**Case 3. The Group “But” Head (Brainstorming Derailed)**

Your group has been charged with developing an all-campus program that will enhance community by getting students out and interacting with one another. You have received some funds from the vice presi-dent’s office to put this program in motion and are very excited about the possibilities!

At your next meeting, the group starts planning the program. The ideas are flying fast and furious, and the energy in the air is palpable. However, Roget, a veteran group member, starts to argue with almost every suggestion that is offered. The word “but” is present in every sentence he says and you can feel the creative spark within your group’s brainstorm being extinguished rapidly.

Roget claims that he’s “just playing devil’s advo-cate” to help folks see different sides to the ideas being presented. He says that increases the challenge to his fellow student leaders so they have to “really prove” that they believe in an idea by fighting for it.

These aren’t the rules of brainstorming that you’ve experienced before and Roget’s approach makes you very uncomfortable. Plus, you’re seeing some of the quieter group members withdrawing – they don’t feel comfortable expressing their opinions or suggestions anymore because they expect Roget will automatically shoot them down.

You see the value of different perspectives but want to make sure that a collaborative, cooperative environment is being created, too. What might you do in this situation?

**Discussion Question:**

What types of things could other group members learn from this situation?