Teamwork
Welcome to *UP Skills for Work*!

The program helps you build your **soft skills**, which include:

- motivation
- attitude
- accountability
- presentation
- teamwork
- time management
- adaptability
- stress management
- confidence

When you have these skills, you have the foundation you need to work well with others—at work, at home, and in your community. That’s part of why employers are looking for people with strong soft skills!

**Soft skills** are ways of acting or thinking that make it easier to work well with other people. Sometimes they're called “people skills.”

**This workshop**

The ability to work well as part of a team is a very important skill.

In this workshop, we will explore why teamwork is important and how to be a good team player. We will look at how to handle conflict with your coworkers. We’ll also talk about how you can improve your teamwork skills.

**Partners in development of UP Skills for Work:**

**Futureworx**

For more information on soft skills, check out [futureworx.ca](http://futureworx.ca)
What is teamwork?

**Teamwork** is an important skill in almost any job.

On a soccer team, each player has a role. One person kicks the ball into the net, but the whole team, working together, makes that goal possible.

At work, when everyone is a good team player, the work gets done better and faster. The job is also more enjoyable, because people respect and support each other.

**People with strong teamwork skills:**

- take responsibility for finishing their work
- cooperate with and help others to get the job done
- think about the whole team’s job, not just their own
- treat everyone with respect
- focus on solving problems, instead of placing blame

Can you think of anything else to add to this list?

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**Let’s talk about it**

- What does teamwork mean to you?
- Have you ever worked in a place where you had a good team? What impact did good teammates have on you and the job?
- What can bosses, coaches or teachers do to encourage good teamwork?
Getting started

How are your teamwork skills? Thinking about it honestly will help you discover what your strengths are, and where there is room for improvement.

For the chart below, think of your most recent jobs or other situations where you worked with a group of people.

For each skill listed below, give yourself a rating from 1 to 5.

5 = I am good at this. Co-workers can count on this behaviour from me.

4 = I am pretty good at this. I demonstrate this skill most of the time.

3 = I’m average – not great, but not bad either.

2 = I try, but it’s a challenge for me.

1 = This one is definitely not my strong point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>I can be counted on to get the job done and do what I say I will do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>I pitch in to help others, share information and knowledge, and look out for co-workers as well as myself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>I listen with respect, share my ideas, and try to resolve conflicts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>I can adapt when changes or new plans arise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>I give my best effort and see the job through.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>I am polite and considerate to all co-workers. I respect everyone's role.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>I focus on solutions, rather than finding fault or placing the blame on others.</td>
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</table>
Warm-up
Castaways

For this activity, form a team of 3-6 people.

Your task:

Imagine your team is left on a small desert island for one week. Your team is only allowed to bring 3 items to help you survive. The island has a spring with fresh water, and plenty of plant and animal life.

• You have 10 minutes to decide as a group what to bring.

• Share your list with the other group(s). Why did you choose each item?

Castaways: How did it go?

Come back together, and discuss:

• Were you able to agree on your three items?

• Did everyone in the group have a chance to speak?

• If there were disagreements, how did you resolve them?
Teams need all kinds of people

Everyone has their own work style. It can feel easiest to work with people who think like you. But that might not make for the best team.

- Some people are good at keeping things organized and making sure things get done on time.
- Some people are full of creative ideas and ways to improve things.
- Some people are hard workers who focus on getting things done.
- Some people are good at communicating and bringing people together.

Can you see how each of these skills brings something valuable to a team? Which of the skills do you feel is your strongest?

Of course, we aren’t just one thing or another. We can take on more than one role at a time!
Trust

When you think of being **trustworthy** at work, what comes to mind? Is it:

- being honest with others when we make mistakes
- doing our work even when the boss isn’t there

Trust and being trustworthy is an important part of teamwork too.

Meet Charles

Charles is a fry cook in a busy restaurant. He wants to impress the owner and get ahead. One night everything seems to go wrong. Charles doesn’t want to get blamed, so he loudly points out everyone else’s mistakes even though he has made mistakes of his own. The prep staff didn’t make enough salad. The server got an order wrong. The last shift didn’t clean the grill properly.

- How do you think Charles came across to his co-workers?
- Do you think they trust him?
- How else could Charles have responded to show good teamwork?

A place for your notes:
Meet Serena

Serena works at a car dealership. She drives a shuttle van, taking customers home when their car is being serviced.

She drops off the last customer of the day and then reverses out of the driveway. But she turns a corner too sharply and hits an iron railing at the front of the property. The rear tail-light gets broken and the fender is scratched.

Serena is afraid to tell her boss that she made a driving mistake. What will happen? Will she be fired? She could just park it on the lot and pretend nothing happened. With so many different drivers, maybe no one would know it was her fault the light broke.

What would you say to Serena if she asked for your advice?

A place for your notes:

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Let’s talk about it

• What do you look for in a co-worker to know you can trust them?

• How do you build trust with your employer/boss?

Write some examples of each in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Looks like this</th>
<th>Trustworthy</th>
<th>Untrustworthy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sounds like this</td>
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</table>

A place for your notes:

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Let’s talk about conflict

At work or at home, some conflict is normal. It’s not pleasant, but it’s not always a bad thing.

Conflict is a sign that there is a problem that needs fixing. If you can focus on solving the problem rather than just being mad at the other person, then a good outcome is often possible.

Conflict resolution is a way of dealing with conflict. It looks at everyone’s concerns and tries to find a solution that works for everyone.
What’s your conflict style?

**Leah** believes in speaking up for herself. When somebody annoys her or does something wrong, no matter how small, she is quick to confront them. “It’s better that I deal with it now, before it grows into a bigger problem,” she says.

- What is good about Leah’s approach?
- What might cause problems?
- Is this good teamwork?

**Stefan** likes to keep things friendly at work and avoids conflict. He usually keeps quiet about things that bother him, even when they are quite serious. “I’d rather get along with my co-workers,” he says. “I don’t want to make trouble for people.”

- What might be good about Stefan’s approach?
- What might cause problems?
- Is this good teamwork?

A place for your notes:

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Practicing what we learned

Meet Minh and John

Minh and John work at a bulk store. Minh works at the cash, while John’s job is to keep the bins clean and stocked.

One morning John has a lot of restocking to do. He asks Minh to help.

“That’s your job!” says Minh. “My job is to be ready when customers want to pay.”

“But there’s nobody even in the store right now! You just don’t want to work!” John says.

“I work as hard as you do!” says Minh. “But I’m not supposed to leave the cash unattended.”

They both feel annoyed and resentful.

But after thinking for a while, Minh says, “As long as I can see the cash, I don’t have to stand right there. I could stock the bins that are right at the front of the store…”

John nods. “And I could bring you the stock, so you don’t have to go in the back.”

What do you think of the way John and Minh resolved their conflict?

A place for your notes:
Tips for Conflict Resolution

The ability to sort out everyday conflicts in a peaceful way is a valuable skill for everyone. It’s also helpful in our personal lives. Here are some tips:

✓ **Pick your battles.** We all make mistakes or do things that bother people without realizing it at times. If a co-worker forgets to refill the coffee or is late with a task once, it’s often best to ignore it and carry on. However, it is important to deal with ongoing or serious problems.

✓ **Discuss it after some time has passed and you are less angry.** For example, on a lunch break or after work, ask your co-worker, “Could we take a few minutes and talk about what happened at the meeting today?”

✓ **Describe the problem, not the other person. Stick to the facts.** When you accuse or insult someone, they naturally become angry and defensive, which doesn’t help. For example, saying “Yesterday I had to stay late to clean up both my station as well as yours and then I missed my bus,” will likely work better than saying the other person made you miss your bus.

✓ **Include their point of view.** You could say, “I understand that it was really busy yesterday and that you needed to leave right after your shift.”

✓ **Suggest a fair solution.** “Would you be willing to start cleaning up your station a bit earlier from now on?” Or you could ask, “How can we work together to fix this problem?”

A place for your notes:

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Practicing what we learned

Try out your conflict resolution skills by imagining yourself as Eric or Arjun.

Eric and Arjun work at a fast-food restaurant. Eric is eager to serve his customers quickly. The problem is, he often cuts in front of Arjun or even bumps into him. Arjun feels like he always has to watch out for Eric to avoid an accident. Arjun has to serve his customers more slowly because Eric doesn’t make room for the other workers.

1. Break into partners. Decide who will be Eric and who will be Arjun.
2. Arjun will bring up the problem. Then Eric will have a turn.
3. Take a problem-solving approach to resolving this conflict.

How did it work out?
How did each partner feel?
Would you try something different next time?

A place for your notes:
Dealing with harassment

Sometimes problems with a co-worker go way beyond a simple conflict.

**Harassment** is unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates you.

**Discrimination** is treating a person or group of people worse than other people for any reason.

**Every province in Canada has a Human Rights Code that protects people from harassment at work.** If you are being harassed or discriminated against at work because of your age, gender, race, religion, sexuality, or some other reason, you might need to seek support. So what can you do?

- Keep a record. Write down exactly what the person said and did, and when.
- Talk to your manager or supervisor.
- If your manager or supervisor is not willing to help (or if they are part of the problem), report the harassment to their boss.
- If you have one, talk to your Human Resources department or Union Rep.
- If no action is taken and the problem continues, you can contact the Human Rights Commission in your province. Find yours here: [https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/provincial-territorial-human-rights-agencies](https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/provincial-territorial-human-rights-agencies)

You have the right to work in a harassment-free environment. If you are being harassed, it is not your fault.
Congratulations!

You’ve completed the UP Skills for Work Teamwork workbook, and taken the next step in building your soft skills. For the last activity, we hope you’ll make a pledge. The **pledge** can be personal, or you can share it with others.

A **pledge** is a serious promise to yourself or to others.

**My pledge**

I pledge to work on my teamwork by:

______________________________

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Sometimes a pledge needs an **action plan**.

An **action plan** is a list of steps you’ll take to make your pledge happen.

**My action plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I will reach it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I will reach it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I need to do first</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Who will support me</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategies for setbacks</td>
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