

Training for Change (<http://www.trainingforchange.org>)

## Task and Maintenance: What makes groups work?



[1] [Handout on Task and Maintenance \(great for people who want to lead this tool\)](#) [2]

### GOALS

- developing awareness in participants around the two different types of leadership in groups (task and maintenance);
- help participants identify their tendencies and learning edges around their own leadership.

### Time

45 minutes

### HOW IT'S DONE

This tool is a quick, easy tool that is effective at helping groups understand the different roles in making groups work: different leadership skills. It requires facilitators to have the theory of task/maintenance internalized fairly well (since they will have to rapidly identify which comments from people belongs where). Step 1: Make a list Have participants make a list of: "What do people do in groups that makes them work?" Don't tell participants what you are doing, but use two pieces of newsprint or two lists. As you write up what people say, put the task functions on one list and maintenance functions on the other list. Step 2: Title the lists After participants have come up with a fairly comprehensive list (hopefully of both types), title the two lists: "Task Functions" and "Maintenance Functions" respectively. Introduce, using personal examples and examples the group raised, task and maintenance functions. Invite participants to come up with examples that clarify that difference, too. (Note: this is not about tricking participants in that no matter what lists are made, they are good lists. This is not about shaming participants if they had one list shorter than the other.) Step 3: Discuss Give participants a chance to identify the type of leadership that they most offer (they'll probably, of course, do activities in both lists -- help them identify their tendencies). What are the most recognized or valued in this group? Step 4: Buddies Get people into buddies to reflect on what are their growing edges with regards to their leadership (task or maintenance? In what way?).

### FOR MORE THEORY ON THIS TOOL

See Leadership for Change: toward a feminist model, by Bruce Kokopeli and George Lakey. Available from Training for Change (PO Box 30914, Philadelphia, PA 19104): [www.TrainingForChange.org](http://www.TrainingForChange.org) [3] \*  
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[Team-building anti-sexism antisexism feminist leadership maintenance make better trainings sexism task](#)

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**Links:**

- [1] [http://www.trainingforchange.org/webfm\\_send/~TFC Files~handouts~teambuilding~TaskMaint.pdf](http://www.trainingforchange.org/webfm_send/~TFC%20Files~handouts~teambuilding~TaskMaint.pdf)
- [2] [http://www.trainingforchange.org/sites/default/files/Leadership Skills-Task\\_Main.pdf](http://www.trainingforchange.org/sites/default/files/Leadership%20Skills-Task_Main.pdf)
- [3] <http://www.TrainingForChange.org>