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## The importance of teamwork

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” The above proverb by Henry Ford can very well highlight the importance of working together in teams. The ability to work in teams is one of the most vital soft skills that often taught in universities to be applied in the business world as well as required in professional life.

Nowadays, teamwork is an essential element of the society and plays an important role in assessing one’s ability in various kinds of career. Teamwork is not only reflected in a team’s success, but also in individual growth. According to Taylorist model, in current times there has been growing emphasis in tertiary education that students should develop professional skills as a part of their education. Skills such as problem solving, communication, collaboration, interpersonal skills, social skills and time management are actively being targeted by prospective employers as an essential requirement for employability, especially in a team environment. Of these, employment authorities consistently mention collaboration and teamwork as being a critical skill, essential in almost all working environments (Taylorist 2003).

Moreover, teamwork is the concept of people working together cooperatively, as in sales team, sports team etc. It has also become so valued that many large corporations have developed specific tests to measure potential employee’s teamwork ability. Hence, it has become an important goal in most workplaces, the belief is that teamwork gives employees a sense of ownership and encourages cooperation (Adeleke, 2008). Gardner and Korth (1998) asserted, “To remain innovative and competitive, businesses are looking for employees who can work and learn effectively in team” (p. 1). Thus, understanding the impact of teamwork on performance is important because teamwork is viewed by some researchers as one of the key driving force for improving a firm’s performance (Jones et al, 2008).

Therefore, Teamwork can be very useful and important to organizations as they can complete critical tasks. Teams are also important and can perform at higher levels than typical workgroups. (See, e.g. Majchrzak & Wang, 1996; Mulvey, Veiga & Elsass, 1996.) This higher performance level is the result of a greater synergy resulting from collaboration and jointly produced outputs rather than a pooling of individual outputs (Katz, 1997). The more informal environment within which team members work, and which also allows for communities of practice to develop resulting in on-going learning and creative applications, enhances the vitality of teams.