

Team Roles

For a team to be successful in any task, there are various roles that must be filled. What follows are the team roles that Discovery Learning Assessments (DLAs) often necessitate. Depending on student experience level and instructor teaching style, the coverage of these roles can be handled in various ways. Some instructors prefer to allow students to informally/implicitly fill these roles, while others prefer to be more formal/explicit about the coverage. Regardless, at a minimum it is helpful for instructors to discuss with students the makings of an effective team, especially the various roles that need to be filled, prior to any DLAs. Doing so is a great investment towards the quality of a team's output.

Keep in mind that not all teams are created equal. While we always aim to have teams of three for DLAs, some teams will be comprised of two students while others might have four. Regardless of the team's size, a team must always cover all necessary roles. Consequently, a role does not necessarily equate to an individual team member. Depending on the size of the group, one student may perform multiple roles. Finally, it is very important to encourage team members to take turns fulfilling each role to ensure students fully understand the course content, are positive contributing team members, and further develop their own personal leadership styles.

1. **Team Leader**

The team leader oversees the entire problem-solving process. The team leader serves as a moderator when team members pose different approach strategies, ensures that the voices of all team members are heard, and is ultimately responsible for making decisions when the team is split. In doing so they must ensure that the team stays organized and focused so they are making continuous progress towards the completion of all necessary tasks.

2. **Scribe**

The scribe gets things on paper. They clearly document and capture the team's ideas. However, this team member does more than just write – they understand the context of what is being written. If a question implicitly requires the team to address various sub-components, the scribe ensures each of those implicit questions are answered. In doing so, the scribe will clearly organize the team's thoughts, both their methodology and results.

3. **Technologist**

The technologist possesses strengths with applicable problem-solving technology. They focus their time on the computer, implementing the chosen methodology in a technologically sound model so that they can providing the team with results.

4. **Timekeeper**

The timekeeper works with the team leader to develop a time allotment plan for the team. Throughout the assessment they will keep the team progressing on the agreed upon plan and will highlight when more assistance is needed in one area if that task is taking longer than initially planned. Do not underestimate the importance of this role.