

Qualities of a Team Player

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John C. Maxwell wrote a great, little book called ***The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player***. Here are my favorite of these.

1. **Collaborative** – I like Maxwell's differentiation between cooperation and collaboration. "Cooperation is working together agreeably. Collaboration is working together aggressively."

Collaboration means that you recognize that everyone on the team brings their unique skills and talents. You recognize your teammates' strength and understand that those strengths complement yours. You have to shift focus from yourself to the team's purpose or goal. You trust that everyone is contributing and you work to create energy that has a multiplying effect.

To me, collaboration means treating your teammates with respect and courtesy, consistently. Collaboration means providing assistance, and listening and sharing information. I think collaboration means cooperating with others, contributing your ideas and honoring others' contributions.

Do you simply cooperate or are you collaborative? Share information, complement others, and focus on the team (not yourself).

2. **Tenacious** – Never, never, never quit! Tenacity means giving all that you have, not more and certainly not less. Do not approach work half-heartedly and give only 50%. Tenacious people not only give 100%, they also do not stop giving just because they encounter a roadblock. Failures will invariably happen. You have to analyze, learn and continue to move forward.

Tenacity also means continuing to work until the job is done, not stopping when you are tired. As Napoleon Hill, motivational author, stated, "Every successful person finds that great success lies just beyond the point when they're convinced their idea is not going to work." Tenacious people are successful because they keep going and obstacles become stepping-stones en route to success.

Are you tenacious? Put in a little extra and go the extra mile.

3. **Dependable** – Dependability is keeping your word and delivering each and every time.

Dependability means follow-through. Dependable team members have a high sense of responsibility to complete what they are capable of completing. You can count on a dependable teammate to deliver consistently and to exercise sound judgment.

Are you dependable? Do people trust you to deliver what you promise?

4. **Enthusiastic** – Enthusiasm, excitement and passion create energy. Attitude is a choice. Energy is self-generated but also highly contagious. You cannot wait for outside forces to spark your enthusiasm. You have to BE enthusiastic, even when you do not feel like it. If you believe in what you are doing and focus on the positive aspects of your work, you will generate energy. When people bring enthusiasm to a team, others feel it and your enthusiasm will energize and motivate your teammates.

Enthusiasm does not mean that you have to be the team's cheerleader. To me, enthusiasm means passion for your work and intensity of focus.

Are you enthusiastic? Do people feel your passion, commitment and sense of focus?

I think Maxwell has a very complete and appropriate list of qualities for a team player. I certainly recommend you read the book if you have not. The only item I would add is:

5. **Integrity** – Identify and uphold your values. Keep your word. Be ethical. Be trustworthy. Be truthful.

I think integrity is a component of being dependable, enthusiastic and a team player in general. However, if I were to write a book, I would have this as my eighteenth quality of a team player because I think it is a determinant of how dependable, enthusiastic and collaborative you are.