

## Team Culture Development Exercise

As a team member, you will come to the team with a set of core values and expectations; some of these will be culturally influenced, and others will be individual. You will notice both similarities and differences between yourself and your teammates in these areas.

Working in a diverse team can support creative thinking and the development of strong solutions, as team members can bring a wider range of experiences and perspectives to the task than is possible on a monocultural team (Tadmor et al., 2012). Benefitting from the power of a diverse team involves a commitment to work through the challenges of forming new relationships and communicating effectively with those whose perspectives, values, and ways of working are different from our own.

This exercise is intended to provide some first steps in discussing expectations and values with your team members to facilitate more effective communication. It will also help you to define a team culture.

### Individual Reflection

#### *Personal Values and Expectations of Teamwork*

<b>Leadership:</b> Should the team have a designated leader? How much authority should that leader have?	
<b>Relationships:</b> How much of each team meeting should be devoted to building a social connection? How important are good relationships to a successful team project?	
<b>Time:</b> Is it important for the team to have a set schedule of meetings, or should meetings be flexibly set as the need arises? Should meetings have clear start and end times? How important is punctuality to me?	
<b>Communication:</b> Do I prefer synchronous (e.g. phone, video chat) or asynchronous (e.g. email, text) communication? What does polite and respectful communication sound like?	

<b>Feedback:</b> Do I prefer to receive direct feedback, or to I prefer that negative feedback be delivered gently alongside positive feedback?	
<b>Conflict:</b> Do I prefer to deal with disagreements directly or indirectly?	

### Group Reflection

Review your answers to each of the questions above with your team. Be sure to allow each person time to share; a good approach is to work through one question at a time, allowing each person to share their response. As you listen to your teammates, note the similarities and differences in values.

Similarities in Values and Expectations	Differences in Values and Expectations

### Team Culture Development

As you work together as a team, you will form your own team culture that integrates your values and expectations in a way that will best serve your work together and the accomplishment of your shared goal. This will likely require flexibility and negotiation, as you search for a team culture that is beneficial for all. This work creates an *idioculture*, which is “a system of knowledge, beliefs, behaviours, and customs shared by an interacting group in which members can refer and employ as the basis of further interaction” (Gunawardena & Jung, 2014, p. 7). Defining your team culture can help to prevent misunderstandings as you move on in your work together.

### **Statement of Team Culture**

<b>Leadership</b>	
<b>Relationships</b>	
<b>Time</b>	
<b>Communication</b>	
<b>Feedback</b>	
<b>Conflict</b>	