

What does it take to be a good team player?

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Are you a good team player? If you think the answer is yes, check to be sure, using these prerequisites drawn from the qualities that consultants Joel Garfinkle outlines on his Career Advancement blog and Marty Brounstein shares on Dummies.com:

Always reliable

This topped the list for both writers. “A great team player is constantly reliable day in and day out, not just some of the time. You can count on them to get the job done, meet deadlines, keep their word and provide consistent quality work,” Mr. Garfinkle says.

Communicates constructively

Good team members know when to quietly get the work done and when to speak up. They aren’t chippy, but can confidently and constructively raise important points. They are respectful of others in doing so.

Listens actively

As well as knowing when to speak up, good team members know when to listen. “Teams need team players who can absorb, understand, and consider ideas and points of view from other people without debating and arguing every point,” writes Mr. Brounstein.

“Such a team member also can receive criticism without reacting defensively. Most important, for effective communication and problem solving, team members need the discipline to listen first and speak second so that meaningful dialogue results,” he says.

Shares willingly

Good team players don’t hoard information and ideas, in order to feather their own nest, but give willingly to their teammates and put the overall cause above their own individual interest. They keep others in the loop, and give time to the informal exchanges that can enliven teams.

Does more than asked

As well as being reliable, strong team members go the extra mile. They show initiative, take on additional responsibilities and embrace the unenviable tasks needed for success. They are willing to take risks, and step out of their personal comfort zone, in support of team objectives.

Shows flexibility

Teams are often spearheading change, and good team members are able to adapt quickly and easily to changing situations.

“They don’t get stressed or complain but are flexible in finding their feet in whatever is thrown their way,” Mr. Garfinkle writes.

In addition, Mr. Brounstein notes, good team players are able to consider different points of views and compromise when needed. They don’t get stuck in a rut, arguing endlessly for a fixed position and slowing the team’s progress.

Demonstrates team commitment

Strong team players don't just put in their time to receive a paycheck, but make their relationships with co-workers a priority. They display passion and commitment to the team.

"They come to work with the commitment of giving it 110 per cent and expect others on the team to do the same," Mr. Garfinkle says.