Peer Evaluation is one of the most common topics discussed on the listserve. There is no one size fits all solution for evaluation, but how his or her contribution to team cohesion and success. Therefore, it is important to stress the value of peer feedback, and how common peer feedback is in the modern workplace.

In the context of TBL, peer evaluation has teammates assessing teammates in order to “measure” the “helping behaviors” and to develop a peer evaluation scores. Peer evaluation does not measure how much a student knows, but how his or her contribution to team cohesion and productivity is perceived by their teammates.

Peer evaluation can have numerous benefits:

1. By motivating students to strive for excellent performance
2. By giving comfort to “stronger” students who fear that they will be doing most of the work
3. By providing the instructor with a more accurate way of assigning individual grades at the end of the course (students know their teammates’ contributions better than the instructor does)
4. By helping students develop their feedback and evaluation skills

Prose and Con’s of Various Methods

**Koles Method:**
This method includes both a quantitative and qualitative assessment. The strength of this approach is that both the quantitative and qualitative data are generated, and that a student’s final peer evaluation score is both informed by their work across the semester (quantitative component) and their teammates’ perception of their performance (qualitative component). This method helps students develop their feedback skills.

In the qualitative component, each student is rated on 12 competencies using a Likert scale (e.g., “always,” “sometimes,” “often,” “very often”). There are twelve competencies divided into three areas: cooperative learning skills, self-directed learning, and interpersonal skills. Points are generated from the compiled Likert results for each student.

In the quantitative component, each student answers two questions for each teammate: What is the single most valuable contribution this person makes to your team? What is the single most important thing this person could do to more effectively help your team?

The quality of the feedback given is evaluated by the instructor using specific criteria, and up to 45 points is given to the student who made the comments. The scores from the quantitative assessment (45%) and the qualitative assessment (45%) are added together to get the final peer feedback score. Students must complete the quantitative and qualitative sections on all of their teammates to receive their own peer evaluation score.

Pros and cons: The benefit of this method is that your peer evaluation score both depends on the quality of your performance as judged by your peers, and the “Helpful” quality of the feedback you give your teammates.

**Texas Tech Method:**
This is another Likert scale method where students evaluate their teammates on twelve criteria, including Promptness/Reliability, Humility, and Preparation for Learning Activities. Students are rated on a five-point scale in which 1 is too little, 5 is too much, and 3 is considered an ideal score. Comments are required for scores of 1 or 5 but are otherwise optional. Scores are averaged for each competency, and the average is included in the course grade at the end of the semester. All the data are collected electronically and fed back to students.

Pros and cons: This method has similar pros and cons as described in the Koles Method above, but the qualitative component of this method is not evaluated with the same thoroughness as the Koles Method.

**Michaelsen Method:**
In this an anonymous method where the peer evaluation makes up a fixed portion of the course grade (3 to 10% typically). The peer evaluation scores are given by the instructor as a pair of a fair peer, this course grade component after the team portion of the course grade. This can be very useful in courses that have a larger role for peer assessment.

Pros and cons: This method is beneficial due to the enforced score differential, but some students complain about having to give scores below 10. Without a differential there can be a tendency for students to assign 10’s across the board in the hope of maximizing evaluation score for everyone. In schools where a lower limit is not used (i.e. no scores less than 7 out of 10 allowed), some students have noticed that giving one student a consistent zero can substantially boost other teammates scores (Ostafichuk, personal communication)

**Combination Method:**
This is another anonymous method where the evaluation score is used as a multiplier with the team portion of the course grade. This can be very useful in courses that have a larger role for peer assessment. At the end of the course, each student will be given their team member’s final grade with relatively small changes in the peer evaluation scores. An activity is added to the start of the semester, where student work is divided into teams to develop the criteria (the whole class must agree on the same criteria). This can be very useful in team evaluation.

**Fink Method:**
This is another anonymous method where the evaluation score is used as a multiplier with the team portion of the course grade. This can be very useful in courses that have a larger role for peer assessment. At the end of the course, each student will be given their team member’s final grade with relatively small changes in the peer evaluation scores.

**Wisdom of ListServe**
Peer Evaluation is one of the most common topics discussed on the listserve. There is no one size fits all solution for peer evaluation, but there are many things you can do to be more successful.

- Many TBL practitioners use “Making Feedback Helpful” by Michaelsen and Schuhtheiss.
- Students should be introduced to the logistics of peer evaluation early in the semester.
- Students should be reminded of purpose and your rationale’s for using peer evaluations.
- Students should be made aware of similar peer assessment processes that are being incorporated into many work place environments.

- We should be made aware of the possible impact of peer evaluations on student performance.
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**Essential Reading**

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