SPECIFYING GROUP ROLES

Specific to grouping strategies is identifying how each group member will process information and come to a consensus within a collaborative setting. If the group is to accomplish its task successfully, each group member must be aware of their specific responsibilities.

Each member of the group has the following responsibilities:
1. To actively participate by contributing ideas and providing feedback to others.
2. To remain on task and refrain from distracting the group.
3. To focus on task completion within the specified timeframe.
4. To listen to other members when they contribute.
5. To take turns speaking.
6. To encourage other members to offer opinions and ideas.

Often the group's task requires a facilitator, a neutral servant of the group, who does NOT offer evaluations or ideas. The facilitator has the following responsibilities to the group:
1. To help the group focus its energies on the task by suggesting methods and procedures.
2. To define the responsibilities of the group, making sure the group's purpose is clearly understood by all members.
3. To protect all group members from attack.
4. To make sure that everyone has an opportunity to participate.
5. To make sure that discussion is not monopolized by one or two members.
6. To get and distribute any materials/resources needed by the group to perform its task.

When the task requires some kind of written record, the group will need a recorder. The recorder has the following responsibilities to the group:
1. To write down the speaker's ideas as they are given. Every attempt should be made to use the speaker's actual words instead of paraphrasing them.
2. To record quickly and legibly in full view of the other group members. Abbreviations and symbols can be used in a fast-paced discussion.
3. To provide a visual tool for the members that will help them stay focused and enable them to review their progress.

The role of the time keeper is a simple but important role in the group. The time keeper helps the group pace itself by keeping track of how much time has been used and how much time is left.
1. To tell the group periodically how much time has been used on the task and how much time is left.
2. To give periodic warnings before time expires. The frequency of warnings depends upon the amount of time remaining for task completion.
3. To advise the group when time is up.