

Effective Peer Teamwork



Photo: Syed Abulhasan Rizvi, Karachi, Pakistan

Background

LARRY KEELEY

Teamwork presentations by ID faculty member and Doblin president

STUDENT-INITIATED “TEAM TEAM”

Survey conducted Spring 2006

TEAMWORK INDEPENDENT STUDY

Chris Bernard, MDM 2006 — may become a class

YOUR FEEDBACK

This is step one in a community learning effort

Most of us expect
teams to be an
essential part of our
design careers.

Most of us disagree
with the statement,
*“ID does a great job
preparing me for teamwork.”*

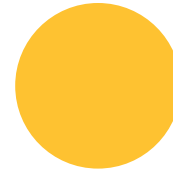


Typical Team Experiences (outside of ID)

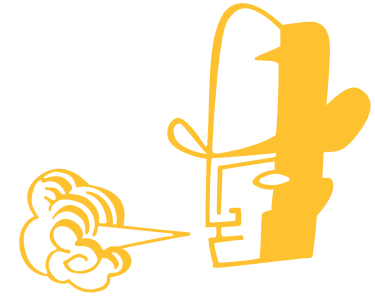
Teamwork Experiences

TEAM OF ONE

- › Undergraduate design
- › Independent consultants

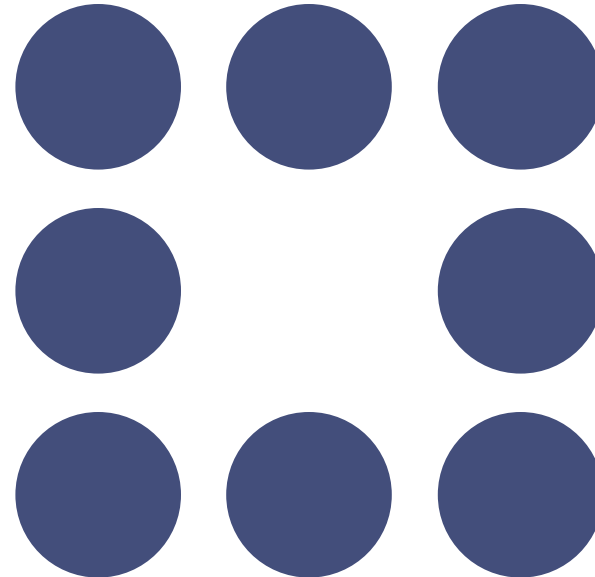


Teamwork Experiences



OUTSIDE LEADER

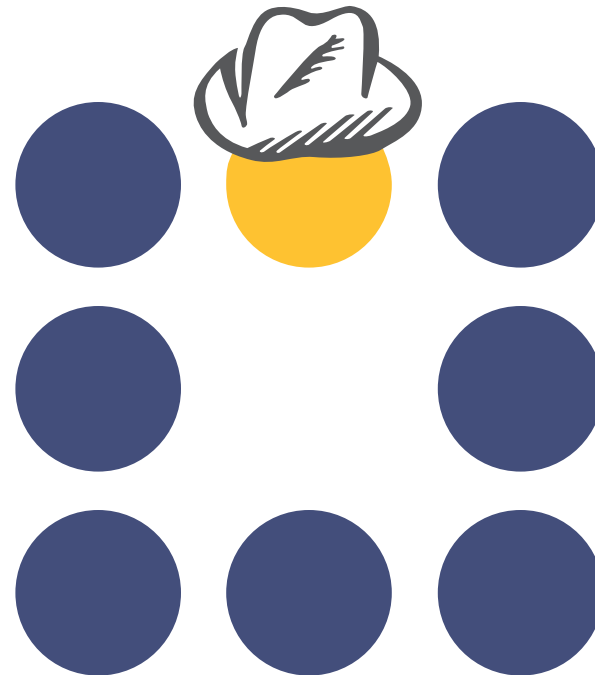
› Sports teams with coach



Teamwork Experiences

INSIDE LEADER

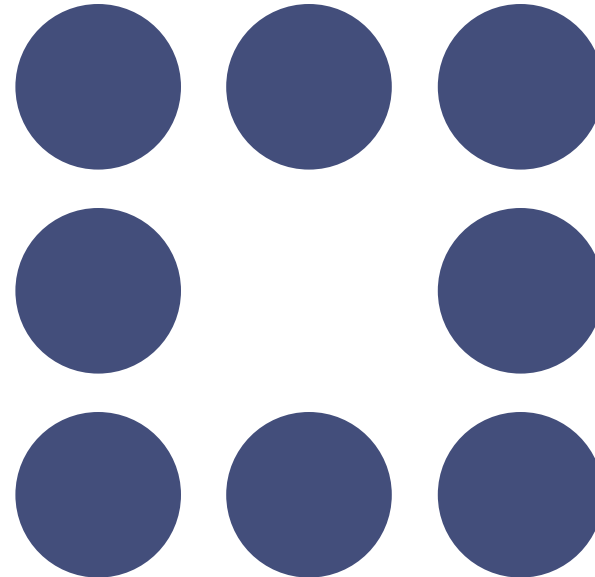
› Most corporate teams



Teamwork Experiences

PEER TEAM

- › ID
- › Collaborative teams
in the real world



Teamwork Experiences

PEER TEAM

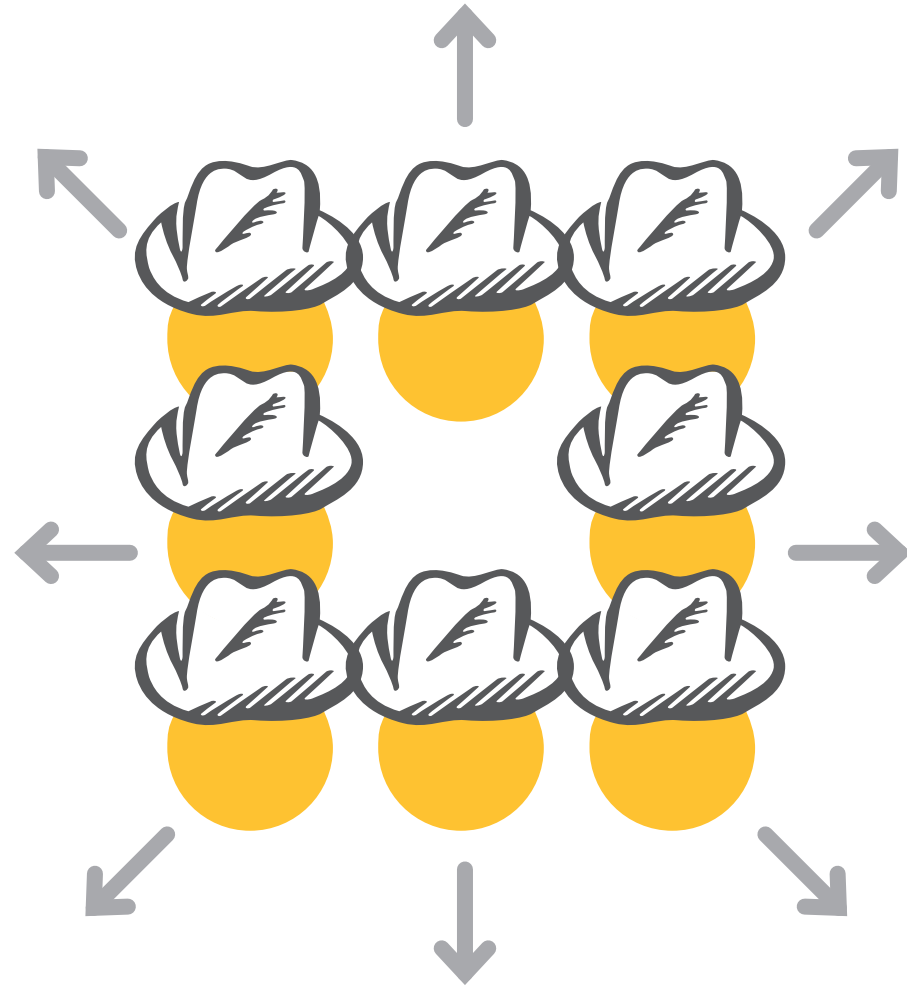
- › ID
- › Collaborative teams in the real world



Teamwork Experiences

PEER TEAM

- › ID
- › Collaborative teams in the real world





Team Experiences at ID

Types of Team Members

EDDIE ENTHUSIASTIC



Eddie just completed an undergraduate degree in design, and is thrilled to be at ID. He wants to try everything, and plans to spend most of his time in the studio, being a consummate artist.

STRENGTHS

- › The enthusiasm and passion of a true artist
- › Familiar with latest design thinking
- › Still in the mode of academic work
- › Has the energy to pull all-nighters

WEAKNESSES

- › Lack of experience
- › Used to working alone
- › Sometimes lets things slide until the last minute, waiting for inspiration to strike

Types of Team Members

WENDY WEBSTER



Wendy is 27 and is making a lateral move from a job in web design (which she didn't particularly like, despite her software engineering degree) towards strategic communication design.

STRENGTHS

- › Knows how to get things done in the real world
- › Motivated to make ID work for refocusing her career
- › Used to working on a team

WEAKNESSES

- › Used to a structured process; design seems fuzzy by comparison
- › Had become dependent on clear direction from a team leader
- › Trained to make things look “cool & pretty”—strategic and user-centered thinking is still new

Types of Team Members

IRIS INTERNATIONAL

Iris has been working as a product designer in her home country, and is taking a brave step to broaden her skills by coming to ID.

STRENGTHS

- › Breadth of experience
- › Brings new cultural perspective to design challenges
- › Focused on mastering particular methods and approaches to product design

WEAKNESSES

- › May be less comfortable communicating at ID
- › Day-to-day challenges of living in Chicago at least initially take up time and mental energy
- › (Focused on mastering particular methods and approaches to product design ... maybe less interested in non-product issues)



Types of Team Members

MARTIN MANAGER



Martin is a successful lead designer in his company, and is getting an MDM to move into senior management.

STRENGTHS

- › Experience using design skills
- › Has practical insights into user needs
- › Knows how to run a team

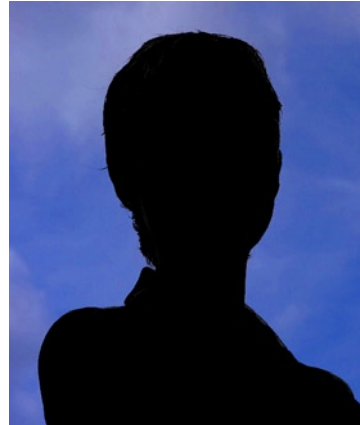
WEAKNESSES

- › Because he is used to running a team, he may tend to take charge
- › Confident in his abilities, he may not always recognize the areas he needs to learn from
- › In his stage of life, he has less free time (clients, family, etc.)

Team Conflict



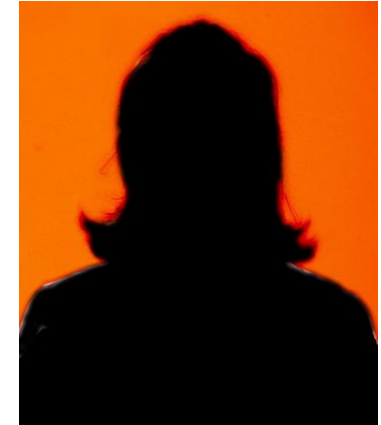
EDDIE EAGER



IRIS INTERNATIONAL



MARTIN MANAGER



WENDY WEBSTER

Different workstyles

Different priorities

Different skill levels

Different expectations



*potential
for conflict*

Team Conflict



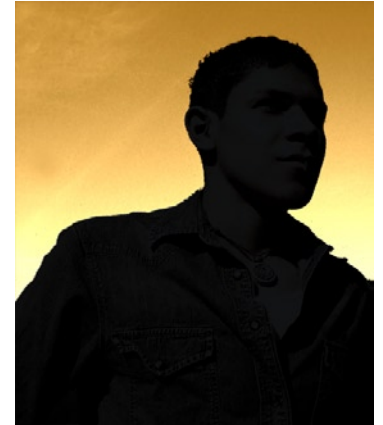
EDDIE EAGER



IRIS INTERNATIONAL



MARTIN MANAGER



WENDY WEBSTER

“Compromise” is not the answer.
Differences are the strength of teams—
and a strength of ID.



ID Teamwork Core Principles

Based on ideas from Rhoda Pitcher and Bix Bickson at Doblin,
extended and adapted by the ID Team Team.

Align.

Alignment \neq Agreement.

Key Enabler Kickoff meeting, all cards on table.

Magic Words “I’m just not feelin’ it.”

Commit.

Never let your team down.

Key Enabler

Facilitator who summarizes and reminds.

Magic Words

Q “I have a request for you...”

A *Yes, I can commit to that
...or No or Tell me more*

Build.

No sidebar conversations. Instead, coach.

Key Enabler Constructive, appropriate feedback.

Magic Words “May I make a suggestion?” [*while affirming what the person is doing well*]

Teamwork Core Principles

Align  Commit  Build

Some Practical Suggestions

Assign roles

- › But don't *always* do what you're already good at

Meet regularly

- › Set an agenda... and anyone can ask for a process check

Use templates

- › Don't kill yourself on things not central to the class

Try online tools

- › Lots of workgroup resources have already been created

Have fun

- › Lighten up, already!

Additional Motivation

Avoid guaranteed problems

- › Operating on your own schedule
- › Remaining quiet
- › Dominating the group

Expect to be graded

- › In some ID classes, team member evaluations could make a letter-grade difference

Learn about yourself

- › Meyers-Briggs or other personality profile tools can help you identify your own strengths & weaknesses in working on a team

Be generous

- › Earn a reputation for being a supportive team member... people will remember it long into your career

Never let your team down.