ETM 522/622 Team Building and Communication

Portland State University

Winter 2015

Team Process Report

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Team 6

Brian Rho

Nrupen Patel

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

In this paper we try to analyze the development of a particular team as they progress through a class at Portland State University which focuses on team building and

communication. We start by introducing the team members and their backgrounds and qualitatively assess the team's thoughts and opinions with regards to the Tuckman Model of team development. Then we use quantitative analysis by having each member assess their performance in six different categories and interpret them by using radar charts. We summarize the results and present the key learnings from the research.

1.   Introduction

Teams are an essential aspect in today's business environment. Individuals are brought together in order to achieve a common goal or solve a complex problem. The individuals are usually experts in their respective fields and possess complementary skills. Teams are beneficial in that they have the potential of accomplishing projects that individuals can not do, expose members to different points of views, and creates higher quality outcomes.

Research has shown that teams develop by progressing through various stages. Variations have been introduced, but the framework and most cited model was created by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. He proposed that the 4 stages, which he named forming, storming, norming, and performing, were necessary and inevitable in order for a team to grow.

This paper tries to follow and analyze the development of a specific team in their progression through the ETM 522/622 Team Building and Communication class at Portland State University. It presents the observations of this team's progression by correlating it to the 4 stages of development proposed by Bruce Tuckman.

2.   Team Members

The team under study consists of 4 members with various skills and backgrounds, and this specific team was designated the team name of "Team 6" for this class. Detailed profiles of the members are describe below.

Shoma Rai is currently pursuing her Master's in Computer Science. She joined Portland State University during Fall 2013 and intends to graduate in June 2015. She did her Bachelor's in Information Science and Technology from Bangalore, India. After her undergraduate studies, she worked for Infosys Technologies Limited for 4 years which gave her the opportunity to contribute to the software industry and realize the importance of working as a team. Her hobbies include sketching and cooking.

Nrupen Patel has been working for the last 6 years as a Research & Development Manager for a chemical manufacturing company. He has two Master's degrees in two different chemistry fields. He intends to obtain a project management certificate from Portland State University which he started in Fall 2014. He enjoys outdoor activities like golfing, hiking, camping, and fishing.

Brian Rho is currently pursuing his Master's of Science in Electrical Engineering specializing in Computer Architecture and is expected to graduate in March 2015. He

currently holds a Bachelor's of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Since obtaining his undergraduate degree, he has been working at a large semiconductor company as an engineer for the past 10 years which involves working in multiple teams.

Sai Krishna Yerneni is currently pursuing his Master's of Science in the field of Computer Science. He obtained his undergraduate degree in the field of Computer Science and Engineering from Hyderabad, India. After completion, he joined Portland State University in Fall 2014 to gain more knowledge about the deeper concepts of Computer Science, however, his interest towards technology management paved a way for him to take up the course, Communication and Team building, in Winter 2015. His leisure time activities include playing sports and reading novels.

3. Deliverables/Approach

The ETM 522/622 class had multiple assignments that were expected from each of the teams. Each team had to deliver 5 selective readings, 2 class ownership presentations, a team research report, a team process report, and a team process presentation. The table below shows the due dates for each assignment specifically for Team 6.

Week No.	Due Date	Assignments
Week - 2	January 14th, 2015	Selective Reading - 1
Week - 3	January 21st, 2015	Selective Reading - 2&3
Week - 4	January 28th, 2015	Selective Reading - 4 & Class Ownership - 1 & Team Charter Document
Week - 5	February 4th, 2015	Write-up:Comtech
Week - 7	February 18th, 2015	Team Research report
Week - 8	February 25th, 2015	Class ownership - 2
Week - 10	March 11th, 2015	Team Process report & Team Process Presentation

During the first week, Team 6 only consisted of 3 members (Nrupen, Shoma, and Brian). These three members decided that it would be best to finish the selective reading assignments as soon as possible so that the team could focus on the other assignments better. The method that the team came up with was for each person to do one selective

reading and would have volunteers for the remaining selective readings. Even though one person was writing the summary for the selective readings, it was expected that all members would read the selective reading. Once the summary was completed it was reviewed by every member of the team and was not turned in until everyone agreed. Once Krishna joined team 6 during the second week of class, he agreed with the process and was added to the rotation.

The similar approach was taken for the other assignments. Since these assignments were larger and needed more in depth analysis, Team 6 divided the task up into sections. For the class ownership presentations, the agenda was finalized and each team member was asked to finish their task by the due date. The activities were a collective effort. Each member was asked to research and bring ideas of activities that were pertinent to the subject being discussed. At the follow up meeting, ideas were presented and the team discussed the pros and cons of each activity until a consensus was reached. This method of the separation of tasks and assignment to each member was also used for the team reports.

The previously mentioned method was especially helpful in getting Team 6 to accomplish all of its deliverables for week 4. During this week the team had the class ownership, selective reading 4 and believed that they had to complete the team charter document. Later on, Team 6 found out that they didn't need to do the team charter document because the professor didn't have time to go over it in class, but they were the only team to hand it in. Their initial attempt has been edited to the version attached in Appendix A as a reference.

4. Communication Methods/Meeting Frequency

Communication methods were established early on between Nrupen, Shoma, and Brian during the first class session by means of sharing email addresses and phone numbers. During the second week, Krishna joined the team and introductions and email/phone numbers were exchanged once again. Since we had our final member at this time Krishna set up a Google Drive space for document collaboration and scheduled a room at the PSU library to have our first meeting.

During our first meeting at the PSU library, we familiarized ourselves with the other team members and reviewed the deliverables of the class. We decided that we would need to meet at least every Saturday and may need to include Sundays for the larger assignments. This posed a problem with some members so we decided to utilized Google Hangouts for virtual collaborations when needed. Google Hangouts eventually became a very vital part of our communications because there were times where we had to have more meetings than our intended schedule. A screen capture of one of the Google Hangouts meeting has been included in Appendix B as reference.

5. Team Development

In order to qualitatively assess the teams thoughts at different stages of their development, a set of questions were devised and handed to each member to answer. The responses were collected and summarized in the sections following. The actual responses are included in Appendix C for reference.

5.1. Forming

During the first class meeting, we were instructed to make teams that we were going to be a part of for the duration of the quarter. The professor stated that she wanted the teams to be well balanced which meant teams should include at least one mid to upper level ETM student. Other teams were formed quickly while our team was formed by putting together the individuals that were leftover. We were also one of the only two teams in the class that had 3 initial members. We introduced ourselves to each other and contact information was exchanged. There was no contact after that until Nrupen took the initiative and sent out a project kickoff email to the group to discuss how we wanted to tackle the assignments. At this stage Brian had already started reading the article and told the team that he would have the summary of the first SR done by Monday night so that the team could review before submission which the other team members agreed to.

During the break period of our second class meeting the professor asked Krishna to join our team. All of the initial team members noticed how engaged and vocal Krishna was during the first half of the class and thought he would be a great benefit to the team. Nrupen took the initiative and introduced himself to Krishna and Brian and Shoma followed. Everyone exchanged contact information again and Krishna proceeded to create the Google drive space and booked a room at the PSU library for that Saturday for our first meeting.

The first meeting for Team 6 started with further background information and thoughts about the class so far. Shoma and Krishna were familiar with each other because they were both part of the Computer Science department. They discussed about the difficulties of the classes and the strictness of the department. Brian also joined the conversation by asking follow up questions because he didn't know much about the Computer Science department policies even though he was part of the ECE department which shared the same building. Nrupen was also listening intently and eventually the conversation turned to questions about the class. Since, Nrupen had the most experience (having taken one previous ETM class), the other 3 members started asking about the expectations and policies of the ETM department. He tried his best to answer all the questions based on his limited experience. At this stage of the team's development, we did not know the strengths of each member, and the fact that we didn't have a member that was skilled in the ETM processes and subject knowledge, made us uneasy about our confidence to succeed in the class.

After the initial introductions we started going over the syllabus and started outlining our process. Nrupen volunteered to take meeting minutes because based on his previous experiences, he thought that documentation resolved confusion later on. Also, the team decided that we would need to meet at least every Saturday so Krishna volunteered to schedule the meeting room until the end of the quarter at the PSU library. He was also in charge of booking a room on Sunday if needed and send out the Google Hangouts link for virtual collaborations as required. At this point, we also had selective reading 2 and 3 coming up which Krishna and Nrupen volunteered for respectively. Class ownership tasks were also divided up. Shoma volunteered to provide the template and each member would fill in their respective section of the presentation.

5.2. Storming

For our team, the storming phase was very short. The only two instances where conflict occurred were around meeting schedules and activity discussions. Our team did not view these two instances as conflict in the strictest sense, but more like disagreements.

Due to the the fact that two of the members were working full time and the other two members were full time students, it was difficult to schedule extra meetings beyond the weekly Saturday meetings. Even though this was the case every member of the team rearranged their schedule when they could, and when it was not possible for all members to meet, three of the members met and the remaining member read over the meeting notes. Also, Google Hangouts was used in order to conduct virtual collaborations during larger assignments, and all members arrived at the Willow Creek Center an hour early before the class ownership presentations in order to go over final preparations.

Agreeing on a proper activity for the class ownership caused some disagreements also. Each member brought ideas to the meetings and presented them to the rest of the team. Each member gave constructive feedback until a consensus was reached on a specific activity to include in the presentation. The process was professional and the feedback was received gracefully.

5.3. Norming

It did not take long for our team to reach the stage of norming. As assignment tasks were being completed on time by all members trust and the level of commitment demonstrated by each member was becoming apparent. Communication was increasing exponentially and the team began to utilize the specific strengths that each member possessed more efficiently.

The first sign of the team entering the norming stage happened when the feedback for selective reading 1 occurred. The high grade we received for our first

attempt at an ETM assignment began to dissipate our uneasiness about our potential for succeeding in the class. Shortly afterwards, our class ownership presentation came due and we felt good about our performance when compared to the other presentations that came before ours. While we did not think that our presentation was the best, we thought that our presentation was very good when factoring in our lack of ETM presentation experience. Also, at this point the roles of the members were solidified.

5.3.1. Roles

Team member roles were not specifically identified at the beginning of team formation. Each individual brought personalities and skills that helped clarify the roles that was most suitable to them. Through the first two weeks of interaction, the team assessed the communications patterns of the individuals, types of tasks performed by each individual, and past experiences to determine the individual roles. Some of the roles stayed consistent while some members shifted to other roles as the team moved into the norming phase. The final roles for each member is listed below which is accompanied by the reasons why each member fit their respective roles.

5.3.1.1. Leader/Organizer

Shoma's past experience of leading a team and managing various tasks made her take up the role of the team leader. She made sure that there were positive outcomes from every meeting which helped them accomplish the goals. She believed that her task was very easy as each member was very organized from preparing for the next meeting to coming up with ideas for the reports or presentations. The team also made sure that they came up with a strategy on how to submit the deliverables on time. Each team member came well prepared for the meetings and as a result were able to contribute. Everyone made sure that opinions of all team members were considered when making the final decision.

5.3.1.2. Scribe/Minutes Taker

As part of Nrupen's role at work he has to attend multiple meetings every day. He believes that it is very critical to not miss anything or forget items from the meetings like assigned work, action items, follow up work, and decisions made. Therefore, taking notes and creating meeting minutes for everyone has become a habit for him and this same habit led him to become the meeting notes taker for this team as well. He took notes in every single meeting which helped the team refer back to the discussions and action items from previous meetings.

5.3.1.3. Facilitator/Agenda Preparer

Brian's role developed due to his past experiences of working on many teams during his academic and professional career. Through his initial comments he showed that he was logical and methodical in the way he approached tasks. He would send out emails to the team on what each member needed to do before each meeting and an agenda on the items that needed to be discussed. At the meetings, he would always ask for inputs from every team member and make sure that the flow of the meeting was not off track.

5.3.1.4. *Logistics/Administrative Support*

Sai Krishna Yerneni's was to be in charge of the administrative support and logistics. This role was taken upon by Krishna himself when he started to look after the meeting places, timings, and sending hangout links, etc. The planning and organization was done with the help of other team members. This arrangement had become a habit every week, and he performed his task perfectly without any delays. This was one of the things which helped the team improve their communications and kept them engaged every week.
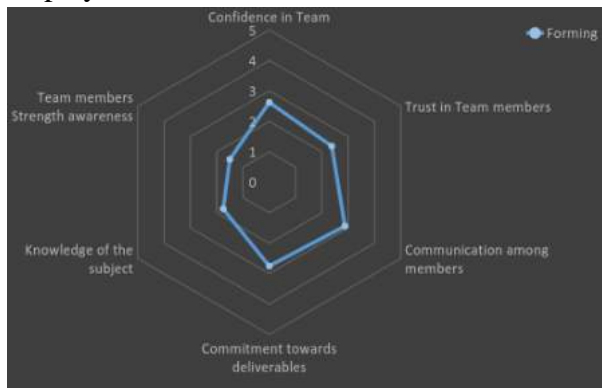
5.4. **Performing**

The team started to enter into the performing stage at around the end of week 5. This was when the team received its grades back for selective reading 4 and 5 which were very high. Confidence in the team's performance grew even more and this fueled their drive to succeed with the team research report. At this point, the team had a better understanding of the requirements and expectations of the class. They were not worried about members not completing their assigned tasks by the due date, or their inability to achieve their goal. From this point forward agendas, outlines, and discussions were more streamlined and efficient. Each member's strengths were recognized so task assignment was very easy. Multiple members were working in parallel and subsequent meetings were becoming more productive because each member knew what was expected of them. The team research report came together quickly and the second class ownership presentation was received better by the class. At the writing of this paper, this momentum is strong and evident as we tackle the last two assignments of the class.

6. **Radar Charts**

The previous sections of this paper described the team's development through a qualitative analysis based on the summary of the opinions and thoughts of each member. In order to quantify the team's development, each member of the team was given a questionnaire in which they were instructed to assess their thoughts of the team at each phase of the development process. The results were tallied and averaged and radar charts
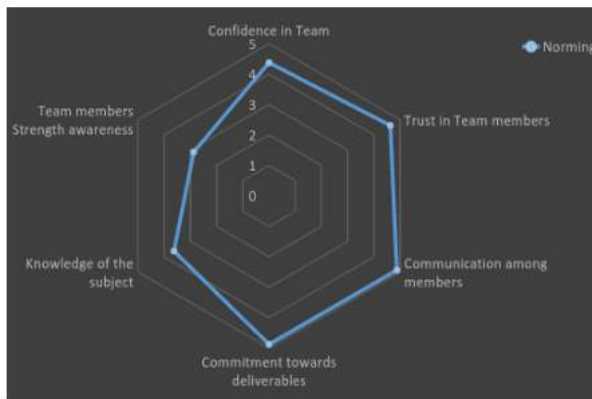
were created based on the information. The resultant radar chart for each stage is displayed below.
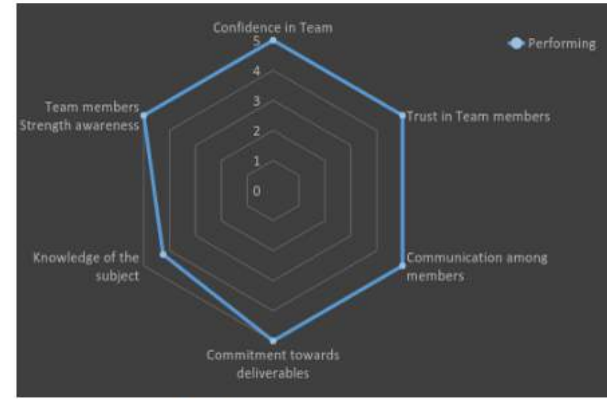

Forming
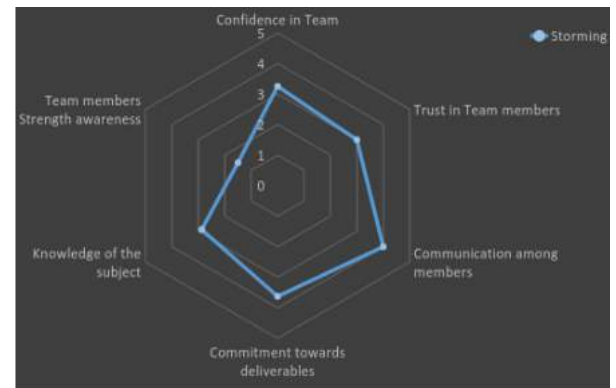
Storming

Norming

Performing

Overall, we can see the development of the team from its initial forming stage to its final performing stage. At the forming stage, the categories that scored the lowest were knowledge of the subject and strength awareness. We believe that this was because of the lack knowledge of each other's backgrounds and the lack of expertise in the ETM subject matter. The next two highest scoring categories were trust and confidence in the team. Even though the members thought they may not be adequately versed in each other's strengths or the subject matter, the members came to the meeting with a positive outlook and were willing to trust each other. Communication and commitment scored the highest at this stage of development which helped the team progress efficiently toward the goal.

As the team moved in to the storming stage of their development, communication and commitment saw the biggest increase followed by confidence, trust, and knowledge of the subject matter. However, strength awareness showed little to no gain. We believe that this was because it was still early in the quarter and we did not have enough previous content to compare our results against. We were all still developing our ideas based on the assessment of the work being produced by each member, but without concrete feedback we weren't sure of how we were doing in the class.

At the norming stage significant increases occurred with regards to confidence, trust, communication, and commitment. At this point we were steadily receiving our selective reading grades and finished our first class ownership presentation. The team felt better about their performance until now and strengths were beginning to become apparent. This helped increase the trust in each other and made every member become confident of the teams potential through the rest of the assignments.

Finally, at the performing stage, five out of the six categories was rated at the maximum score of 5. The only category that did not achieve the max score was knowledge of the subject matter. While the other five categories dealt with the interactions on a team level, the last category was based on a more global level. Even though we believe that our team dynamics were very good, we still believe that we do not know everything that has been taught in the class. Even though we have read all the articles assigned and attended all the class ownership presentations, we cannot call ourselves experts in the subject matter.

7.   Key Learnings

As we watched our team develop and change throughout the course of the class, we have realized the importance of teams. Some of us came into the team worrying about the lack of experience on the subject matter or uncertainties regarding each members dedication and motivation in helping the team succeed. At the beginning stages, our past experiences may have led us to conceive pre-judgments about each other, but our willingness to trust each other helped us to be open minded. We may have felt jaded because we weren't asked to be a part of a team quickly, but we believe that this was the first step for us to prove our worth within the class. Every member was determined and focused with the task at hand and knew the deliverables that needed to be achieved in order to reach our goal. As we come to the conclusion of this class, we look back and realize the traits that our team possessed and developed that helped us become a performing team. These traits are listed below:

- Hardworking individuals
- Quality and frequency of communications
- Respect for each other as individuals and team members
- Trust in your team members
- Finishing tasks by deadline
- Having Fun / Friendly Atmosphere.
- Believing in others skills and expertise
- Positive feedback and jokes
- Responsibility
- Mutual Accountability
- Willingness towards learning

- Ready to listen to what others others have to say.

8.   Conclusion

Teams are essential in more and more aspects of everyday life. Many times members come from different backgrounds and fields of study in order to solve a particular problem. These individuals may have never met before and may not realize how they could possibly achieve a successful outcome. This scenarios seemed to be the case for Team 6.

The members of this team were brought together with very little knowledge of the processes and methods of the ETM department, but they were determined to succeed. They had past experiences and strengths that they were able to utilize to become a successful team within the ETM522/622 course. Every member came into the team with a very high sense of responsibility and work ethic. Each member completed their tasks promptly and trusted that every other member would do the same. This sparked a fire in each other to not let the other members down and complete their own tasks promptly also. The dedication that was shown was apparent early on and was never questioned as the team progressed. This led to increased levels of respect, confidence, and strength awareness among the members. This also helped the team to become more open and sociable with each other which allowed for even more open discussions and a friendly atmosphere. We believe that all of these things combined helped make Team 6 become a performing team.

All of the members agreed that even though we may not receive an "A" in the class, that this team was the best team that they were ever a part of. We believe that the material that was taught in this class was invaluable and that this course should be a requirement for anyone that is currently or will be a part of a team in the future. This course has helped us realize why some of the other teams that we were a part of previously failed or separately abruptly soon after the task was completed. All of us intend to take what we learned from this class to our future teams in order to increase the likelihood of achieving success.

Appendix A

TEAM CHARTER DOCUMENT

Mission Statement

Our mission is to come together as a team, respect each other's opinions, share and gain knowledge, recognize each member's strengths and weaknesses, and enable others to develop skills which would in turn enable the team to make effective decisions. The main objective of the team is to learn effective team building and communication skills throughout the course and use the time and resources efficiently in order to submit quality deliverables on time.

Deliverables

- 5 Selected Readings
- Team Charter document
- 2 In-Class presentations
- Team Research Report
- Team Process Report
- Team Process Presentation

Expected Scope/Approach/Activities

In Class Presentation

- ### *Team Meeting*

    ◦ Before we have any deliverable to submit, the first step is to conduct a meeting, so that the team members are assigned different responsibilities and action items.
    ◦ The team has agreed to have 2 meetings. One meeting would be conducted a week before the submission and another the same week. This is to ensure that the team is well prepared and has all the resources needed and manage time.
    ◦ Before the meeting, the team members are expected to be well prepared with the assigned reading materials.
    ◦ All the team members are expected to attend the meetings on time.
    ◦ The team also makes sure that each member's schedule is well respected and the timelines of the meetings are decided before hand.
    ◦ The location of the meeting is decided before hand and one team member takes the responsibility of reserving a meeting room which has all the equipments such as a whiteboard and a projector.
    ◦ The team assigns the role of
        ▪ Facilitator, to manage the meeting's proceedings,
        ▪ Time-keeper, to make sure that everyone gets a chance to present their material.
        ▪ Recorder, to take notes of all the items discussed, such as action items and the materials needed for the next week.

- ### *Discussion*

    ◦ The team members make sure that everyone's opinions are very well respected and considered while making decisions.

- ◦ The team follows a structured brainstorming method wherein all the members get a chance to raise their opinions and ideas.
- ◦ The team members are also expected to listen to other members and give constructive criticism.
- ◦ Communication is also done via emails.

- • ***Decision Making***

  - ◦ The team has decided to have a voting process to decide on the final item.
  - ◦ The team also makes sure that every team member agrees to the final decision.

- • ***Process Improvement***

  - ◦ Feedback is taken from the team members.
  - ◦ Self-evaluation is also done to decide on any changes that need to be done regarding the process.

Selected Readings

- • For the selected reading submission, each member is assigned with a selected reading. All other team members are expected to go through the material. Once a draft is prepared, other team members review the summary document and give feedback. Once the review is done, the selected reading is submitted.

Team Research Report

- • For the team research report, every member in the team is expected to give his ideas. Once all the ideas are collected, a voting process is followed to finalize the topic. The team also makes sure that all the members agree to the final decision.

Team Process Report & Presentation

- ● For the team process report, every member is expected to keep a journal to record important interactions.
- ● After the meeting, all members will add the notes they took to the team interaction document that will be set up on Google Drive.
- ● The team will meet during week 9 of the quarter to review the document and remove any irrelevant information.
- ● Each team will be tasked to select the top five important interactions and the team will gather to vote on the final contents.
- ● Each member will be given a topic to write about and present.

Strategic Alignment factors

The goal of the team is to put the skills learnt in the class such as effective team building and communication methods into practical use which would benefit them in their workplace or day to day life. The team has to make sure that a positive environment is created so that each and every team member learns and gains knowledge throughout the duration of the course.

Time Frame/Duration

Sl.No	Deliverable	Start Date	End Date	Duration

1	SR 1 – Team Building Approach for Competency Design.	7 January,2015	14 January, 2015	1 week
2	SR 2 – The Effects of Top Management Team.	14 January, 2015	21 January, 2015	1 week
3	SR 3 – How the Right Metrics Help Teams.	14 January, 2015	21 January, 2015	1 week
5	In Class Presentation- 1	16 January, 2015	28 January, 2015	2 weeks
6	SR 4 – Time and Transition in Work Teams.	21 January, 2015	28 January, 2015	1 week
7	Comtech Cellular (Case Study)	28 January, 2015	4 February, 2015	1 week
8	Team Research Report	21 January, 2015	18 February, 2015	3 weeks
9	In Class Presentation - 2	9 February, 2015	25 February, 2015	2 weeks
10	Team Process Report	25 February, 2015	11 March, 2015	2 weeks
11	Team Process Presentation	25 February, 2015	11 March, 2015	2 weeks

Team Resources

Role	Name(s)	Participation Level	Skills Required
Team Leader(s)	Shoma Rai	100%	(For all team members)
Core Team Members	Shoma Rai	100%	• Management
	Brian Rho	100%	• Decision Making
	Sai Krishna Yerneni	100%	• Writing
	Nrupen Patel	100%	• PowerPoint Preparation

Team Facilitator	Brian Rho	100%	• Formatting / Grammar Checks
Administrative Support	Sai Krishna Yerneni	100%	
Minutes/NoteTaker	Nrupen Patel	100%	• Researching
Steering Body Members	Whole Team	100%	• Creative Thinking

Each of the roles mentioned above is subjected to rotation every meeting.

Team process

Process Item	Frequency	Audience/Distribution, Day/Time
Information Distribution	Before/After meetings	Team Members
Team Meeting	Twice before in-class presentations	Team Members
Status Reporting	Whenever the task is completed	Team Members
LAN Storage of Documents (Google Drive)	Whenever changes are done to the document.	Team Members

Expected Results

Benefits (What results will be gained?)	Metrics (How will the results be measured?)
Improve Presentation and communication skills	• Get feedback from the professor and the class. • Get feedback from the other team members.
Learn to conduct effective meetings	Get feedback and suggestions from the other team members after the meetings in order to improve the process for future meetings.
Understand and apply effective communication and	Self-evaluation and get feedback from peers/team

team building skills in our workplace.	leader.

Appendix B

Hangouts :

Appendix C

1. Thoughts about others when they met first time.

Nrupen

When I met first time with Brian and Shoma, I found them very quiet and introvert personality, totally opposite of me. I thought it would very difficult to communicate for me with the team because no one likes to talk. On the other side, I found Krishna very outspoken personality more like me, so he made me feel more comfortable on sharing my views.

I didn't know anyone's background, expertise and importance of this class for them and also looking at the quiet personality, I thought that it would be very difficult to accomplish these many projects and assignments. As we moved forward, Brian took the charge of first SR study which changed whole dynamics of the team, then after everyone started acting and taking responsibility and communicating. Third meeting's pizza from Shoma opened up everyone and brought close to each other and made it feel like a team. After the first two successful accomplishment of SR readings and team presentation project we had very good trust in each other and I felt the power of team.

Brian

When team 6 was formed I was a little apprehensive because of our knowledge base. The first thing that I thought was that we may struggle because our lack of experience in ETM ideologies. While I had extensive knowledge in the engineering field and worked on projects with different teams, I had no idea what sort of things were expected in an ETM class. Also, when I heard that presentations had to be 90 minutes long, I felt that I may not be successful and may need to drop this class and take an ECE class. When I met Shoma who is a computer science major, I felt that we had a strong technical team and started thinking how we can use these skills to help us succeed. Then, I met Nrupen who worked as a manager which was reassuring, but the fact that this was only his second ETM class made me go back to wondering about our team building and communication knowledge. Krishna joined our team the second week and he too was a CS major and this was only his second term at PSU. The one thing that I noticed about Krishna was that he was very friendly and an extrovert. I thought that this balanced our team because now we had a good balance of personalities. Before our first meeting I was certainly convinced of our strong technical knowledge, but was questioning our ETM knowledge.

During our first meeting I was stunned by the focus and drive of each of the members. All of my previous apprehension disappeared because I noticed my team members were hardworking and determined as I was. Even though we may have lacked knowledge in ETM, I felt that everyone knew what we had to do to succeed and we would do it at all costs. Anything that we didn't know we would learn. Everyone was structured and

organized.   Everyone completed every task by the due date. Collaboration and communication was stupendous. During my entire time at PSU, I have never been part of a team that was so dedicated and focused. I severely underestimated the true potential of this team.

Shoma

When the teams for the course were decided, everyone formed teams instantly with people they had worked before. I thought that it would be of great benefit to the team to have a member with ETM coursework experience, not that my team couldn't come up with activities for the in-class presentation or even write research papers, it was mainly to know the format or how the students would be evaluated. But looking at the scenario, I thought that it is best not to bother about the experience but take it as an opportunity to learn on our own.We could always take help from professor!.When the students introduced themselves, I came to know that Brian was of ECE major and thought that similarities in technical background would prove to be helpful. He came across as someone who was methodical in his approach. I felt Nrupen was quite outspoken and didn't hesitate to speak out. I thought that it would help our team. Since I knew Krishna from previous term, it wasn't an issue to interact with him. Seeing him pose a lot of questions in his first day of class made me feel that he's quite outspoken and friendly.
The team was very organized right from the beginning, may it be dividing the selective readings or taking up sections for the presentations. All members came well prepared for the meetings and it eased the decision making process. Each member did not hesitate to take up any responsibility.Everyone took charge of the meetings and gave suggestions. Each member made sure that input was taken from other members. Even though I couldn't make it for some of the meetings due to other commitments or any other issues, the members would understand the situation and keep me informed with the things that they discussed in the meeting which is not seen quite often. The level of trust in one another improved from one meeting to another and now I can strongly say that it is definitely the best team that I have worked for.

Krishna

The way I was a part of this team is really dramatic. Since I registered late for the course I did not attend the First lecture. So, I didn't know that there were teams and that they will be decided right on the first day itself. Later, through some of my friends I got to know that there will be teams and I should be part of one. So, I e-mailed the Professor requesting her to join me in any team. In the next class the Professor said I can join Team - 5 or team - 6 since both the teams had 3 members each. There was one more student who was to be a part of a team. The Professor asked us to decide which team to go, and then Nrupen who was standing beside me said "Stay with us, we can be a good team". That's how I ended up in Team - 6 and without any doubt that was the best move. Since I know Shoma before we had a casual talk. I know that she is a very hardworking person so I was happy that I was a part of her team.Later when I spoke to Nrupen, he

sounded like a very organized person who likes things to be done within the given deadline, with perfect planning. When I interacted with Brian who was silent the whole time, actually he was very friendly and I noticed he was cool and composed at all times. It didn't take much time for us all to get close to each other, our weekly meetings, hangouts, constant emails helped us to improve the communication amongst us and build the team strongly.

2. Different Stages - Teams

Name: Shoma

Forming

What was your impression about the team for the first two weeks?
Since the team members didn't have any trouble in mingling or communicating with others in the team, for the first two weeks the team mainly spent their time in coming up with a strategy on how to submit the deliverables on time. All the team members were very focussed and were willing to take up any responsibility.

Storming

1. Did you notice any kind of conflict? when and about what? with who?
I didn't notice any kind of conflicts in this stage, infact I can say there were no conflicts throughout the course. When a team member came up with an idea, constructive suggestions were given and I believe this helped in bringing the team together and not make anyone feel insulted. The team also made sure that everyone's opinions were taken and respected.
2. How did we/you resolve conflicts?
NA

Norming

At what point did you start appreciating your colleagues strengths and felt that your they had a strong commitment towards the team goal?
- Good performance in selective readings and presentations.
- In all meetings when each person was ready to take up any task.
- When team members shared their ideas in meetings and took responsibilities.

Performing

What traits lead to good performance of the team?
- Good communication among team members

- Trust that each member would complete the task assigned to them on time.
- Ready to listen to what others others have to say.

Challenges

What kind of challenges did you face during the course ?
- Coming up with activities related to the topics for presentation but it was a fun experience.
- Getting to know the format for the reports/SR's - But professor was always there to give information

Name: Brian

Forming

What was your impression about the team for the first two weeks?

Because I never knew my team members before, I stayed pretty quiet in order to access people personalities and work ethics. It seemed as though the other members were trying to feel each other out also. We got down to business and discussed the first SR and how we were going to divide it up. Everyone seemed to agree with the process that we came up with in tackling the assignments that were assigned for the class. Nrupen and Krishna was more outspoken so they kept the discussions going. Luckily we had two members like this because it would not have been as productive if everyone was quiet.

Storming

1. Did you feel or notice any kind of conflict? when and about what? with who?

We did not have any sort of major conflicts. The only thing that could have been seens as a conflict was the small disagreements we were having when we were trying to come up with the activities for our first in class presentations. We were the last team to present so we had some sort of idea on the types of activities, but we had to throw out many of the ideas due to complexity or not enough interaction. We did eventually agree on an activity through mutual consensus.

2. How did we/you resolve conflicts?

We used a consensus method. We were brainstorming ideas and researching fun and interactive activities, but it was difficult to choose one. We kept throwing out ideas until we found an activity that everyone agreed upon.

Norming

At what point did you start appreciating your colleagues strengths and felt that your they had a strong commitment towards the team goal?

For me this point was after our first in class presentation. At this point we had received some of our SR grades and we did well and I thought that we performed well for our first in class presentation. We did make a couple of mistakes in the in class presentation and accepted the feedbacks from the class in order to improve for the next time around. Up until this point everyone came through with their tasks and we were able to accomplish our goals of completing the SR's early and having a good in class presentation. The strengths of each team member was visible to everyone and we continued to build on this by assigning tasks to the correct person. We have been able to use this method until today which has turned out to be a very good method.

Performing

What traits lead to good performance of the team?

- Hardworking individuals
- Very good communications
- Respecting each other as individuals and team members
- Trust in your members
- Finishing tasks by deadline
- Having fun.

Challenges

What kind of challenges did you face during the course ?

Most of the challenges we had was the expectations of the class. Three members came from different fields and for the last member this was only the second class. Getting the feedback for the SR's helped us improve our summaries as we went along and we achieved high grades for the 4th and 5th SR's. Activities were difficult because we have never done this before. It was totally new to us and we weren't sure if ours could compare with the other team's activities. It was easier to come up with activities for the second in class presentation.

Name:Nrupen

Forming

What was your impression about the team for the first two weeks?

I remember, when I met Brian and Shoma very first time , they were very quiet. I thought they are being quiet because we don't know each other well. After our first class, I was expecting that either of them would initiate the conversation regarding projects

and meetings but didn't hear until following monday.I thought, I would have to initiate the conversation in the team in order to get things done. So,I started the conversation through email regarding the project kick off and Brian's response was I have already started and will be ready for everyone's review tomorrow, and after shoma said that, she will get done another assignment soon, these responses gave me positive feeling about the team and I also realized their commitment to excellence for the team and class as well.

Storming

1. Did you feel or notice any kind of conflict? when and about what? with who?

As far as I know, we did not have any major conflicts in the team however we had disagreements on many things. Only conflict we had was time,since everyone is full time working or full time student we had to struggle to find the right schedule to fit everyone, so we can spend enough time together to work on assignments.

2. How did we/you resolve conflicts?

Any disagreements were resolved by consensus decision making method, where we discussed every single point with team members and came to decision/ conclusion for the best interest of the team.

Norming

At what point did you start appreciating your colleagues strengths and felt that your they had a strong commitment towards the team goal?

I would say I started appreciating team member's strength, when we received the first good grades on our SR readings and also everyone started taking responsibilities for next tasks and finishing them timely and precisely

Before the third week we had already planned out the finishing up the first assignment and presentation this gave me feeling of strong commitment towards the team goal..

Performing

What traits lead to good performance of the team?
- believing in others skills and expertise
- frequent communication and faster response
- positive feedback and jokes
- frequent communication
- everyone started taking responsibilities and task ownership from the second meeting
- sharing ideas and getting feedback on every single thing from team members

Challenges

What kind of challenges did you face during the course ?

Since all the projects and assignments for this class required the team work, we had to do frequent and long meetings. So, finding time schedule that would fit everyone's schedule was the biggest challenge.

This is my second term back to school after long years of break so I am not use to typing long reports, research papers and spending long hours on computer so this was also little challenging for me.

Name:Sai Krishna

Forming

What was your impression about the team for the first two weeks?

Right from the formation of the team, there was always positive energy and that was a real good motivation for the team. So, as I noticed in the first meeting there was no one out of the conversation, everyone was involved in the conversation and were doing their part. Nrupen started to take the notes for the meeting for future reference, Shoma had already done some homework for the meeting coming up with the ideas for activities etc, Brian gave ideas about how we can divide the work equally and I was trying to keep track of time. So, everyone was right on target and we were focusing on the things we need to submit. We planned to finish the SR's in the first weeks so that we can concentrate on the big things we need to submit in the later weeks. There was positive energy right from the first week since there was a willingness to do work in each and everyone.

Storming

1. Did you feel or notice any kind of conflict? when and about what? with who?

I really might have filled up this section if it was any other team, but fortunately this team was the best team I have worked with. Since everyone on the team was experienced, they exactly knew how to handle situations. The only disagreements we had were about deciding the activities. Even those, I wouldn't call them disagreements since it was always constructive and helped the team to come up with really good and creative ideas.

2. How did we/you resolve conflicts?

N/A

Norming

At what point did you start appreciating your colleagues strengths and felt that your they had a strong commitment towards the team goal?

Each passing week confidence was growing within the team. Every member in the team started to know what are the strong points of every other member. After the first presentation, it was So, eventually without even assigning responsibilities everyone

took up their own responsibilities and executed their tasks very efficiently. It had a positive impact on the team's performance since the tasks were equally divided and it did not increase overhead on other members.

Performing

What traits lead to good performance of the team?
Responsibility
Mutual Accountability
Willingness towards learning
enthusiasm
Friendly atmosphere

If at all any member of the team is not able to make it to the meeting or not able to complete the task that week, other members take up that task and finish it without any issues. That's the best part because when there is someone on your team who always backs you up it will be definitely a good feeling. Additionally, every one on the team had the enthusiasm say it activities, say it presentation or say reports there was enthusiasm in all of it from all of them. It was not a very formal, professional kind of meeting each time we met, rather is a very friendly meeting and when we all sit together time just moves very fast.

Challenges

What kind of challenges did you face during the course ?

First thing we found as a challenge was we were not sure how would we do a 90 minute presentation. We thought presenting all the timings wouldn't take more than 40-45 minutes. But, when we actually started to plan and come out with the agenda, then we suddenly had a doubt that 90 minute time period might not be sufficient. So we rehearsed the presentation by doing each part and noted down the timings for each part. Other Challenge was to answer each and every question the class posed during the presentation. We worked on that and were successful to the most part of the questions that came our way.