D o you or your family own any Tupperware? Chances are the answer is yes. Tupperware, invented in the 1940s, consists of the ubiquitous plastic bowls and other kitchen storage containers that keep food fresh because of its unique way of "burping" air out of the container. A Tupperware party, a sales meeting usually in someone's home, is held every 2.5 seconds resulting in annual sales of over $1.2 billion.[1] But the pervasive influence of Tupperware in American kitchens during the past half century almost didn't happen. The inventor of Tupperware, Earl Silas Tupper, was a genius in creating new products, but he didn't know how to sell them. Then Tupper met Brownie Wise, an energetic person with a gift for sales. Their meeting and working together is a testament to how people with different skills and talents can create something that neither one could do on their own. Wise was a marketing genius: Tupper was a brilliant inventor. Through Wise's sales ideas (home Tupperware parties), Tupperware became a household word and the Tupperware business flourished. Without Wise, Tupperware would probably be a forgotten product. But because of their collaboration, great things happened.[2] Working together and with teams of salespeople, Tupperware became a household word.

leading questions

1. Brownie Wise and Earl Tupper each had different talents: Wise was the salesperson and Tupper the inventor. When have you been part of a group or team that included people with different talents and backgrounds that accomplished more than was possible if the individual group members had worked alone?

2. When you have worked with people who were different from you, what strategies have you used to bridge the differences? What would you like to learn that would help you collaborate with people who have different skills, talents, and backgrounds than you?

business and professional settings, most of the truly powerful transformations hap ough collaboration. One person's idea connected to
such innovations

Meeting Place: The Centennial Building, Abernathy Conference Room

Meeting Time: Tuesday, September 19, at 3:30 PM

Meeting Goals: At the end of the meeting, meeting participants should be able to
1. Identify positive and negative reactions to the finance report.
2. Describe how the new employment policy will influence hiring practices.
3. Identify strategies to increase sales.

I. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Are there any other agenda items we need to discuss today?
B. What are positive and negative reactions to the finance report distributed before the meeting?
C. How will the new employment policy influence hiring practices?

II. ACTION ITEMS

What can be done to improve our sales figures during the next sales period?

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

Announcements

FIGURE 10.2 Sample Agenda

How to Develop a Team Mission Statement

A **team mission statement** is a concise description of a team's goals or desired outcomes. A clearly worded mission statement helps a team know not only whether it's on task or off task but also when it has completed the task.

A good team mission statement should pass the SMARTS test—it should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound, and should Stretch the team.[64]

- *Specific:* It should clearly describe what the team should accomplish.

- *Measurable:* The team must be able to assess whether the mission was achieved.

- *Attainable:* The mission statement should be realistic given the time and resources of the teams.

- *Relevant:* The mission should be appropriate to what the team has been assigned to do.

- *Time-bound:* Teams should set a deadline or time frame for achieving the mission.

- *Stretch:* The goal should be a bit of a challenge so as to stretch the team.

Here are examples of team mission statements that pass the SMARTS test:

- Our team will make 10 percent more widgets by the end of the month.

- Our team will sell more life insurance policies than any other sales team in our sales area.

- Our team will attract two new businesses to our community, which will result in an increased tax base by the end of the year.

How to Manage Team Status Differences

Status refers to an individual's importance and prestige. Your status in a group influences whom you talk to, who talks to you, and even what you talk about. Although some people underestimate their perceived status and influence in a group, research suggests that you are probably quite aware of your own status level when communicating with others.[65] You perceived importance affects both your verbal and your nonverbal messages. Typically, person with high status

- Talks more than those of lower status.

- Di... ...ments to other high-status group members.

... ...oup makes.

TABLE 9.1   A Classification of Group Roles

Task Roles	Description	Example
Initiator/contributor	Offers new ideas or approaches to the group; suggests ways of getting the job done.	"How about developing an agenda to help us organize our work?"
Information seeker	Asks for additional clarification, facts, or other information that helps the group with the issues at hand.	"Can anyone tell me how many times we have had to cancel our fall conference because of bad weather?"
Opinion seeker	Asks group members to share opinions or express a personal point of view.	"So, what do you all think of the new uniform that all of the service workers have been asked to wear?"
Information giver	Provides facts, examples, statistics, or other evidence that relates to the task confronting the group.	"Within the past year, the Vice President for Information Technology has told us to use two different information management systems."
Opinion giver	Offers opinions or beliefs about what the group is discussing.	"I think the new information technology policy will decrease our productivity."
Elaborator	Provides comments or examples to extend or add to the comments of others.	"Travis, your ideas sound a lot like Sondra's suggestion. Sondra, why don't you elaborate on your idea and we'll see if Travis agrees or disagrees with you."
Coordinator	Clarifies and notes relationships among the ideas and suggestions that have been offered by others.	"Jessica, that's a good point. The same thing happened to me when I worked for our main competitor two years ago."
Orienter	Summarizes what has occurred and seeks to keep the group focused on the task at hand.	"I think we're getting a bit off track here. Let's go back to the issue on the agenda."
Evaluator/critic	Assesses the evidence and conclusions that the group is considering.	"How recent are those statistics? I think there are newer figures for us to consider."
Energizer	Spurs the group to action by making comments to motivate the group to work harder.	"Come on, team. We can do it if we just keep at it! Don't stop now."
Procedural technician	Helps the group accomplish its goal by handling tasks such as distributing reports, writing ideas on a chalk board, or performing other tasks that help the group.	"I'll write your ideas on the board. After the meeting, I'll copy them and summarize them in an email to each of you."
Recorder	Makes a written record of the group's progress by writing down specific comments, facts, or the minutes of meetings.	"I'll take notes of today's meeting."

Social Roles	Description	Example
Encourager	Offers praise and support and confirms the value of other people and the ideas they contribute.	"You're doing a great job. Thanks for working overtime on this project."
Harmonizer	Manages conflict and mediates disputes between group members.	"Grover, you and Nicole seem to be agreeing more than you are disagreeing. Both of you want the same goal. Let's brainstorm some strategies that can help you both get what you want."
Compromiser	Resolves conflicts by trying to find an acceptable solution. Seeks new alternatives.	"Muriel, you want us to meet at 7:00 PM, and Samantha, you'd like us to start at 8:00. What if we started at 7:30? Would that work?"
Gatekeeper	Encourages people who talk too much to contribute less and invites those who are less talkative to participate.	"Blair, we've not heard what you think. What do you suggest we do?"

TABLE 9.1 (continued)

	Description	Example
Follower	Goes along with the suggestions and ideas of other group members.	"I can support that option. You have summarized the issue about the same way I see it."
Emotion expresser	Verbalizes how the group may be feeling about a specific issue or suggestion.	"We seem to be frustrated that we are not making more progress."
Group observer	Summarizes the group's progress or lack of progress.	"We are making great progress on all of the issues except how much salary we should offer the new person we've just hired."
Tension reliever	Monitors stress within the group and offers suggestions for breaks, using humor or other appropriate strategies.	"Hey, what we need is a good laugh. Here's a joke I saw on the Internet today."
Individual Roles	**Description**	**Example**
Aggressor	Deflates or disconfirms the status of other group members or tries to take credit for the work of others.	"Lee, your idea is awful. We all know that what I suggested two meetings ago is clearly the best option."
Blocker	Is negative, stubborn, and disagreeable without an apparent reason.	"I just don't like it. I don't have to tell you why; I just don't like it."
Recognition seeker	Seeks the spotlight by dwelling on his or her personal accomplishments; seeks the praise of others.	"I offered that suggestion two meetings ago; I'm the one who usually makes things happen for this team."
Self-confessor	Uses the group as a forum to disclose personal feelings and problems unrelated to the group's task.	"I'm not happy at home, so that's why I seem a bit off at this meeting. My kids are driving me crazy."
Joker	Wants to crack jokes, tell stories, and have fun instead of focusing on the task or what the group needs.	"Hey, let's just go have coffee. Then I'll tell you the gossip about Harvey in accounting. What a nutcase!"
Dominator	Tries to take control of the group, talks too much, and uses flattery or aggression to push his or her ideas on the group.	"Now here's what we're going to do: Martin, you will take notes today. Alice, you go get us some coffee; and Luke, I want you to just sit there in case I need you to run back to my office to get the Simpson file."
Special-interest pleader	Seeks to get the group to support a pet project or personal agenda.	"My boss would like it if we would support the new downtown renovation project. I'll stand a good shot at a promotion if I can get you on board."
Help seeker	Seeks to evoke a sympathetic response from others. Often expresses insecurity stemming from feelings of low self-worth.	"I'm not very good with people. I just feel like I don't relate well to others or have many friends."

What are the best or worst roles to assume? We recommend that you avoid assuming an individual role; by definition, these roles focus attention on an individual rather than the group. Groups need people to take on a balance of task and social roles, not draw attention to themselves.

What is the proper balance between task roles and social roles? Some experts recommend a 60:40 balance between task and social roles.[58] What is clear is that groups seem to operate most effectively when it's not all work and no play. Conversely, an out-of-balance group is not going to achieve its task goals. In general, . . . work done than about . . .

just teenagers; increasingly when groups and teams need to collaborate in business and professional settings, especially if team members are not physically close to one another, they connect using technology rather than meeting face-to-face.

A **virtual team** is a team that interacts via a channel other than face-to-face communication. Email, video conferences, and a vast array of technological tools make it possible for us to be psychologically close to someone even if that person lives and works on the other side of the world. Because of the increased costs of travel, many businesses and professional organizations are doing more collaborative work using virtual teams.[38] And even if we work in the same building with our colleagues, we may nonetheless connect electronically rather than interacting face-to-face. Yet collaborating in virtual teams seems to have a tipping point. One study found that when virtual teams interacted via electronic channels more than 90 percent of the time, teams were *less* successful in achieving team outcomes.[39]

Your personal computer, your cell phone, and other technological tools give you the ability to collaborate with other people who are not all in the same place at the same time. To give you an idea of how rapidly worldwide Internet use is increasing, note these statistics: In 2005, over 950 million people used the Internet; that number had grown to over 2 billion people in 2011—and the numbers continue to grow exponentially.[40]

How is electronically-mediated, virtual teamwork different from live, face-to-face conversation? There are four key differences:[41]

- *Anonymity:* If you are interacting by text message or email only, you may not always know precisely with whom you are communicating when you receive a message.

- *Physical appearance:* There is typically less emphasis on a person's physical appearance and nonverbal communication online.

- *Distance:* Although we certainly can and do send email messages to people who live and work in the same building, there is typically greater physical distance between people who are communicating online.

- *Time:* You have greater control over the timing and pacing of the messages you send and receive. You can decide, for example, when to retrieve a text or email messages or when to respond to a message you receive. Your interaction with others can be **asynchronous**—which means your messages are out of sync with the time in which you send them; there often is a time delay between when you send and receive a message. Or they can be **synchronous**—the messages are received the moment they are sent.