

# Group smarts:

Elevate collective intelligence  
through communication,  
norms, and diversity



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# Download the article and accompanying tools

This presentation is a supplement to the full article. Download more information, resources, and tools to help you implement these ideas in *The Learning System* (Summer, 2013).

Available at [www.learningforward.org/publications/learning-system](http://www.learningforward.org/publications/learning-system).



# Some groups are smarter than others

Teams have an intelligence of their own that is independent of the intelligence of individual members.

“To form the best teams, create groups with good communicators, enhance those skills, and make sure members have a variety of backgrounds.”

**Source: von Frank, V. (2013, Summer)** Group smarts: Elevate collective intelligence through communication, norms, and diversity. *The Learning System* 8(4). (p.1, 4-5). Available at [www.learningforward.org/publications/learning-system](http://www.learningforward.org/publications/learning-system)



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# How do you raise the group's IQ?

“Improving the group's ability to communicate will raise its collective intelligence.”

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# How do you raise the group's IQ?

According to Robert Garmston in *Unlocking Group Potential to Improve Schools* (Corwin Press, 2012):

- Ensure that members consider information from one another as potentially useful.
- Allow equal input from every member.
- Use dialogue — a free flow of ideas that build on one another's thoughts.
- Allow constructive critiques that offer concrete ideas for improvement, never about or judging an individual.

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# Selecting a smart team

- Seek differences in backgrounds and life experiences to avoid groupthink.
- Include a mix of veterans and newcomers.
- Include people who have never worked with one another.
- Train groups to be aware of power and status issues and how to resolve those challenges.

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