Paul Bierman is a professor at the University of Vermont in Burlington.

**Preceding paragraph**

I returned to the United States a changed scientist. Now, I spend more time listening and making sure that everyone’s voice is heard. Four months ago, I took the Cuban approach to heart when I led a workshop for scientists from 5 countries. We met to discuss how we were going to analyze a few precious grams of rock that had been collected from beneath the Greenland Ice Sheet. I made sure that every scientist had a voice in the discussions and that all 35 of us ate dinners together. The approach worked: We began as individuals; after the workshop, we were a team.

**FEB 19 version (62 words)**

My Cuban collaborators taught me that the best teams value every member. When that happens, the team does better work because each person brings different ideas to the conversation. All voices have value, and each and every person is deserving of respect. I hope this essay inspires others to recognize the power of real teamwork—even during routine moments such as dinner.

Paul Bierman is a Gund Institute fellow and professor at the University of Vermont in Burlington.

**FEB 20 version (52 words)**

Cuba isn’t a political or economic utopia, but Cuban scientists, in my experience, know how to treat one another. All voices have value, and each and every person is deserving of respect. I hope this essay inspires others to recognize the power of real teamwork—even during routine moments such as dinner.

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**Suggested edit (62 words)**

My Cuban collaborators taught me that the best teams value every member because better work happens when each person brings different ideas to the conversation. All voices matter, and every person is deserving of respect even if their politics and cultures differ. I hope this essay inspires others to recognize the power of real teamwork—even during routine moments such as dinner.

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