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<!-- Col Count:2-->Module:	Communication and Interpersonal Skills
Skill:	Leadership and Negotiation

Overview: Leadership and Negotiation

It would not be surprising if you are wondering why you need to think about leadership and negotiation skills now, before you have reached the professional world. If you do not plan to be a professional leader or negotiator, you might reasonably wonder why you need to think about these skills at all. The answer is simple: because of what they can do for you right now. These are skills you can use as a student to take control of your learning and get what you need out of opportunities – both in and out of the classroom. Student life also gives you plenty of chance to practise your leadership and negotiation skills, so you will become not only a more effective student but also a more attractive candidate when you hit the career market.

Let's take a moment to look at two types of students, so that we can break down what a leader and skilled negotiator might look like (or not):

1. A leader? Students who are the life and soul of every party and who can talk loudly and laugh even louder; those who most students like to be near, who are happy to have their say in any situation.

2. Funnily enough, these students often struggle to lead. You might see them literally leading their admirers across campus towards the nearest nightclub, but the qualities needed for effective leadership can be lacking. Loving to talk makes it very difficult to chair a meeting, for example. Voicing strong views can leave members of your team feeling isolated. Being hugely popular can leave you vulnerable, shying away from difficult or sensitive conversations. Being used to getting your own way or being afraid of being even a little bit unpopular can make negotiation very difficult.
3. A leader? Students who talk less than they think, who are willing to listen to others, and sometimes – but not always – voice their own views. Students who lead less from the front but spend their energy helping everyone work together. Students who are not easily distracted and are goal centred.
4. These students can become excellent leaders, leading by example and negotiation and making sure that a team works well together. They may not be especially well noticed, but they are somehow known to be reliable and determined, even though they have not been a leader in social groups.

There are many different types of leader, and the examples here are built on generalisations, but hopefully you get the point: leadership is a skill that can be developed like any other, and negotiation can become a positive part of your life.

Developing leadership skills relies on:

1. Identifying the leadership skills and qualities that you already have, or those that come most naturally to you
2. Developing your skills as an influential team player so that you can pivot to leadership when the need arises
3. Finding opportunities to practise leadership in the relatively low-risk situation of studying

Developing negotiation skills relies on:

1. A clear sense of what you want
2. A willingness to value the views of others
3. An understanding of how compromise works so that everyone wins

Now that the myths are dispelled, we can move on to developing your skills as both an effective leader and a successful negotiator.

Suggested Readings

1. Rock, D. (2014). Quiet leadership. HarperCollins e-Books.
2. Kahnweiler, J. The introverted leader.
3. Myers, P., & Myers, P. (2010). Gifts Differing. Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
4. <https://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/>
5. <https://www.belbin.com/about/belbin-team-roles>

<p><!--Col Count:2-- >Table of Contents Heading 2:</p>	<p>Developing Your Leadership Skills</p>
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Topic 2.1: Discovering Yourself as a Leader

Becoming a proficient leader can be hard work, but it is hard work that pays off. Recognising and developing your leadership skills gives you the chance to take control of crucial learning situations; it also allows you to have your say more effectively and to move confidently into leadership roles in future. Even if you are not interested in becoming a high-profile, ‘lead from the front’ type of leader, you can still use this resource to develop your skills so that you can employ them in a variety of situations. Being able to ensure that your group listens to what you have to contribute and follows your lead relies on your developing the skills discussed here.

If you see yourself as a natural leader, you might reasonably wonder why you need to read this at all. It is because the characteristics that we often casually tend to recognise as ‘leadership qualities’ – being outspoken, becoming a popular member of a group, having strong views – can work against your personal

development as an effective leader. This is because these characteristics, which can be valuable when harnessed in leadership, can also exclude members of your group, or make others hesitate to work under your guidance. For you, developing leadership is less about finding your leadership qualities and more about finding out how to use them well.

Your first step towards leadership success is to consider the ground you have already covered. It is too easy at this moment for you to say to yourself 'I have never led anything or anyone'. Resist that urge! The contexts in which you have shown leadership qualities may not be as obvious as you expect, so read on....

Situations in which you might have shown leadership qualities could be taken from your home life (organising a family event, helping to run a family business, guiding some of your family members through a difficult time). You would not necessarily recognise this as leadership, but the qualities you developed (empathy, clear goals, persuasion) are valuable in leadership. You might also look to your social life (arranging a group trip, leading meetings for a club or society, organising an event) where you might already be recognised as a leader without having noticed.

If you have worked (voluntarily or in a paid position), then you will have yet more experiences to draw on (you are the person asked to befriend new staff, you give an informal training session on a work-related task, you are given responsibility beyond your core role). If you add to this your study life (perhaps as leader of a study group, or head of a society, or the organiser of group tasks), you can see how your leadership portfolio is building without you having had to do anything out of the ordinary.

Topic 2.2: Analysing Your Past Leadership Experiences

So why is it important to analyse the situations in which you have shown leadership qualities? Because by fully recognising where you are now, you can exploit your strengths and nurture those areas in which you are less strong. This will save you time and energy, which puts you in a great position to move forward strongly.

Think about situations in which you now recognise that you have used leadership skills. For each of these, fill out the worksheet. Ideally, you would be able to find at least three of these situations, to give you a rounded view of yourself as a leader. You might need to enlist the help of family or friends, or an academic tutor or mentor, as you work through the exercise.

Identifying Your Leadership Skills

[Link file: [Identifying_Your_Leadership_Skills.docx](#)]

Once you have completed this exercise several times you will begin to see patterns emerging. The exercise will not be enough in itself to give you a complete picture of yourself as a leader, but you will benefit from recognising the patterns and what they can tell you about yourself. You might, for example, come to recognise that you tend not to volunteer to be a leader but that you have enjoyed the experience. You could come to see the personal qualities you possess that have helped you to lead and could be developed further. You might see a pattern of strengths and weaknesses across several leadership situations, which will help you make the most of this resource.

A Word About Quiet Leadership

There has been growing recognition in recent times of the importance of 'quiet leaders', those individuals who are more modest and self-effacing in their leadership style, often leading by consensus from within a group. These leaders are an important part of our society and the recent work in this area will be of special interest to you if you feel an affinity with this description. Leaders have vision and goals, they inspire those around them and make things happen; they are essential to our society and, crucially, they come in all shapes and sizes.

Given that leadership success goes beyond one personality type, you might be interested at this stage in discovering more about your personality traits and how these might feed into your development as a leader. There are plenty of resources to allow you to do this, and your university or college Careers Service might offer tests and guidance for free.

Now that you have a greater sense of yourself as a leader, we need to think together about barriers to leadership and how you might overcome them.

Topic 2.3: Overcoming Barriers to Leadership

The greatest barrier to leadership is your own perception of yourself as a leader. For example, if you recognise in yourself only those qualities that make you a good team player, then you might overlook your leadership potential. Being a productive team player and being an effective leader are not mutually exclusive: no leader leads on every occasion, and some of the finest leadership work you are likely to do will arise from your in-team leading activities. These are the small, often unnoticed actions we take as team players that nevertheless have an impact on team outcomes. This may be simply the right words at the right time to remind the team of the overall goal, or an email to confirm results so far from your viewpoint, or the ability to stand up at a meeting and share

your concerns. Watch the video for a more detailed discussion of obstacles that you might face to taking on leadership positions at university as well as advice on how to overcome these barriers.

[Video 1. More Barriers to Leadership](#)

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Knowing yourself as both a team player and a leader are going to be important to you as you develop your skills in this area. However, this is not easy. The worksheet you completed in the previous topic [<!--Q1: Production; Link to topic 2.1 Discovering Yourself As a Leader-->](#) will take you only so far. Having considered your own response to leadership situations, and how you see yourself, you are now ready to enlist the help of others.

You might feel vulnerable in this situation – they could say anything – and so it will help to keep your questions tightly focused. If you know you are easily upset by comments that are less than positive, you could send out an online questionnaire similar to that on the accompanying worksheet explaining that you are asking questions as part of some leadership development work you are undertaking. This context will help your respondents keep on task and will remind you of why you are undertaking this exercise.

Asking Others for Feedback on Your Leadership Qualities

[\[Link file: Asking_Others_for_Feedback_on_Your_Leadership_Qualities.docx\]](#)

After this exercise, you will have completed a huge amount of emotional and analytical work, and you should be in a good position to move forward in developing your leadership qualities.

To move through the next stage, take a three-step approach:

1. *Action* – take the chance to lead in everyday situations, knowing each time that you are working on your areas for development. The other skills covered on this platform will help you in this, especially the sections on assertiveness and communication.
2. *Reflection* – take stock regularly, asking yourself how you have developed your techniques for leadership in specific leadership situations. These might be as everyday as leading a discussion in a seminar or tutorial group, so you will have plenty of chance to reflect, especially if you identify in advance your next few leadership opportunities.
3. *Reaction* – from what you have learnt from your reflection, make a plan of action, even if you have only one small area on which you want to work next.

For example, you might take action by volunteering to lead a seminar or class discussion. On reflection, you could feel that you did it well, but that you talked over other students from time to time. Now you can reflect – was this because:

1. You were so excited to share your points that you forgot to share the space from time to time (you need to develop your leadership patience)
2. You felt that the points that they were making were taking the whole discussion off course (you showed good leadership vision)
3. You know that some quiet members of the group wanted to contribute but were being stifled (you demonstrated empathic leadership)

You can now react positively to the experience by finding the chance to lead again in a situation where you will need to show leadership patience, whilst knowing that you have been able to demonstrate excellent leadership vision and empathy.

Topic 2.4: Creating a Successful Team

In a study setting, you are often simply given a team to lead, just as you are given the project brief and the timeline. However, you might sometimes get the chance to choose your own team, and this needs to be done carefully.

Choosing a Team

Resist the temptation (always strong!) to go straight to your friends, asking them to join the team. This can lead to disaster. Instead, look around your pool of possible team members and make up your team by answering these questions:

1. Who can I rely on to support me through the whole project?
2. Who works hard?
3. Who seems to enjoy working in a successful team?
4. Who have I worked well with before?
5. Who is the most expert in this type of task?
6. Who is the most knowledgeable in this topic area?
7. Who has a workload that might make them easily available when they are needed?
8. Who makes up for what I lack as a leader?

This last question is important. Successful leaders are not those who could complete an entire task alone if they chose to, so you need not always be the top expert in the room. The most reliably successful leaders are not even those who are expert in every aspect of leadership. The most effective leaders are those who recognise where they excel and who can identify the support they need.

For example, if you are leading a team that will be giving a presentation, you might know that you are not the strongest presenter on the team. This does not matter at all: you are in the best position to allow others to shine whilst you contribute by keeping things on track and making amazing presentation slides. Similarly, if you know that your leadership weakness is keeping team meetings in order, it is simple enough to ask team members to take turns to lead the meetings, so that you get the chance to practise leading meetings a couple of times, but so too does everyone else.

Analysing Your Team

Once your team is formed (whether you chose all the members or not) you will need to factor into your plans three team features:

1. The size of the team
2. The skills of the team
3. The team members

The *size of your team* will not be a problem, but if it is large (in a study setting, eight would count as a large team) you could think about dividing the team according to tasks. It is often easier to delegate an area of the project or a set of tasks to a group of two or three team members than to individuals, although you will still need to ensure that the small group sticks to task.

Analysing the *skills of your team* is not just an essential part of delegating tasks, it is also a great way to bond as a team. If you give everyone the chance to complete a skills inventory, they can show how valuable they are to the team, and bond with each other over shared skills; you also gain all the insight you need to delegate effectively.

A skills inventory is simple. Everyone completes a sheet such as this and then shares it with the rest of the group online or in a meeting.

Skills Inventory

[Link file: Skills_Inventory.docx]

You cannot change the personality of your team members, but you can give them the best chance to work well together to achieve the team goals. Communication is crucial here. At the outset, ask yourself:

1. Do they all know each other?
2. The skills inventory will help here if not.
3. How do they like to communicate?
4. A quick online poll will tell you whether you need to hold regular meetings or do more work by email.
5. Is there any history to the team?
6. Good or bad history between team members will give you the chance to divide tasks so that you maximise good feeling and minimise tension.

Once you have answered these questions, the whole team could work together to analyse the team members so that you are all fulfilling the roles in the team that suit you best. You might find this sort of test is administered for free by your college or university. The [Belbin website](#) offers descriptions of the different types of team member.

Helping team members recognise their strengths and roles within a team, and then giving them the chance to shine, is the single most important gift you can give your team, and the surest way to success.

<!--Col Count:2--> >Table of Contents Heading 3:	Delegation
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Topic 3.1: How Teams Work and the Art of Delegation

Although it might seem counterintuitive, the best way to begin your work on delegation skills is to think about situations where delegation *has not* worked. These might be situations in which you were delegating, or teams where you were able to observe how delegation was handled. To analyse why delegation might not have worked in the teams you have been a part of before, complete the worksheet.

Analysing Your Delegation Skills

[Link file: Delegation_Problems_Worksheet.docx]

Although you might have been looking at several different situations, what you now have is a clearer sense of what has gone wrong in your past teams and why that happened. You will see that teams tend to run into problems in three areas:

1. Clear planning (those labelled as (1) above)
2. Communication (those labelled as (2) above)
3. Cooperation (those labelled as (3) above)

There is often overlap between these areas, of course, but you now have a blueprint to move forward. You have analysed problems in your past teams in which you were either a leader or a team member and you have come up with fixes for those problems. You now know yourself better as a leader and delegator, and you can apply the fixes to future situations before problems arise. Watch the video for more advice on how better to reflect on your delegation skills and improve.

Video 1. Reflecting on Your Delegation Skills

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Topic 3.2: Setting the Agenda

Working as a team to complete a study project can sound simple: let's all read the project instructions, divide the tasks between us and get on with it. It is rarely that simple. Taking control at the starting point will save you both time and lost marks later. You will be delegating tasks throughout the project, and everyone will need to be clear about how those tasks fit into the overall project.

[Begin Scenario 2: Multiple Choice Questions]

Scenario 2

Imagine for a moment that you are about to lead a team on a project which will result in a project report and a group presentation (this might be something that you are doing right now – maybe that is why you are reading this).

The following questions will set the agenda for what happens next.

What is the task?

<!--Col Count:3-- >Answer Choices	Correct or Incorrect?	Feedback
I think it is on the course website somewhere – I will have to check.	Incorrect	It helps if the leader of a team has understood the task in detail before anyone starts to discuss plans.
My friend described it to me, so I am fairly clear.	Incorrect	Your team will lose respect for you as its leader if you are not crystal clear on the project brief.
It is fully described on our course website.	Correct	Well done for finding it – now is the time to share all the details of the brief with the team.
It sounds really daunting – I will look later.	Incorrect	The team leader is the one person who cannot afford to put off this task.

How are the marks allocated?

<!--Col Count:3--> Answer Choices	Correct or Incorrect?	Feedback
We do not need to worry about that right now.	Incorrect	You might run short on time, or lose a team member, or be working with limited resources – you need to know where to put the team’s energy as you delegate.
The same as the last project, I assume – we do these projects all the time.	Incorrect	It is easy – and dangerous – to make assumptions about something so vital. Always check.
I have never quite found that information on any of my projects – I will ask a team member to share the brief with us all at our first meeting.	Incorrect	Being team leader gives you the chance to improve your study skills, such as getting to grips with the details of project instructions.
That was itemised along with the brief.	Correct	Knowing what to do, and where to put your team’s energy, will set you up for success.

How much time do you have?

<!--Col Count:3--> Answer Choices	Correct or Incorrect?	Feedback
I am not sure that matters – we just have	Incorrect	Delegating tasks relies on agreement that the allocation of a task is reasonable, and that

<!--Col Count:3-- >Answer Choices	Correct or Incorrect?	Feedback
to get on with it.		includes the time given to it.
Not enough – this project is huge.	Incorrect	As a leader, you must confront this head on. If you have misunderstood the task (study projects are rarely too large for the time allowed), you need to set things straight for your team. If it really is too large a task, you need to negotiate on behalf of your team.
Six weeks – until noon on the Friday of that week.	Correct	Making sure that everyone has this date, and all the timeline dates and deadlines, in their calendars will keep you all on track.
Way too much time – we might be best to start in a couple of weeks.	Incorrect	It is usually far better to get started and factor a break into your plans later in the project than to put off starting, which could demotivate the team and leave you dashing at the end.

Is there a precedent for the task?

<!--Col Count:3-- >Answer Choices	Correct or Incorrect?	Feedback
I did something similar in a school project.	Incorrect	Because school and higher education are producing different outcomes, it is always a good idea to assume that a task at this level

<!--Col Count:3-- >Answer Choices	Correct or Incorrect?	Feedback
		is likely to be looking for different skills and knowledge.
I know that one team member did a similar thing last year – we can follow her lead.	Incorrect	That makes her the team leader, but a rather confused team leader and one who is not in command of the full brief.
This is a totally new type of project, I think – I have never heard of it before.	Incorrect	One of the benefits of leading a team is that you are surrounded by experience. You might not have heard of this type of project before, but now you have the chance to ask others. It is unlikely to be a totally new project, and looking back can be a good way to scope out what you plan to achieve. You will still need to be clear about this project’s details, but hindsight can help set you all on the right path.
The same brief was given out last year.	Correct	This gives you the perfect chance to check out what was achieved last year – and to read any feedback offered to students – and then plan based on that knowledge.

[End Scenario 2: Multiple Choice Questions]

Now that you have explored the details of your task thoroughly, you can set the agenda by sharing your understanding with others (through the team's preferred style of communication) and delegating tasks.

Topic 3.3: Your Personal Delegation Style

Delegation is not about following a set of rules and knowing that it will always work out. It is about developing your own style of delegating and using it effectively. Now that you have taken some time to think about delegation and some of the challenges that team projects can throw up, we can think more about your delegation style.

This task is perhaps the most difficult within this section. It seems straightforward, but it will take time to think through and it will have a significant impact on your ability to delegate effectively. There are many reasons why leaders struggle to delegate, such as failure to plan clearly and communication and cooperation difficulties, but your personality might also work against effective delegation.. You might find it embarrassing to ask team members to carry out tasks, or you might have no faith that people will really listen to you; you might think it is easier just to do it all yourself, or know that you will get angry if anyone fails to finish a task on time. Watch the video for more advice on how to identify your own delegation style.

[Video 1](#). Exploring Your Delegation Style

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There are just three questions to end this section. Take as long as you need to note down your responses, which could be complex and personal. You need not share these answers with anyone, but they will help you to recognise any hurdles that you must overcome if you are to be a successful delegator.

Exploring Your Delegation Style

[Link file: [Exploring_Your_Delegation_Style.docx](#)]

<!--Col Count:2-->Table of Contents Heading 4:	Negotiation Skills
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Topic 4.1: Negotiation Skills in a Nutshell

Higher education is not designed to be a high-tension, cutthroat negotiation environment, but the stakes are high and there will be times when you need to negotiate. You will not want to be left with all the work on a group project, or run a campus society single-handed, or be the only student ready to present in class. Beyond campus, you will also need to delegate. If you live in shared student housing, your negotiation lessons will start on day one and might be relentless until you graduate.

Your career, both now and in the future, will rely on negotiation from the very first day. If you are working as a student, you need to land the shifts that fit in around your study demands, you might need to come and go according to your study life patterns, and you will certainly want to earn the most money you can for every hour you work. When you launch yourself into the job market, you will not even be waiting for the first day: the negotiation starts at the interview.

However, you probably do not have the time or inclination to undertake a course in negotiation, or to devote hours to negotiating every aspect of your life right away. You will develop negotiation skills over time – most of us do – but for now here are six steps to successful negotiation:

Know what you want

- Be prepared to give a little – and know how much that ‘little’ is
- Listen actively to the other person
- Be prepared to walk away – and know whether you can
- Be clear on what has been agreed – this is not as personal as you think
- Stick to it – you are building trust for future negotiations

In the next section, [Q2: Production: link to topic 4.2 negotiation skills in practice](#) we will look at how these principles of negotiation can be put into practice, so you might want to think of a situation in which you need to negotiate right now, so that you can make a note of what you plan to do as you work through the section.

This worksheet might help you to do this effectively as you read through the next section:

Negotiation Skills

[\[link file: Negotiation_Skills.docx\]](#)

Topic 4.2: Negotiation Skills in Practice

In the previous topic [Q3: Production: link to previous topic 4.1 Negotiation Skills in a Nutshell](#), we examined the skills that you will need for negotiation and completed a worksheet to consider how you might put those skills into practice.

Negotiation Skills Worksheet

[\[link file: Negotiation_Skills.docx\]](#)

With your worksheet beside you, we are now ready to go through the six steps in detail:

1. Knowing what you want involves taking time before you negotiate. You can be completely thrown if you are negotiating from a position of weakness. If you are arranging a group project and you have the deadline date wrong, you have damaged your negotiating position before you start, because the person who corrects you is now leading the negotiation. If you are trying to negotiate with your boss to reduce your hours to 10 a week for 2 weeks whilst you revise, but there is a company policy against reducing below 15, you are on false ground. So do your research, understand exactly what your options are, and then you are ready to determine your negotiation starting point.
2. Be specific about what it is you want, in detail and in language that everyone can respond to easily. ‘I am exhausted and want to do less on this project’ gets you nowhere fast, but ‘I have two other assignments to complete during this project, so can my tasks be scheduled to allow a two-week break for me?’ makes sense to everyone. Always ask for the best outcome, but work out what your bottom line is. If you have only recently started to develop your assertiveness skills, you might have two base points, one of which you have in reserve in case it is needed. For example, you might say to yourself ‘I want a two-week break from the project, but I could take ten days instead. If it really disrupts everyone in the team, I could take just a week’s break, but I would need no interruptions at all in that time, weekdays or weekends’.
3. Listening is the single most important feature of negotiation. It sounds simple, but it is still worth repeating: listening well requires you to be quiet and listen to what is being said in words, what is being said through body language, and what is being left unsaid but is implied. Listening actively also requires you to show the other person that you care about what they are saying (there is more on this in the skill [‘Being Assertive’](#) [Q4: Production: link to skill “being assertive”](#)).

4. Walking away from a negotiation is extremely difficult for some students, particularly if they are under stress or come from a family where everyone talked loudly all the time. It is an art to be mastered, so you need not expect to do it naturally from the outset. You just need to know when and how to walk away effectively. There are two types of 'walking away' – taking a break from the negotiation and leaving it alone entirely. For a student, the first is the most common. At the point at which you have decided you need to take a break (which you might have decided in advance, or might be when you feel the pressure is too intense or the options too complicated), be clear and strong in saying that you need time to think about things and give a firm time when you will be in touch with the person or group.
5. The best way to be clear on the outcome is to write it down – an email confirming what has been agreed or a plan or timeline to show everyone. If you were the one who set up the negotiation then you need to be responsible for this, and never give in to the temptation to sound upset or disgruntled in that confirmation email or conversation. Negotiation can feel intensely personal, but in fact it rarely is: if the members of your group are students, you are all simply trying to get the most from a situation.
6. You might feel a huge sense of relief once the negotiation appears to be over, but in fact it is not. You are now in the 'trust building phase', during which you need to stick exactly to what was agreed and, if you need to do something different, you need to go back to negotiating. You might decide to initiate some 'mini negotiations' throughout a project, so that not everything is set in stone at the outset. This can be an especially useful approach if you are a team leader

Negotiation within study situations can become complex, and it does not always feel easy, but remember that we all negotiate each day – with compromises and wins that are both small and large – so you have it in you to do this. As a leader, it is one of the key transferable skills you will develop, so it is certainly worth the effort to follow a systematic approach and get it right.

Topic 4.3: Negotiating as a Leader in a Study Situation

It will take time, reflection, and experience of leadership to develop your personal delegation style to a point where you are happy with it, so you need some quick wins now. This can be done through troubleshooting. You will read about some problematic study situation for a leader and I will offer you three possible approaches so that you can fix things now. As you learn and hone your leadership skills, you can adapt or develop the technique in future so that it suits you even better.

[Begin Scenario 1: Explore Your Options]

Scenario 1

Situation 1: My team have fallen out completely. I now seem to be leading two separate teams.

Accept it quietly

- You can assign tasks to one or the other faction and complete the project regardless.

Accept it openly

- One email to explain that you recognise that team members prefer to work in separate, smaller groups and you are happy to work on that basis. Then try to avoid any discussions about it – focus on the task, not the team politics.

Hold one meeting to allow everyone to have their say

- Use the negotiation techniques outlined in this resource to help you make the most of the meeting. If nothing can be resolved, revert to the divided team approach described in the other options.

Situation 2: We are running short on time – this is a crash about to happen in a couple of weeks when the project is due in.

Revise the plan

If you have not been working to a formal, written plan, now is the time to make one and share it with everyone.

Bring your team together

If you are concerned that team members are not pulling their weight, hold a meeting to make a collective plan that everyone can approve.

Choose an effective timeline

If your plan does not include a timeline to monitor progress and remind everyone of the deadline, now is the time to make one.

Situation 3: The team are trying hard but some of the material that a couple of team members have produced is not good enough.

Point out the need to be uniform and let everyone know that you have been kind enough to set up some guidelines based on the assignment criteria

Written guidelines give you and your team some distance from each other at the same time as putting in place the tools to fix it.

Suggest that, now the project is underway, you are pairing team members up to edit each other's work – then be careful with the pairing

Pair working can be a powerful move and will usually result in greater productivity and better quality work – as long as you think about which pairings will be most productive.

Offer to proofread and check over anyone's output and hope that the underperforming team members take you up on the offer

This will take up your time, but it is probably less time-consuming than having to reallocate (or even rewrite) work later.

Situation 4: One member of my team is loud – all the time. It is disrupting everything.

Switch to online meetings for a while and encourage everyone to use the chat function so that other voices can be heard

The chat function on online platforms is a gift both to those members of a team who are naturally quiet, or feel silenced, and to the leaders who really want to hear from them.

Share leading the meetings with different team members so that others get the chance to shine

This gives everyone the chance to shine, but only if you have the self-discipline to support the team by letting others lead from time to time without too much interference.

Be brave and talk directly to the team member – this is not easy, but the person might have no idea that there is a problem

The material in this resource on assertiveness would be valuable if this is the route you decide to take.

Situation 5: Everyone seems to think that being the leader means doing all the work. I am exhausted.

Switch how you communicate

Changing how you communicate can be an effective strategy for you to delegate and change team dynamics. If you find it hard to be assertive in a meeting, use email to make some of the arrangements and task allocation.

Recirculate the plan with the task allocation clearly noted as a reminder to everyone

If you suspect that your email might be ignored, make a hard copy and circulate it during your next team meeting.

Delegate and empower

You are the team leader, not the manager. You could ask two team members to make sure that allocated tasks are completed on time.

Situation 6: I am holding meetings where only two of the team of eight turn up, so we are demoralised and doing all the work.

Check how much you are enjoying the work

It can feel good to bond with team members over the amount of work you do, even if you tell yourselves you are demoralised. If you are doing all the work but not really finding it too onerous, you might allocate new tasks to others and keep the current workload to yourselves.

Use an online poll to find out what time and date suits everyone, and whether they would prefer on-campus or online meetings

This will give you an idea of when and how to hold meetings, and also ensure buy-in from team members.

Are you holding too many meetings?

Perhaps the reason that you are getting low attendance at the meetings is because they are at an inconvenient time or not very useful for others. Think carefully and plan the minimum number of meetings you need to finish your project on time.

[End Scenario 1: Explore Your Options]

As with so many of the skills you will be developing as you study, both leadership and negotiation are part of your developing tool kit in life. You could not expect to conquer either of these in a short time or through one or two experiences. This resource will be here for you to revisit throughout your time as a student, as you become increasingly proficient in these skills and so more successful as a leader and negotiator.

Skill Self-Assessment

1. I need help to think about the sort of leader I might be. (maps onto topic 2.1, Discovering Yourself as a Leader)
2. I am not sure how my previous life experience can help me become a leader. (maps onto 2.2, Analysing Your Past Leadership Experiences)
3. I am not sure I could recognise and overcome barriers to my leadership. (maps onto 2.3, Overcoming Barriers to Leadership)
4. I am not sure how to create a team that will work well together. (maps onto 2.4, Creating a Successful Team)
5. I have been in some poorly led teams in the past and want to learn from that. (maps onto 3.1, How Teams Work and the Art of Delegation)
6. I am not sure how to set things up as a leader. (maps onto 3.2, Setting the Agenda)
7. I do not have a personal delegation style. (maps onto 3.3, Your Personal Delegation Style)

8. I need to understand some basic negotiation techniques. (maps onto 4.1, Negotiation Skills in a Nutshell)
9. I want to master the detail of how to negotiate successfully. (maps onto 4.2, Negotiation Skills in Practice)
10. I want to try out my negotiation skills in a study setting. (maps onto 4.3, Negotiating as a Leader in a Study Situation)