



Here are eleven competencies for effective teamwork (adapted from University of Minnesota, 1996).

1. Demonstrate a client-centered focus

A good team has as its first priority meeting the client's needs and respecting their values and preferences. The client may be the patient, a family, a community or an audience.

2. Establish common goals to guide team actions and outcomes

This may include short- and long-term goals. Ensure that all team members, including the patient and family, agree about what constitutes a successful outcome.

3. Understand the role of each profession

Team members must be familiar with the professional capabilities of each person on the team and must be willing to acknowledge greater expertise and, in some instances, defer to other team members.

4. Show flexibility in roles

While it is necessary to understand and respect each person's specific role (scope of practice), flexibility in assignments is important. Achieving common goals is more important than individuals' preferred roles.

5. Demonstrate confidence in other team members

Consider and value the opinion of others and work toward building this confidence over time.

6. Share expectations of group norms and rules

Ensure everyone is aware of the expectations of others in the group. The expectations are often behavioral, e.g., being punctual, participating equally, and staying current in one's field.

7. Acknowledge and resolve conflict

Every healthcare team will experience conflict. A successful team will identify a specific mechanism, clearly understood by all, for resolving conflict through a team leader, outside leader, or other process.

8. Communicate effectively

Effective communication involves consideration of what is shared and how it is shared. Teams also need to listen effectively and develop a consistent record keeping system (electronic or other), and use a common vocabulary.

9. Share responsibility for team actions

Each team member must share the responsibility for the actions of the team and be willing to be held accountable for those actions. Team members should use "we" in communication when discussing team decisions.

10. Be open to giving and receiving feedback

The team process must be open for evaluation and revision on a continuing basis. A specific mechanism must be developed for ongoing evaluation of team's effectiveness and redesign as needed.

11. Develop a decision making process

Establish a decision-making process acceptable to all members and appropriate to the needs and goals of the task. Work to balance task and process.

Thank you to the Centre for Teaching and Learning for contributing to this tip sheet.