

Scenario

This team is part of a technical communication class in electrical engineering. They are about 1/3 into the semester. Their assignment is to submit a proposal for research related to a new development in ECE. This team is convening for their regularly scheduled weekly team meeting and the topic for discussion is compiling the different portions of the proposal. Student teams have progressed through creating an abstract, developing a team experience page, and researching their individual task/approach. The next step in the design process is compiling the actual document and deciding on who is responsible for what. That is the purpose of this team meeting. The students, Rachel, Jared, Ben, and Sam are hoping to write a high quality proposal and earn an A.

Jared is the official team leader for this phase of the project. When the team developed their working agreement, they decided that leadership would rotate from team member to team member. In addition, they decided that the leader would be responsible for having an agenda to guide interactions during the meeting, and would keep the team on task and encourage participation from every member. Today, Jared's main agenda is to design a cover page for the proposal. By the end of the meeting, a mock up of the cover page is to be produced.

The following information is the basis for the dialogue that ensues.

Jared

Jared is the official team leader. He has a passive communication style, but is very thoughtful in his contributions to the team. He takes the working agreement very seriously and is committed to having all members of the team participate equally.

Rachel

Rachel was the official team leader for the previous phase of this project. She is domineering and is often impatient with the design process. Her goal is to be extremely efficient and as a result, she often skips over agenda items to get her goals accomplished with minimal time and minimal team discussion.

Ben

Ben has not yet been a leader in this team, but is an active team member. He is even-tempered and encourages participation from everyone. Producing a quality result is his top priority. He is extremely committed to the project and believes the best way to accomplish their goals is by relying on the expertise of all team members. Ben and Rachel are friends outside of class.

Sam

Sam's loyalties flip-flop. He will be an advocate for Jared, the self-proclaimed leader, one minute and a part of the coalition that sometimes develops between Ben and Jared the next. He wants to do a good job, but he is basically a silent member who goes along with different people at different times.