

# Implementation Guide

Exploring

Teamwork

Essentials

- A dynamic program
- for building diversity
- appreciation, friendships
- and team skills.

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# Exploring Teamwork Essentials

## A Response to Change

Two significant trends are dramatically changing life in North America. One is the rapid globalization of our economy; the other is the increased diversity in our workforce and at our high school and college campuses. Both trends are creating the need to adopt a greater world view – understanding foreign markets and business practices abroad as well as appreciating the team-based beliefs, values, and behaviors of people who are extraordinarily diverse (in terms of their ethnicity, generation, gender, personality, religion, and so on).

This increasing emphasis on cooperative human interaction leads us to some important observations:

- Employers and colleges are increasingly having people work in teams. Team performance is highly correlated to the development of mutual respect among members, which in turn is dependent on understanding and appreciating different norms of behavior.
- Different groups of people hold different definitions for what constitutes respectful behavior.
- The capacity for understanding others' perspectives and developing listening skill is best improved through a combination of education and meaningful interaction.
- Our differences make us uniquely special and our multiple perspectives hold the potential of improving team performance – as long as they are made known.
- If we expand our perspective and widen our lens of perception, we can begin to appreciate our differences as a source of strength. This, in turn, can lead to deeper learning and stronger teams.

## Easing the Transition from High School to College or Work

The high school experience represents a phase in human development when people seek others most like themselves. The formation of cliques is inevitable. Even in highly diverse schools, ethnic-, gender-, and religion-based segregation in the classroom, in the cafeteria, at school events, and in the development of friendships remains the norm. It is therefore natural for many students to not have meaningful discussion with others unlike themselves and not have their developing “world views” or perspectives deeply explored. These phenomena are not inherently harmful, but can become so when false and negative stereotyping and unhealthy behavior develop.

To prepare students for college and to work effectively in teams, we must offer them opportunities for interaction with people other than close friends with similar life experiences. Discussion can expand learning and break down the walls of bias and ignorance. And the more the unfamiliar becomes familiar, the more likely we are to enjoy diverse relationships.

## Program Description

*Exploring Teamwork Essentials* is a facilitator-led program that features broad but meaningful exposure to the essentials of high-performing teams; communication, value, and behavioral norms of different population segments; and an award-winning documentary film. Facilitated by residence hall advisors, instructors, or other student mentors, participants engage in small-group discussion. These discussions prompt self-reflection while simultaneously providing students the opportunity to build team skills of suspending judgment and listening.

The ultimate goals of *Exploring Teamwork Essentials* are to prepare students to work effectively in team settings and to develop stronger diversity appreciation and understanding. Benefits include:

### **For students:**

- Gain an understanding of what makes teams successful.
- Gain an understanding that respectful behavior varies across (and within) groups of people.
- Become more accepted by others as sources of uniqueness are understood.
- Become better listeners as they appreciate the feeling of being respected when not interrupted.
- Meet more members in their residence hall, class, or school through interesting interaction.

### **For school administrators:**

- Provide a cost-effective program that positively meets multiple priorities: increase inclusion, develop diversity understanding, increase student capability for working in teams, and improve foreign student assimilation.

### **For program facilitators:**

- Offer a highly engaging, educational, and flexible program for their students.
- Develop skill facilitating a basic group exercise.

## Instructional Strategy = Educate + Experience + Assimilate

We believe the unique power of our program stems from the integration of several instructional strategies. Complementary mediums (text, film, interaction) produce magical moments as emotion and logic productively mix. Multiple learning styles are activated, maximizing its effective reach to more students.

**Educate:** The student booklet appeals to the mind. It provides evidence and arguments for the need to become skilled working in team settings. It also offers a fundamental understanding of teamwork-impacting differences, especially those that are most prevalent in the worlds of school and work: ethnic communication norms, generational values, gender communication norms, and personality-driven work style preferences.

**Experience:** The film strikes chords in the soul and opens the heart. It leads the participant on a journey to illuminate differences of perspective, sense the potential of oneness, and appreciate their unique role in this world while appreciating others' as well. The film also sets up the discussion activity to follow. Discussions perform the essential step of developing listening and suspending judgment skills. They also shape one's own (developing) views on key personal beliefs and values. The conversation provides a platform for understanding oneself and others more, surfacing common ground, and forming friendships. Importantly, it also builds team skills and student propensity for greater inclusion.

**Assimilate:** Students answer and discuss questions that call for reflection and comprehension of lessons learned and wisdom gained. The facilitator is also equipped with additional questions to emphasize and integrate key lessons.

This student-empowered program is designed to ensure a meaningful, relevant learning experience. Finally, the highly practical context: - learning to become an effective team member – stimulates student motivation. It offers a credible answer to the question, "What's in it for me?"

## Program Overview

The program consists of three steps:

**Step 1.** The first step involves educating students on the fundamentals of teamwork and diversity. Students begin by independently reading the booklet, *Exploring Teamwork Essentials*. The group then comes together for a discussion that reinforces the fundamentals and builds student connections.

**Step 2.** Next, students view an edited cut of the award-winning film, *ONE: The Movie*. This is designed to create both the awareness of our similarities as well as to open students' minds and hearts to our differences. The film also prepares students for the skill-building exercise to follow.

**Step 3.** Finally, students will develop the critical teamwork skills of listening and suspending judgment by engaging in small-group discussion. This exercise also offers an important side benefit of building connections among students.

## Preparing to Deliver

The purpose of this implementation guide is to enable you to successfully facilitate the *Exploring Teamwork Essentials* program. With proper preparation, we are confident you will succeed in creating a very positive experience for your students. This guide will walk you through each step.

Before facilitating this session, it will be helpful to do the following:

- Read the student booklet for *Exploring Teamwork Essentials*. This information will help you answer questions and increase your confidence as you facilitate.
- Review this entire implementation guide carefully, adding notes in the margins based on your own experience and any other factors specific to your situation.
- Watch the film, *ONE: The Movie*. Observe your own reactions and feelings provoked by the film. You may even wish to watch it more than once, and spend some time discussing it with a colleague, friend, or family member.
- Invite the participants. See the Appendix of this guide for a sample message and a promotional flyer that you can use to promote the program.
- Reserve a room and arrange for the required materials.

## Required Materials and Equipment

The following materials and equipment are required to facilitate this program:

- This implementation guide
- DVD of *ONE: The Movie*
- DVD player and screen large enough for all to see
- Copies of the student booklet
- Multiple sets of Question Cards and 60-second timers (one set for every four students is ideal). You might first review the questions cards, removing any that may be inappropriate to your purpose.

## Room Set-up

You will need a theatre or room large enough to accommodate your students. You will also need seating to accommodate the group dividing into small teams of 3-5 students. Tables and chairs are preferred, but sitting in circles on the floor works too.

Ensure that all participants in the room can see the movie screen. Test the equipment to ensure it is working properly.

Place a table for the facilitator at the front of the room.

## Tips for Effective Facilitation

- Watch the film privately before the session. Observe your own reactions, and be sensitive to the potential reactions of your audience.
- Greet participants as they arrive, and encourage a friendly, informal atmosphere.
- Use this implementation guide. Keep it open in front of you and refer to it as you lead the session.
- Resist the temptation to speak too much. Allow moments of silence as participants consider their feelings and formulate their responses.
- Listen carefully. Ask participants to elaborate if you're not certain of their meaning. Do not judge or criticize any responses.
- Ask open-ended questions. This requires participants to do more thinking and reflection.
- Don't permit a few attendees to dominate the conversation. Ensure that all participants have an opportunity to speak. Invite participants who are not contributing to share their own thoughts or opinions.
- Maintain a positive, optimistic, compassionate tone throughout the session.

## Using This Guide

This implementation guide is designed to lead you through the process of preparing for and delivering this program. The text is presented in two different formats:

- Directions and suggestions are presented in the regular font, such as in this sentence.
- ***Bold, italicized text indicates things you should say.***

You will also see helpful notes throughout the guide, such as the one below.

### Facilitator Note

Throughout this guide, you will find occasional notes like this one. These are designed to draw your attention to helpful information.

## Agenda – Activity Timeline

The facilitated portion of this program is designed to be conducted in about 1.5 to 2.5 hours. The activities and estimated timing are shown in the table below. You have the option of spending more or less time with some of the activities, depending on your availability and your objectives.

Activity	Estimated Timing
Students read booklet and complete short Reflections exercises. Independent activity.	45 – 60 min.
Students discuss their responses to the Reflections exercises. Facilitator-led.	5 – 40 min.
Students watch edited film, <i>ONE: The Movie</i> . Facilitator-led.	45 min.
Students work in small groups to develop skills in listening and suspending judgment. Facilitator-led.	30 – 40 min.
Students process group activity. Facilitator-led.	10 – 20 min.
Facilitator provides closure to program.	5 min.
<i>Estimated time requirement – Facilitator*</i>	<i>~ 1.5 – 2.5 hours</i>
<i>Estimated time requirement – Students</i>	<i>~ 2.5 – 3.5 hours</i>

\* Breaking the facilitated portion into two separate student events is very viable. The first session would focus on discussing students' responses to the Reflections exercises in the booklet (the educational component), while the second session would include the film and discussion (skill-building component).