Team Competency #1

Communication goals and strategies guide

Goal: get everyone to participate equally.

Problem: Someone is dominating the conversation.

Strategy: Don't let one person impose their point of view.
"What do you think Chris?"

Strategy: Ask that person to help you get others to participate.
"Jack, since you are so good at communicating ideas, why don't you help me get the rest of the team to contribute?"

"Barbara, since you have so many ideas, why don't you work with Tim and see if he can come up with anything else?"

Problem: Someone is rambling or digressing.

Strategy: Remind them that a goal of the course/ communication is to give only relevant information that is direct and to the point (concise).
"Jack, let's get back to discussing trade-offs, I think we are veering off course."

"Matt, I am losing you. Remember we have to work on staying on point and not being too verbose."

Problem: Someone isn't talking

Strategy: Take turns in talking.
"Pat it's your turn next."

Strategy: Choose someone who hasn't spoken in a while.
"Sasha hasn't commented yet, what do you think about..."

Goal: Listening for understanding.

Problem: People aren't listening to each other.

Strategy: Listen carefully and respectfully to what others say. Have members summarize important points.
"Pat can you explain what Chris just said?"

"Sasha made an important point, did everyone get it?"

Strategy: Have team members show that they are listening by making eye contact with the speaker and smiling or nodding your head.
"All eyes on Harry, please stop doing what you are doing for a moment."

Strategy: Treat everyone's suggestions seriously.
"That's an interesting idea."

Problem: People aren't understanding each other.

    Strategy: Check with listener to see if they understand.
          "Pat did that make sense to you?"

    Strategy: Encourage the team to ask questions when they don't understand
          "I'm not sure what you mean, can you explain more."

          "John, do you need Mary to explain what she means?"

    Strategy: Try to reword what someone else said.
          "Do you mean... ?"

Goal: Building on each other's ideas.

Problem: People aren't benefiting from each other's work.

    Strategy: Have a meeting or find a way to share ideas.
          "Let's get together to share what we've been thinking and doing."

    Strategy: Try to add to someone's suggestion.
          "Maybe we could use that by doing..."

Problem: One idea doesn't connect to the next.

    Strategy: Build on other's ideas.
          "Building on what Chris said, I think … ."

          "I think what Sue said would work if we also..."

    Strategy: Relate each idea to something you know.
          "That reminds me of … ."

Problem: One idea doesn't spark another.

    Strategy: Connect what you say to what was just said.
          "What you just said makes me think about …."

Goal: Create a common, shared understanding

Problem: The team hasn't developed a common shared understanding.

    Strategy: Try to summarize the main ideas.
          "To sum up, … ."

Problem: After a disagreement, people still can't agree on a course of action.

    Strategy: Try to put different ideas together.
          "So I think that Sasha's idea is related to Pat's idea in this way … ."