

# **Group Collaboration with Autism Speaks**

**Group 2**

# Group Formation

- ❖ In some cases, choosing the right people is key to putting together a team that is well rounded.
- ❖ Our strategy was to find people that worked well together in the past as well as to identify new group members.
- ❖ Andrea reached out to both Shanell and Elisabeth through the introductory video posts.
- ❖ Additionally, Andrea noticed Jasmyn was in our class and connected with her.
- ❖ Lastly, Louis reached out when he saw that Andrea, whom he had worked with before, was in the group.

## Group Formation Cont.

- ❖ Identifying the group quickly allowed us to bond early in the group formation.
- ❖ We started out getting to know each other's backgrounds.
- ❖ As we identified each new member, we added them to a group text that would eventually become a Facebook Messenger thread.



# Choosing Roles

- ❖ Our first set of roles were determined by the strengths we had presented—i.e. technology, social media, outreach, etc.
- ❖ As a group, we decided to go further by taking a test to help understand the roles for which we were best suited.
- ❖ Andrea provided a well-designed Belbin Roles test that allowed us to assign values to statements regarding our communication styles as well as team dynamics. (next slide)

# A Sample of the Belbin Roles Test

## What I Believe I Can Contribute to a Team:

1 I think I can quickly see and take advantage of opportunities.

2 I can work well with a very wide range of people.

3 I can usually sense what is realistic and likely to work.

4 My capacity to follow through has much to do with my personal effectiveness.

5 My ability rests in being able to draw people out whenever I detect they have something of value to contribute to group activities.

6 My technical knowledge and experience is usually my major asset.

7 I can offer a reasoned case for alternative courses of action without introducing bias or prejudice.

8 Producing ideas is one of my natural assets.

9 I am ready to face temporary unpopularity if it leads to worthwhile results in the end.

You have ten (10) points to distribute amongst the statements on the left, depending on how much you agree with each of them. Statements you disagree with or are indifferent to will be awarded zero points. You may not give negative points to any statement, nor are you allowed to award fewer than ten points in total. You may distribute points as you wish.

Points Remaining:

10

YOU HAVE NOT USED ALL OF YOUR POINTS YET

10 I am ready to face temporary unpopularity if it leads to worthwhile results in the end.

8 Producing ideas is one of my natural assets.

## Choosing Roles Cont.

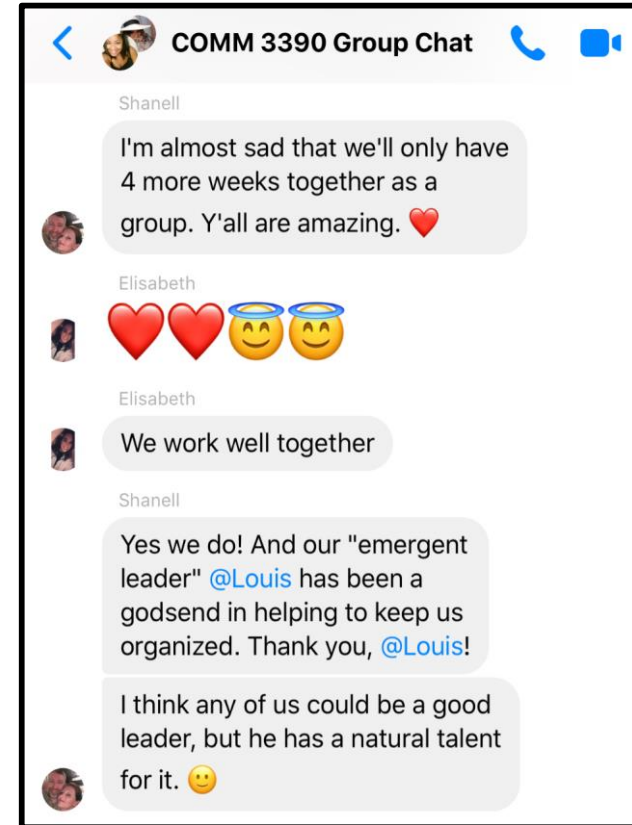
- ❖ We each took the test, shared our results, and used Andrea's guide as well as the text to better understand what our roles meant.
- ❖ Our group proved to be as strong as we had imagined with a diverse range of results that covered all of the roles to some degree.
- ❖ While we appreciated understanding more about how our personalities fit certain roles, we did not conform strictly to the results we received.
  - Many of us proved to be versatile group members. We all implemented ideas, specialized in various areas, monitored and evaluated the progression of the project, and we each worked well as a team worker.

# Creating Rules

- ❖ Deciding which rules to implement was another example, early in the project, of how well we coordinated with each other.
  - We all showed a strong desire to work hard, efficiently, and respectfully with each other.
  - We quickly realized that a text string was not the best way to communicate as many members preferred typing on a keyboard and working from a computer.
  - As a group we decided to form a Facebook Messenger chat that we would all be a part of.
  
- ❖ From here we agreed that communication was of the utmost importance.
  - We discussed how often each member should be responsible for checking the group chat and agreed that three days out of the week to catch up on communication was reasonable.
  - We realized that our varying schedules might clash and established a chat window from 10AM until 10PM to ensure that nobody was bothered outside of chat hours.

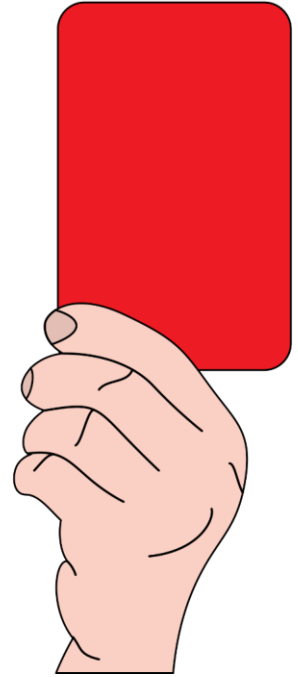
# Creating Rules Cont.

- ❖ The final rule that we created was the oldest rule in society: the **Golden Rule**. Respect, kindness, and humility were to be utilized at all times as we wanted to treat each other as we would like to be treated.
- ❖ Each of these decisions was made through open, honest communication as a group. We presented our ideas and arguments for those ideas then collaborated as a team to ensure we all agreed on each decision.



# Assigning Penalties

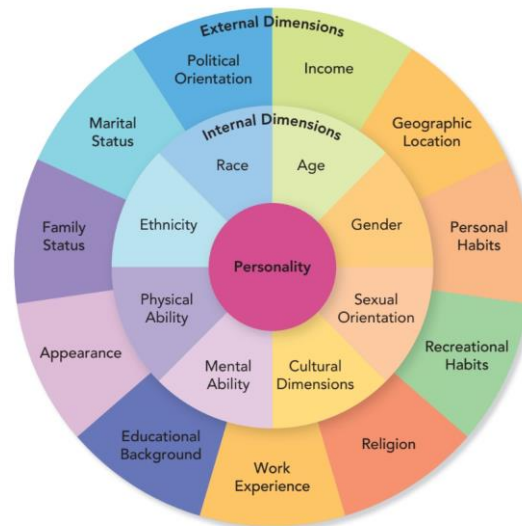
- ❖ Penalties proved to be an easy obstacle to tackle because none of the group members were overly concerned that we would have to implement them.
  - We agreed that the first step in any rule violation was to address it as a group and to make sure that the member committing an infraction knew that they had.
  - The second step would be a team meeting that would include a video-chat or other conference to address the problem and discuss further solutions.
  - If all else failed and a group member refused to work with the team, we would turn to Professor Winfield and evaluate whether or not more drastic means needed to be taken to ensure the continued harmony of the group.



# Group Differences

- ❖ Chapter Four of the textbook discusses the Three Layers of Diversity.
  - We had a mix of each of these layers of diversity represented in our group.
    - Internal dimensions that varied include gender, age, ethnicity, etc. while external dimensions include marital status, political orientation, geographic location, etc.

Figure 4.1 Three Layers of Diversity



# Group Differences Cont.

- ❖ These examples of diversity did not hinder or divide our group.
- ❖ The most difficult element to work around was our geographic locations as we are all spread out around Texas.
  - The group was able to utilize our different locations to find local chapters of our chosen organization in multiple cities.
    - This proved to be a strength for us as we were able to have a larger network of understanding as to the reach of Autism Speaks.
    - We connected with the local chapters as well as other individuals who represented those affected by Autism in some way.

# Group Differences Cont.

- ❖ Another way in which we differed was also discussed in Chapter Four: Personality Dimensions.
- ❖ The group was mostly composed of extroverts who were not afraid to engage with each other in the chat.
  - Talking and interacting was not an issue.
  - When it came time to make decisions there was a mix of accommodation and compromise (Chapter Eight) which made it possible for us to decide on courses of action efficiently.
- ❖ Overall, we were able to not only recognize our unique diversity, different communication styles, and various approaches to conflict, but utilize each of these to create an even stronger group.

# Choosing an Organization

- ❖ Each member presented an organization that would be interesting or fundamental to support, but it seemed quickly that Autism Speaks was the one for us.
- ❖ Nearly all of us know someone with Autism as this condition affects an estimated 1 in 59 children in the United States today.
- ❖ The organization was important for us to represent and bring awareness to because it's imperative for people to understand and have compassion for these children and their parents.
- ❖ No child is the same, and while some may take the Bar Exam, others will need care the rest of their lives and we want people to understand that and not hold each child to the same standard.

“If you’ve met  
one person with  
autism, you’ve  
met one person  
with autism.”

Dr Stephen  
Shore

## Choosing an Organization Cont.

**Christina held an interview with a SPEAK (Special Program Educating Autistic Kids) teacher in Humble ISD about AS, below is a snippet-**

**Christina:** “Why do you think Autism Speaks is an important organization to bring attention to?”

**Mr. Rother:** “I think, due to the increasing diagnosis of the condition, that its important for parents to know that NO autistic child is the same, and there are resources and help available to them. They should not be scared to reach out and connect with other parents, doctors, therapists, etc., to be able to provide the best possible care and understanding for their children. Don’t be scared of the label.”

# Organizational Information

The following is an overview pulled from the Autism Speaks website:

“In 2005, Suzanne and Bob Wright co-founded Autism Speaks, inspired by their grandson who was diagnosed with autism. Guided by the Wrights’ leadership and vision, Autism Speaks has grown into the world’s leading autism science and advocacy organization. The Wrights helped raise funding for groundbreaking science, effective advocacy and extensive family services, enhancing lives now and into the future. They spearheaded Autism Speaks’ signature initiatives: new federal laws ensuring financial security for people with disabilities and insurance reform for autism care; a public service campaign credited with educating countless families about the early signs of autism; World Autism Awareness Day, sanctioned by the United Nations; and the Light It Up Blue awareness campaign, now involving more than 150 countries.”

# Organization Information Cont.

- ❖ The organization has chapters in areas that include:
  - Arizona, Carolinas, Central Florida, Chicago/Wisconsin, Colorado, Eastern Pennsylvania/Southern New Jersey, Georgia/Tennessee, Greater New York, Indiana, Iowa, Long Island, Michigan, Minnesota, National Capital Area, New England, New Jersey, New York City, Northern California, Ohio, San Diego, Seattle, South Florida, Southern California, St. Louis/Kansas City, Texas, Western Pennsylvania.
- ❖ They provide many ways for people to volunteer and get involved including:
  - Donations
  - Fundraisers
  - Charity walks
  - Advocacy campaigns
  - Partnerships with companies and other organizations

# The Impact we Hoped to Have

- ❖ As stated earlier, we believed that aligning with this group would help in many ways.
  - We wanted to spread awareness for the organization so that the public knew the value of the nonprofit.
  - We wanted to use our social media campaign to not just spread awareness for the organization, but for Autism and Autistic individuals in general.
  - We wanted to create a further sense of compassion in individuals and educate the public on the uniqueness of each individual with Autism.
  - We wanted to get more people involved with the organization and encourage participation in a variety of ways.
  - Above all else, we wanted to show support for an organization that supports so many others and works hard for a community.

# Connecting with the Organization

- ❖ Andrea reached out to a connection of hers within Autism Speaks to begin the process while other group members contacted reps for local chapters.
  - This provided a good foundation for starting our project
  - Andrea was able to learn what areas the organization was lacking in so that we could form our project around those weaknesses.
- ❖ Our goal became raising awareness for Autism Speaks and the various services they provide including:
  - Healthcare
  - Diagnostic testing
  - Therapy
  - Occupational support



# Connecting with the Organization Cont.

- ❖ The results of our small group collaboration was rewarding.
  - Our Facebook page accrued close to 200 followers.
  - Our posts gained many likes as well as dozens of shares that reached others.
  - Our group communicated daily to ensure that posts were effective and that deadlines were met.
  
- ❖ Our collaboration with the larger organization was very promising.
  - In addition to learning about the need for more awareness of the organization, we identified other areas for growth.
  - We learned that Autism Speaks encourages the creation of chapters on college campuses and while most of us are close to graduation we helped spread this information further.

# Our Facebook Page

Enhancing lives today  
and accelerating a  
spectrum of solutions  
for tomorrow

Across the spectrum and throughout the life span



**Autism Speaks Awareness**

Published by Shanell Dyson Weatherall [?]

Like This Page · February 7 · 🌐

Add a description



Tag Photo



Add Location



Edit



Andrea Nicole



Like



Comment



Share



Write a comment...



Press Enter to post.

# What Worked and What Did Not

- ❖ The first tactic that we realized did not work was our process for assigning roles.
  - The primary roles we came up with were based mostly on our first impressions of each other's strengths and weaknesses.
  - Andrea provided a Belbin roles quiz which each group member took.
  - Louis then analyzed the results to identify who would be best doing certain tasks, such as reaching out to the organization, based on those results.
  
- ❖ The tactics that did work were our social media strategies.
  - Creating a Facebook page gave us a platform to reach the public.
  - Sharing information as well as links to further reading was the best way for us to spread awareness on a large scale.

# What We Accomplished

- ❖ Overall, our group accomplished everything that we hoped to.
  - We were able to agree on a nonprofit that appealed to the altruism in us all.
  - We made contact with multiple members of our chosen organization and identified how we could be of help to Autism Speaks.
  - We created a social media page that allowed us to reach people who were not well-informed on the services of the organization.
  - We gained hundreds of likes, follows, and shares on the page.
  - We communicated efficiently and effectively, made connections, and created a presentation that we were all proud of.

**MISSION ACCOMPLISHED**

# Group Members

- ❖ Andrea Askins
- ❖ Louis Barragan
- ❖ Jasmyn Carter
- ❖ Christina Jacquot
- ❖ Elisabeth Johnson
- ❖ Joseph Simmons
- ❖ Shanell Weatherall



# Resources

- ❖ <https://www.autismspeaks.org/become-partner>
- ❖ Engleberg, I.A. & Wynn, D.R. (2013). Working in groups (6th edition). Boston; Pearson.