

Essential Teamwork Skills: Perspectives of Environmental Geoscience Employers

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PURPOSE & GOALS

- Geoscience employers have identified the ability to work in teams as an essential non-technical skill (Mosher & Keane, 2021)
- We need to identify what these specific skills are, and how they are enacted in academic and professional employment settings in order to design instruction that helps students learn critical teamwork skills
- This study characterized teamwork process skills essential to the geosciences identified by employers as viewed through the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Teamwork Model (Marks et al. 2001)

METHODS

Participants

	Focus Group 1	Focus Group 2	Focus Group 3
Gender	Female: 1 Male: 4	Female: 1 Male: 3	Female: 1 Male: 2
Position	Snr. Hydrologist, Proj. Manager, CEO, Tech. Leader, Snr. Scientist	Princ. Geologist, Section Head, Vice President, District Supervisor	Proj. Manager, CEO, District Head

Data Collection & Analysis

Three online focus group discussions centered around teamwork

Focus group discussions were audio recorded and transcribed

Developed a priori codes defined within the taxonomy of three teamwork process skills - transition, action, and interpersonal skills

Fourth category of teamwork skills, ethics, emerged from data analysis

Coded text segments representing each category were compiled using NVivo 12

Results interpreted within the Marks et al. (2001) framework

Finalized coding scheme was applied to all focus group transcripts

RESULTS

Transition Skills

- Skills that promote team task evaluation and planning
- Mission analysis
 - Identification of resources
 - Goal specification
 - Planning & budgeting

One of the pivotal foundations of being able to move a project forward is being able to identify goals and identify who's doing what.

Action Skills

- Skills that directly impact task accomplishment
- Metacognition
 - Mentoring & Coaching
 - Information synthesis
 - Coordination

It's important to mentor, train and educate our team members at the various levels to understand the role that they play.

Interpersonal Skills

- Skills that promote the management of human resource interactions within teams
- Emotional intelligence
 - Communication
 - Organization & time management

That high emotional intelligence of being able to kind of read things in the teams.

Ethics

- Skills that ensures moral standards and principles in teamwork
- Trustworthiness
 - Humility
 - Integrity

You got to be genuine. Because people in your team want to trust whatever you say or do.

DISCUSSION

Teamwork Skills	Identified Teamwork Competency Skills		
	Marks et al., 2001	Mosher & Keane, 2021	Present Study
Transition Skills	Mission analysis; Goal specification; strategy formulation	Goal setting	Mission analysis; Goal specification; Resource identification; Planning & budgeting
Action Skills	Monitoring Progress, Systems, & Team; coordination	Metacognition; Coordination; Coaching; Problem solving	Metacognition; Mentoring; Information synthesis; Coordination
Interpersonal Skills	Conflict management; Confidence building; Affect management	Leadership; Conflict management	Emotional intelligence; Communication; Organization & time management
Ethical Skills	-	-	Trustworthiness; Integrity; Humility

Key finding: In geoscience workforce teams, skills related to planning and evaluation of tasks, metacognitive and coordination skills, mentoring, and interpersonal skills related to emotional intelligence, communication, and ethics are essential for effective teamwork.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

- Employ experiential learning practices such as
 - Role-playing that uses teamwork skills
 - Service-learning techniques that employs structured teamwork among students
- Communicate the importance of teamwork skills to students
- Workforce preparation strategies that teach geo-ethics