
So What Will You Get Out of the 15.279 Team Experience?

- Practice in teamwork skills
- Friendships
- A grade
- A richer sense of your
 - Skills
 - Propensities
 - Style relative to others

Agenda

- It's all about communication
- Three concrete tips
- Where teams can get into trouble
 - Individual behaviors
 - Group social psychology

It's All About Communication

Practicing good communication skills

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Refraining from communication roadblocks



Engaging in dialogue

Building trust

Being productive!

To Communicate Well . . .

- Listen well
- Observe carefully
- Give feedback constructively

Communication Behaviors to Observe

- Who participates
- Who doesn't
- How do people take turns?
- Who talks to whom?
- Who responds to whom?
- How are interruptions handled?
- Is silence O.K.?
- Is anyone dominating the conversation?
- How are decisions made?
 - By consensus?
 - By voting?
 - By one person?

And be sure to
observe your own
feelings, reactions,
and behaviors

Communication Can Go Awry If We . . .

- Order or command
- Warn or threaten
- Preach or moralize
- Cross examine
- Label, evaluate, or judge
- Tease or make light of
- Respond with sarcasm
- Avoid discussing an issue
- Assume instead of listen
- Forget differences in communication style may be related to gender or cultural differences

Four Principles of Communication

- All communication takes place on the content and relationship level
- We cannot not communicate
- Often the problem with communication is the assumption of it
- Metacommunication is very useful

When You Have Built Trust, You Have . . .

- Acted with consistency and coherence
- Demonstrated concern
- Treated others with a sense of fairness
- Fulfilled obligations and commitments

When You Are Engaging in Dialogue, You Are . . .

- Seeing things from the other person's perspective
- Really listening
- Expressing your concerns as *your concerns*, not as another person's problem
- Giving others a stake in the process or outcome

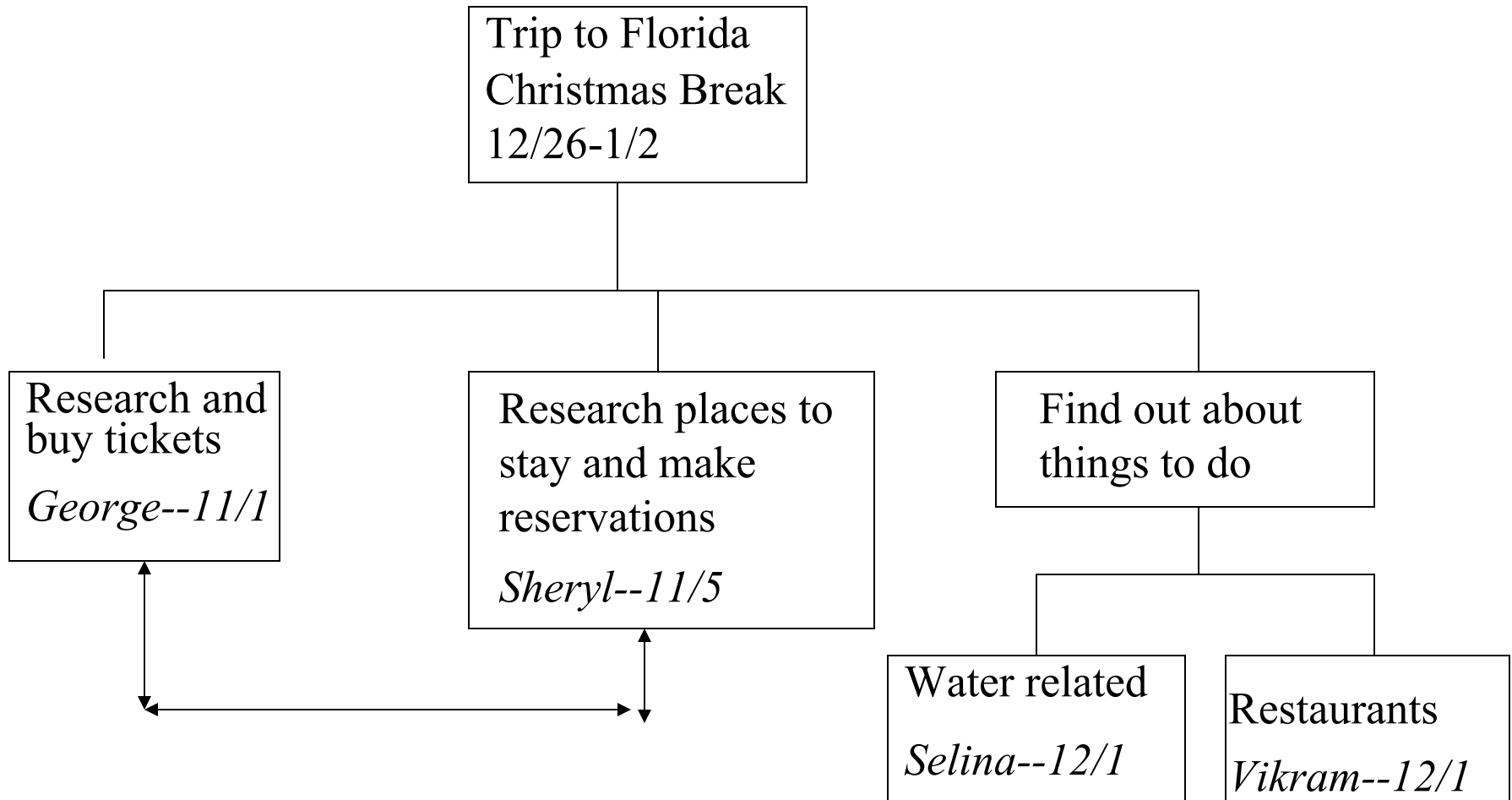
Three Concrete Tips

- Use a facilitator/coordinator
- Delegate tasks effectively, using a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
- Set some ground rules

Work Breakdown Structure

- Way to organize a series of tasks to accomplish a project objective. Consists of:
 - Hierarchical diagram of tasks
 - Person responsible for executing the task
 - Deadline to have the task completed
 - Interdependencies with other tasks
- Each task in a WBS should contribute to the goal of delivering the required material on time and done well

Sample WBS--Planning a Vacation



Facilitator/Coordinator

- Why? If everyone is responsible, no one is
- The coordinator/facilitator should
 - Focus the team toward the task
 - Get all team members to participate
 - Keep the team to its agreed-upon time frame
 - Suggest alternatives
 - Help team members confront problems
 - Summarize team decisions

Setting Ground Rules

- Goals and expectations
- Work norms
- Facilitator norms
- Communication norms
- Meeting norms
- Consideration norms

What Makes Teams Troublesome*

- Individual behaviors
- Group social psychology

*Even people with good intentions can get into trouble.

Individual Behaviors

- “Ego integrity”
- Self-interest versus group interest
- Inability to observe self and/or use feedback
- Different styles of
 - Learning
 - Interaction
 - Expression

Group Behaviors

- “Defensive routines”
- Us versus them
- Reluctance to test assumptions publicly
- Getting “off task”
- Lack of boundaries
 - Ill defined roles
 - Unclear objectives and/or expectations