slides.pptx>

## Teamwork Skills #1

*Team work is an important part of university study and students usually have to work in a team on a project, presentation or seminar. These skills are fully transferable to future careers so it is important that you learn strategies to develop a productive atmosphere.*

### 1. Experience

i. Have you ever worked in a team? Where? When? Who with?

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ii. What was the experience like?

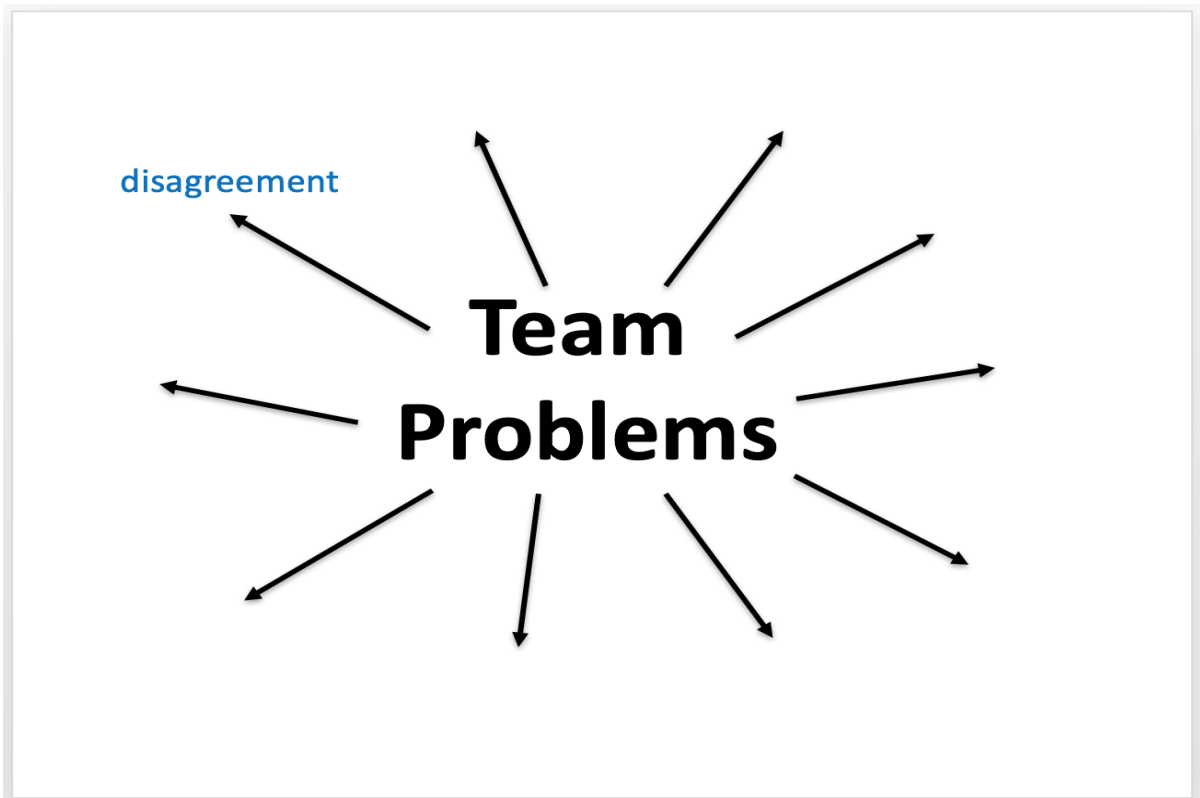
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### 2. Issues

i. What kind of issues / problems might students [redacted]? Work with a partner / in a small group and write [redacted] possible problems.



### 3. Solutions

i. How can you [redacted] issues? Discuss with a partner / small group.

## Creating a Good Team #2

### 1. Be positive and open to the group experience.

See group work as an [ ] to develop [ ] skills and experience for future employment and your CV.

### 2. Take time to get to know your team

Introductions are important. Discuss together what are [ ]? What are your fears? A team that takes [ ] each other first will bond and work better.

### 3. Create a productive group environment.

Find a good place to work where you will not be [ ] or distracted. Organise how often, when and where you [ ]. This helps the team stay [ ] and work better together.

### 4. Set your team's ground [ ].

Everyone should [ ], respected and able to voice their thoughts. Before you begin set some basic ground rules. Write down the rules and [ ].

### 5. Decide on your team/meeting roles.

It is usually helpful to have [ ] your meetings. Common roles include: minutes taker, time-keeper and meeting chair/facilitator. Roles can be set [ ] for each meeting.

### 6. Check your understanding of [ ].

It is vital that you check that everybody has a clear understanding [ ] before you start. Check everyone [ ] what needs to be done.

### 7. Decide on your [ ] practices.

As a group, make decisions on what needs to be done and start [ ] work. Share out work fairly and equally. This may need to be addressed on a weekly basis.

### 8. Establish your [ ]

Every group needs to have a clear idea of the [ ] of the group. In addition, aims of each week / meeting must be recorded and established.

### 9. Get everyone's [ ] details.

You should decide how the group is going to communicate ( [ ]) and share out contact details. Also, use a live group [ ] such as OneDrive or Google Docs.

### 10. Agree your next meeting date/time.

Finally, it is surprising how many groups forget this last, vital step. It might be useful to agree [ ] that is convenient for everyone so [ ] to keep remembering new times and dates every week.

## Teamwork Activity: The Marshmallow Challenge<sup>#3</sup>



The image shows a blue banner for the Marshmallow Challenge. At the top left is the AE UK logo. The main title is 'Marshmallow challenge' in large white letters, with the subtitle 'The tallest Freestanding Structure' below it. In the center is an illustration of four people standing around a circular table, building a structure. Below the illustration are four items: a bundle of spaghetti, a roll of tape, a ball of string, and a marshmallow. Each item is labeled with its name: Spagetti, Tape, String, and Marshmallowi.

**Aim:** to improve the skills of collaboration, negotiation and shared experience through working together as a team.

**Team:** 4 people

**Time:**

**Objective:** to build the tallest freestanding structure that holds a marshmallow on the top.

**Materials (per group of 4):**

- of spaghetti
- cm) of sticky tape
- cm) of string
- One marshmallow
- One pair of scissors
- One ruler

## **Build a tower, build a team**<sup>#4</sup>

[listening comprehension questions]

**Author:** Tom Wujec

**Date:** 2010

**Time:** (6:45)

**Location:** TED TALKS

**Level:** \*\*\*\* [B1/B2/C1]

**Link:** [https://www.ted.com/talks/tom\\_wujec\\_build\\_a\\_tower/details](https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_wujec_build_a_tower/details)

Check these words before listening:

### **Key vocabulary**

1. A marshmallow
2. A design challenge.
3. A free-standing structure
4. [REDACTED]
5. Measurement: a yard / an inch
6. String
7. To collaborate
8. A [REDACTED]
9. CTOs of the Fortune 50 (Google this)
10. To [REDACTED] power
11. To admire something
12. To buckle and collapse (a structure)
13. To [REDACTED]
14. Crisis
15. Kindergarten
16. [REDACTED] process
17. A prototype
18. Facilitation
19. A process
20. High [REDACTED]
21. Incentives
22. Assumptions
23. A shared [REDACTED]
24. To tweak and adjust something
25. A fundamental lesson

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## Build a tower, build a team<sup>#4</sup>

TED TALK: Tom Wujec [2010. 6:45]

**The Challenge**



**Eighteen Minutes**

**Teams of Four**

**Tallest Freestanding Structure**

Link: [https://www.ted.com/talks/tom\\_wujec\\_build\\_a\\_tower/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_wujec_build_a_tower/transcript)

### *Explain what you understand*

1. Who [redacted] Marshmallow challenge?
  
2. What's the [redacted] this challenge?
  
3. Who are cited to be the [redacted] participants? why?

|             | Who? | Why? |
|-------------|------|------|
| [redacted]: |      |      |
| Best:       |      |      |

4. Measurements & statistics (the height in inches):

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| [redacted] height:    |  |
| [redacted] Structure: |  |

5. Why are engineers & architects [redacted] builders?
  
6. Does an [redacted] help? why?
  
7. Overall, success is...
  
8. The success rate of [redacted] is...
  
9. What [redacted] the \$10,000-dollar prize?
  
10. What happens when you [redacted]?
  
11. How does the Marshmallow challenge help in [redacted]?

Critical thinking? What do you think about this lecture? What is the important point you have taken from this lecture? Do you agree that the Marshmallow challenge really improves teamwork? What could be the criticism of this type of activity? Do you agree that adding higher stakes prevents success? What else do you think?

For more information, go to the blog:

[www.marshmallowchallenge.com](http://www.marshmallowchallenge.com)



## **Build a tower, build a team ANSWERS#6**

TED TALK: Tom Wujec [2010. 6:45]

1. Who created the Marshmallow challenge?

Peter Skillman.

2. What's the point behind this challenge?

Difficulty factor, Forces quick collaboration, deep lessons on the nature of collaboration.

**ALL the ANSWERS include in paid version...**