

# Strategies for Effective Group Activities

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The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the homepage of the Team-Based Learning Collaborative (TBLC). The browser's address bar shows the URL [www.teambasedlearning.org](http://www.teambasedlearning.org). The page features a navigation menu with links for Home, What is TBL?, Resources, Research, News & Events, About TBLC, and Be a Member. The main content area includes the TBLC logo, which consists of four hands (two red, two black) forming a circle around the letters 'TBLC'. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'Team-Based Learning™ Collaborative'. Below the navigation menu, there is a video player showing a group of people in a classroom setting. To the right of the video player, a text block states: 'The Team-Based Learning Collaborative is an organization of educators from around the world who encourage and support the use of Team-Based Learning in all levels of education.' The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons and the system clock indicating 10:23 AM on 10/12/2018.

<http://www.teambasedlearning.org/>

# 4 S's of Team Assignments

- ▶ Work on a Significant problem, from students' point of view.
- ▶ Work on the Same problem (students can then learn from the differences in the way different teams grappled with the same issues).
- ▶ Make a Specific choice. When students have to decide on a specific action, they are more “invested” in the outcome and learn more deeply than when they just respond to a hypothetical question.
- ▶ Simultaneously report: All students benefit when they hear how others dealt with similar issues at the time of their own group report—back to the class, while their interest and attention is heightened.



# An Example: Senior Care Inc.

- ▶ Significant problem: Should Senior Care call a bond?
- ▶ Same problem: 6–7 teams work on same case
- ▶ Specific choice: Should Senior Care call the bond:
  - Now
  - One year from now
  - Not at all
- ▶ Simultaneously report: Teams post and defend their recommendation

# Activities

- ▶ Before class, individuals:
  - Read the case and play with case model
  - Draft answers to case questions
  - Submit case input data on Sakai
- ▶ In-class, teams:
  - Review individuals' draft answers to case questions
  - Debate and discuss the differences in answers
  - Decide on a team response and write team answers
  - Submit case solution on Sakai
  - Post and defend their recommendation
- ▶ After class, teams receive:
  - Detailed feedback from the instructor and TA

# Strategy Works Because:

- ▶ Individuals come to class prepared.
  - They have to review the case for pre-class assignment
- ▶ The cases are real world.
  - For most cases, instructor knows what decision management actually made and whether it was the best decision. Teams like comparing their decisions to real life decisions – really happy when their decision is better than what management did.
- ▶ Cases are complex and require analyses.
  - Spreadsheets with input variables focus team discussion on what to do with information versus creating the spreadsheet.

# Strategy Works Because:

- ▶ Peer evaluations control free-rider problem.
  - Mid-term – individuals assess team performance and make improvement suggestions for remaining cases
  - End-of-term – individuals assess performance of each team member and instructor uses result for 10% of grade.