

Assessment Task 2:

Assessment Task	Project: Establish and Maintain Strategic Networks
Schedule	Due Week 10
Outcomes Assessed	Performance Criteria: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 Addresses some elements of required skills and knowledge as shown in the Assessment Matrix

Description:

Note to Trainers/Assessors: *This assessment task should be handed out at the beginning of term to allow for planning and in-class project work in conjunction with respective learning sessions. Due date for the assessment can either be three separate dates for each part of the task or a final date at the end of the term. Supervised project time during learning session is highly recommended to ensure participation, consultation and originality of work.*

For the purpose of this task, you may also establish an online network for the group that they can then use for completing this task. The network should have a purpose and a primary method of communication such as consultation, negotiation, information exchange, knowledge share etc. If implemented, users should be asked to comply with legal (e.g. privacy) and policy requirements (e.g. OHS, code of conduct, diversity, gender, disability etc.). All practical tasks MUST BE COMPLETED during designated assessment sessions.

This is an individual project task for this unit that commences at the start of the unit and progresses over the term. There are three parts of this project and each part should be completed as per the schedule discussed and agreed with the trainer/assessor.

Primarily, you will be required to establish and maintain three different types of networks for three specific purposes during the course of the unit (10 weeks). Information collected and compiled in Assessment Task1 can be useful in identifying and selecting appropriate networks. As you may have some constraints joining some of the networks (e.g. government networks and especially internal networks), consult with your trainer/assessor before you select a network.

Assume that you are working for a government agency in Victoria. Your role requires you to interact and connect with a large number of stakeholders. You have realised the importance and need for strategic networking and have accordingly selected internal and external networks to join and maintain.

Your trainer will establish one of the required networks for your group as a simulation using an online platform. You will be provided with more information on the purpose and structure of the network in the classroom. Different learners will be assigned different roles, keeping in mind a composition of a culturally diverse workforce including people with disability.

Part A: Develop a Reference Document

In this part, you will need to develop a comprehensive theory both as a justification and a guide for joining and using strategic networks.

Plan and prepare a reference document that provides a justification or rationale for selecting and joining the networks that you have identified for the purpose of this assessment task. You will also be required to research and compile information on communication and conflict resolution principles as knowledge reference for your colleagues or co-workers.

A suggested structure for your document could be;

- Aims and Objectives
- An Overview of the Proposed Strategic Networks
- Expected Benefits and Outcomes
 - For Self
 - For the Organisation
- Perceived Strategic Values
- Key Stakeholders
- Communication Methods and Strategies
- Working in Public Sector in Victoria (legislation and protocols)
- Key legal and policy requirements (including OHS requirements)
- Key Principles
 - Interpersonal, group and inter-agency communication
 - Conflict resolution in a strategic context
 - Equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- Further Resources

This document should ideally be prepared within the first 3-4 weeks of the term to develop and reinforce the required context and knowledge for this project. All the three networks can be covered and described within each of the above headings.

Part B: Establish and Maintain Networks

In this part, you will be required to actually establish and maintain your strategic networks. From privacy point of view, you must not provide any information on unknown or new public networks that could compromise your identity or privacy. You may also use any existing known or trusted networks that you already use (e.g. membership with professional bodies, workplace intranet etc.).

YOU WILL BE ESTABLISHING/JOINING AND MAINTAIN THREE SEPARATE NETWORKS over the duration of the term, including an internal network set up by the trainer. Join the required/selected networks and in each network;

1. Download and save terms and conditions or code of conduct completed at sign-up
2. Add friends, contacts or join groups
3. Start new group or conversation or forum, as the network permits
4. Start conversations and build rapport with other members, participants
5. Contribute in existing discussions
6. Maintain and lead a healthy communication as per the communication strategy
7. Expand your network and invite others to join in
8. In the local network (created by your trainer) develop relationships and devise tangible outcomes in terms of consultation, negotiation, knowledge sharing or work procedures
9. Identify any conflict or misunderstanding occurred during the conversations
10. Take a pro-active approach to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings
11. Create or identify new and mutual opportunities through the networks

This task **MUST BE COMPLETED** during designated assessment sessions. The process of establishing, joining and maintaining the strategic networks must be observed by your assessor for marking. You will also have to provide your login details to your assessor for assessment of your work and activities with the networks.

Part C: Reflection

- At the end of term write a reflection paper based on your experience with strategic networks including;
 - Your previous thoughts and perceptions on relevance and efficacy of strategic networks
 - Any change(s) in your perception after maintaining the actual networks
 - Key learning and development (skill, knowledge, perception or ideas) gained in the process
 - Difficulties/conflicts/problems faced and resolved

The reflection paper is focused on own experiences and learning. The reflection paper should be word processed and contained within two single-sided A4 sheets.

Assessment Criteria

The following assessment criteria will be used for marking this assessment task. Ensure that you have addressed all of the criteria in your work.

- Developed a reference document for establishing and using strategic networks
- Aims and objectives of using strategic networks are established within professional and organisational contexts
- Selection of strategic networks is relevant and consistent with the stated objectives
- Key features of each of the networks are outlined
- Expected benefits for self and organisation are articulated
- Strategic aspect of networking is established with identification of strategic values behind each of the selected networks
- Perceived benefits and strategic values are realistic and align with the stated objectives
- Identified and listed key stakeholders for each network type
- Distinction is made between internal and external stakeholders based on their specific roles and needs
- Respective communication methods are identified and analyse for their effectiveness
- Identified and described relevant legal or policies requirements relating to public sector environment (including OHS)
- Public sector legislations and protocols are researched and articulated with appropriate references
- Further resources of information are identified and listed
- Established three different types of networks for specific purposes
- Followed and completed participation and registration requirements and conditions
- Created own group, discussion or interaction and developed contacts within the networks
- Communicated mutual benefits and expanded the networks
- Approached and maintain networks according to the communication strategy and group communication principles
- Led and developed consultation, negotiation, knowledge exchange or collaboration in line with strategic objectives
- Maintained trust, courtesy and respect with network members
- Identified and created new opportunities for mutual benefit or improvements
- Adopted a rational and logical approach towards conflict resolution
- Demonstrated key conflict resolution principles in handling conflict and misunderstandings
- Exercised restraint and demonstrated understanding of diversity, gender and equal opportunity issues in communication and interaction
- Wrote a reflection paper that summarised previous and current experience in establishing and maintaining strategic networks
- The reflection paper encompasses the breadth of experience in this project and includes key learning and development

Submission Guidelines

Submit:

- A hard copy of the reference document with appropriate assessment cover sheet and attachments
- Login details of your strategic networks
- Print out of any communications or important references, opportunities or incidents
- A hard copy of the reflection paper with appropriate assessment cover sheet and attachments

Electronic versions of the assessment task and email/electronic submission arrangements are at further discretion of the trainer/assessor.