



High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson HS.82

SKILLS FOR CONSENSUS BUILDING

Unit. Stage 2 of Development—YOU

Problem Area. How Do I Begin to Influence Others?

Precepts. C5: Persuade others to commit.

National Standards. NL-ENG.K-12.12 — Applying Language Skills — Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Define consensus and consensus building.
- 2 Describe the importance of consensus about vision and goals for the group or organization.
- 3 Identify and apply effective skills for arriving at group consensus.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

Kouzes, J. M. and B. Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*, San Francisco. Josey-Bass, 2002.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ Overhead projector and transparencies
- ✓ Three tennis balls
- ✓ HS.82.Assess
- ✓ HS.82.TM.A



Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- Consensus
- Consensus building
- Synergy



Interest Approach



Agreeing with each other is an important part of life. Think about a time when you, your family, or a group of friends were trying to decide where to go eat. Record the events that took place as you attempted to make this decision. When finished, turn your paper over.

Call on individuals to share their responses. If necessary, teacher may begin discussion with a personal example.



Thanks for sharing. Our responses seem to indicate that agreement is not as simple as it sounds.



SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Define consensus and consensus building.



Let's take a look at how to simplify the concept of agreement.

Provide the following information on the writing surface and instruct students to capture the information in their notebooks. Relate key terms given in student definitions to the definitions given below.

- I. Consensus is a general agreement on an idea or course of action held by all members of the team.
- II. Consensus building is the creation of the agreement between all members of the team.



Now that we understand consensus and consensus building, re-write the "going out to eat" scenario to determine how these concepts can be applied.

Allow for student responses, and reinforce the fact that consensus was the final decision upon where to eat, and consensus building was the process of reaching consensus on where to eat.

Objective 2. Describe the importance of consensus about vision and goals for the group or organization.

Provide the following information on the writing surface and instruct students to capture the information in their notebooks. Relate key terms given in student definitions to the definitions given below.

- III. For a group to accomplish its goals and vision efficiently and effectively, everyone on the team must agree on and be committed to the goals and vision.
 - A. Every person on the team plays a role and has a different function that is vitally important to the accomplishment of goals and realization of vision. If a person is more committed to a personal agenda than the group's general course, the group will not function as effectively or efficiently. Those special talents and abilities of the one individual



will not be available for the production and realization of the group's common interests.

B. When everyone in the group forms a consensus about vision and goals, and everyone strives to turn those into reality through action, synergy is built, and everyone benefits. Usually, groups work more efficiently and realize a common accomplishment and reward that is greater than any single person's accomplishment or reward.

1. Synergy means the combined action being greater in total than the simple sum of actions. An example of synergy is that $1 + 1 = 5$, instead of the traditional of 1 and 1 summing to 2.



Think about the importance of consensus with goals and vision. This activity requires you to listen carefully, think creatively, and share your ideas with the class.

Tennis Ball Activity.

Assemble the group in a circle.



The objectives of this activity are three-fold: to move the tennis ball(s) around the circle as quickly as possible, to make sure everyone touches the tennis balls, and to call each person's name as they are passed the balls. The last person passes the ball(s) back to the originator. The same order must be maintained throughout the activity.

Pass one tennis ball around the circle and time the group. Challenge the team to a faster goal. Allow the team to generate ideas and pass the balls. Add the other two balls for a total of three tennis balls. Pass the balls and time the event. Continually challenge the group to faster times and brainstorm until the fastest possible is attained.

The fastest means is for every one to crowd in together and hold their hands out. One person moves to the middle of the circle, holding the balls. As he/she spins around, everyone touches the balls and calls the name of the person next to them. This should take about three to four seconds.

Objective 3. Identify and apply effective skills for arriving at group consensus.

Provide the following information on the writing surface and instruct students to capture the information in their notebooks.

Use HS.82.TM.A to facilitate instruction about Objective 2. Relate key terms given in student definitions to the definitions given below.

IV. Effective skills for arriving at a consensus about vision and goals include caring for your team members, brainstorming, creating ownership in the goals and vision, and rewarding success.

A. What's in it for me?

1. Most people want to know how they will be affected by the actions and consensus goals and vision of the group or team.

2. The leader must paint a picture of the personal benefits for all involved in the goals and vision.



- B. Allow everyone input into the process, goals, and vision.
 - 1. One of the strongest motivators is the drive to see a personal idea or vision turn into reality.
 - 2. Even if we can have a small portion of ownership in the idea, action, goals, and vision, we will work harder to see that those aims are realized.
- C. Brainstorming
 - 1. The collaborative effort of sharing ideas about a particular problem, opportunity, direction, goal, or vision.
 - 2. Implies that all ideas are valid and useful to the formation of consensus.
 - 3. No idea is evaluated, no idea is discouraged, and no idea is withdrawn from consideration.
- D. Provide clear expectations
 - 1. The basic minimum acceptable standards must be clearly stated and abided by.
 - 2. The expectation that all team members give maximum effort.
- E. Provide effective assistance
 - 1. The leader provides needed assistance to anyone on the team.
 - 2. Individual help or direction to obtain necessary skills and information is supplied.
 - 3. Connect key individuals who have compatible skills and talents.
- F. Reward effort and build collaboration
 - 1. The leader rewards effort with verbal and public praise.
 - 2. Both praise and fear are motivators; however, praise is sustaining and constructive, while fear is limited and destructive.
- G. Have fun.
 - 1. People prosper in an atmosphere of high energy and fun.
 - 2. Fun can increase productivity when channeled correctly.
 - 3. For many types of personalities, the process of achieving something is as important as the actual attainment of a goal.



Think about effective skills for consensus building. This activity requires you to listen carefully, think creatively, and share your ideas with the class.

Teach the following material using a Me-you-us Moment. The topic to initiate the discussion is methods for consensus building.



Review/Summary



Think about skills for consensus building. This activity requires you to listen carefully, think creatively, and share your ideas with the class.

Review, using a Bob the Weather Guy Moment. Students deliberate and then present an idea, concept, or process as if it were a weather report. Challenge them to forecast what will happen, show how other people and activities will be affected, and what their latest “Doppler Radar” explains about this idea, concept, or process. The “weather report” should reflect knowledge of consensus building.



Application

Extended Classroom Activity:

Have students develop a personalized plan for developing consensus when working with teams.

FFA Activity:

Analyze local chapter FFA scenarios and the use of consensus building.

SAE Activity:

Develop a personal SAE plan for building consensus with customers.

Evaluation

HS.82.Assess

Answers to Assessment:

Part One: Matching

1. b.
2. a.
3. c.

Part Two: Completion

1. affected, vision
2. verbal feedback, encouragement
3. expectations, excellence
4. brainstorming, respected

Part Three: Short Answer

1. People prosper in an atmosphere of high energy and fun. Where there is fun, there are happy people. Where there are happy people, there also will be found productive people. For many types of personalities, the process of achieving something is as important as the actual attainment of a goal.
2. Synergy means the combined action being greater in total than the simple sum of actions. An example of synergy is that $1 + 1 = 5$, instead of the traditional of 1 and 1 summing to 2.



SKILLS FOR CONSENSUS BUILDING

►Part One: Matching

Instructions. Match the term with the correct response. Write the letter of the term by the definition.

- a. Consensus
- b. Consensus building
- c. Synergy

- _____ 1. The creation of an agreement between all members of the team.
- _____ 2. A general agreement on an idea or course of action held by all members of the team.
- _____ 3. The combined action being greater in total than the simple sum of actions.

►Part Two: Completion

Instructions. Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

- 1. Most people want to know how they will be _____ by the actions and consensus goals and _____ of the group or team.
- 2. You can make a person's day by recognizing the individual with _____, a pat on the back, a note, a card, a simple gift, anything that provides _____ and endears the person to the group and its cause.
- 3. The leader must provide clear _____ of the level of _____ and performance expected.
- 4. The _____ process necessitates that all ideas and opinions are _____ and considered, every member of the team operates on the same level, and people feel the need to share ideas.

►Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions. Provide information to answer the following questions.

- 1. Why is having fun in group settings important.
- 2. Explain synergy.



SKILLS FOR ARRIVING AT GROUP CONSENSUS

- ◆ **What's in it for me.**
- ◆ **Make their day.**
- ◆ **Believe in the power of your people.**
- ◆ **Allow everyone input into the process, goals, and vision.**
- ◆ **Brainstorming.**
- ◆ **Provide clear expectations.**
- ◆ **Provide effective assistance.**
- ◆ **Reward effort and build collaboration.**
- ◆ **Have fun.**

