

Grundtvig In Service Training Courses

DYNAMICS OF COMMUNITIES



Educommunity – Educational Community

WHAT TO EXPECT IN GROUPWORK

Several factors we may not always think about when working in a group are vital to a successful collaborative oriented communities.

You should always establish how your group will handle each of these.

- Agreement
- Conflict
- Socializing
- Wrong Decisions
- Unequal Commitments



AGREEMENT

"Ideal" productive groups do not exist. Some of the most productive groups disagree, spend a lot of time goofing around, and even follow many blind alleys before achieving consensus. It's important to be aware of the rather messy nature of group work.



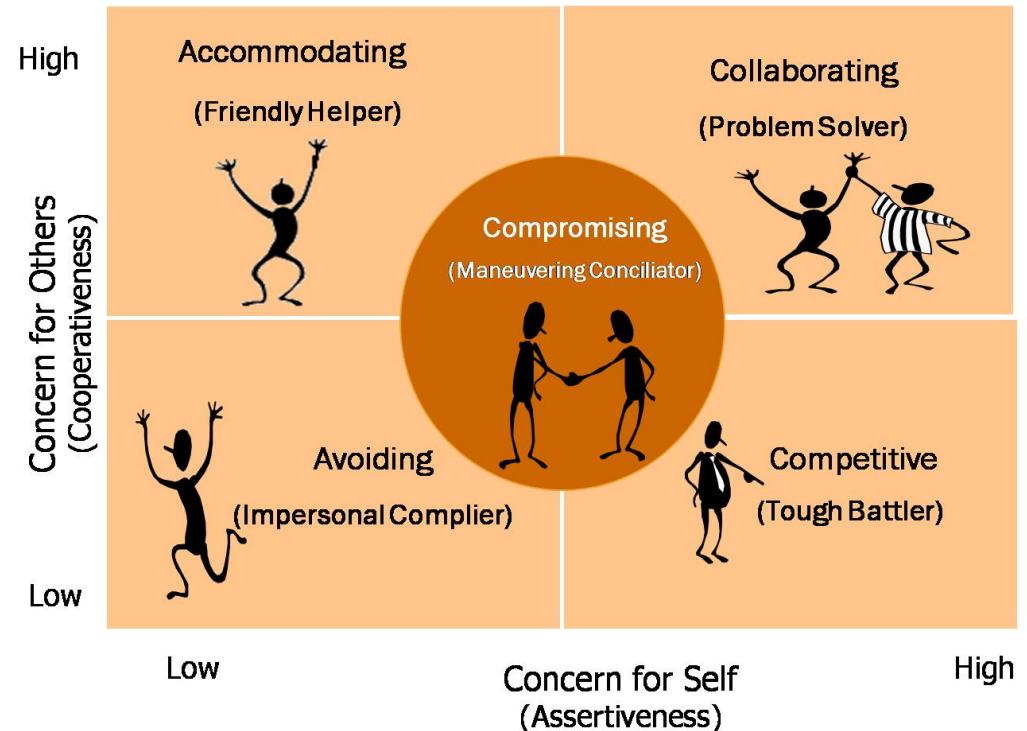
CONFLICT

Substantive conflict, conflict directed toward the work at hand and issues pertaining to it, is highly productive and should be encouraged.

Personal conflict, conflict directed toward group members' egos, however, is damaging and unproductive.

The lesson is that students need to respect each other. Some groups decide to negotiate respect by making rules against inappropriate comments or personal attacks.

CONFLICT HANDLING INTENTIONS



SOCIALIZING

Socializing, joking around, or telling stories are a natural part of group interaction and should be encouraged.

It is primarily through goofing off & out; that group members learn about each other's personalities, communication styles, and senses of humor.



Such knowledge builds trust and community among the members.

Although groups should be counseled not to spend inappropriately long amounts of time simply gossiping or telling stories

they should also realize the importance and influence such interactions can have on achieving a group identity that all members come to share.

WRONG DECISIONS



Making mistakes, trying out options that don't work, and so on are not a waste of time.

Although such frustrations take place even in individual contexts, they are particularly hard to negotiate in a group context because our immediate instinct is to blame another group member for a faulty suggestion.

Members should be aware that all time spent on a task is productive even if it does not lead to any tangible product.

UNEQUAL COMMITMENT



In a perfect world, everyone would have as much time and desire in a group as others to create the best possible result, but the reality is some people are procrastinators or care more about their grades in certain group.

Expect this and make contingencies for it by deciding early on:

- what the "penalty" will be for those who miss meetings or fail to pull their weight;
- what is the best role fit for each member.

PHASE 1

- Oppositions and mistrust
- Lurking
- Establishing reciprocity
- Growing of the disposability to share experiences and knowledge;
- Development of peer to peer support dynamics
- Consolidation of the sense of belonging and membership



Time to encourage socialization

PHASE 1



- information about : aims, times, ways;
- adhesion to the assignment through a learning agreement;
- Self presentation, profile description, meaningful biography ;
- explicating motivations and expectations;

PHASE 1

The generation of a productive dialog and learning interaction it is not a spontaneous process. Culture of knowledge sharing is a result more than a starting point.

- Support the exchange of ideas, experiences, values, rules.
- Create the conditions for a mutual support relationship and to support the growing of sense of belonging to the group and the development of a common identity.
- Propose clear rules, netiquette, guide lines for the interaction, timetable.



Rules Social Etiquette Netiquette Ethics
pleasant communicate proper
Cyberspace Code Behaviour

The happening of a **COGNITIVE CONFLICT**, during the interactions with the other members of the Community around themes of discussions, is a decisive and critical point.

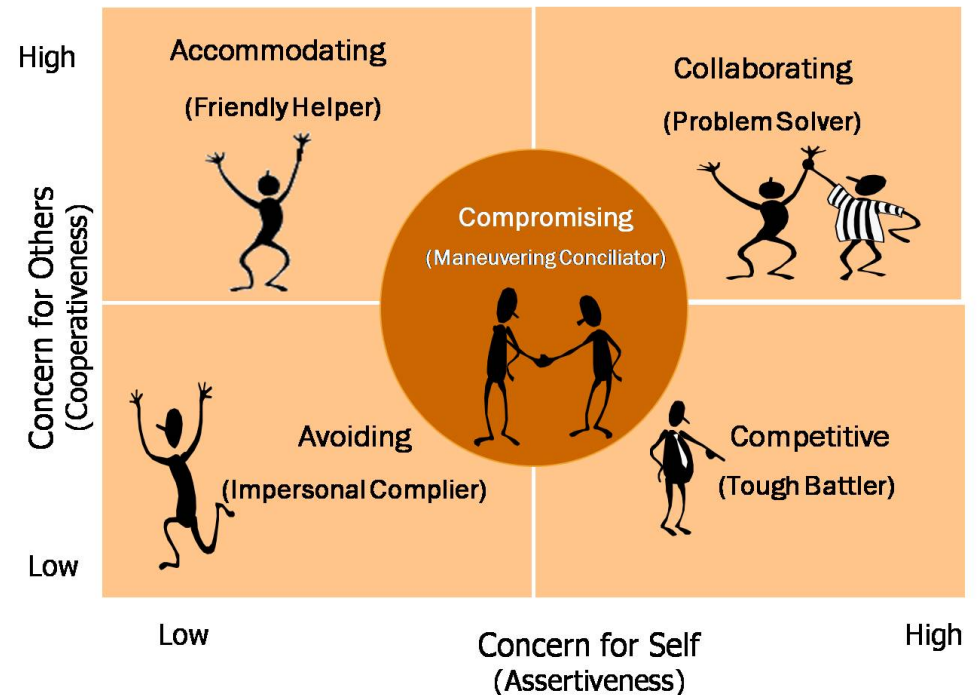
It is a hard moment of crisis of consolidated knowledge; it can also generate flaming, yet it is a **precious moment** to be valorised.

The cognitive conflict represents the **real start up of the learning process** of the group and of the individual.

Reactions and feedbacks of the Tutor and of the other participants can support the **start up of the learning process of the whole community**.

PHASE 2

CONFLICT HANDLING INTENTIONS



PHASE 2

The cognitive conflict stimulates the sharing of experiences, of representative biographies and of knowledge supporting the improvement of membership. The mistrust slowly decreases and the community is more and more dispositive to share doubts and problems.

- Sharing of common problems, doubts, solutions, tools;
- Development of peer to peer supports dynamics;
- Complete adhesion to the aim of the community and knowledge sharing consolidation;
- Request of transformation of the learning environment;
- identification of experts de facto;
- improvement of the autonomy of the community in the problem finding, setting, solving;
- developing of a leadership at a dynamic asset;
- growing of the networking with other communities having similar interests and aims.



PHASE 2

- Identification of experts "de facto";
- improvement of the autonomy of the community in the problem finding, problem setting, problem solving;
- developing of a dynamic leadership at a variable asset;
- growing of the networking with other (virtual or real) communities having similar interests and aims;
- flexible and integrated use of a rich mix of communication devices.



Thank you for you attention

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