
Getting the Best out of Group Projects

Members Commit to the Group and the Project

Part of functioning in a group is to have a common vision, common goals, and a common mission even though you may work independently on a project; and to understand that you and your work represent the group. Your individual commitment is critical to group function.

Becoming a Team

A Team is two or more people; working together; on a Common Goal (or goals). Groups become Teams if this is in place and attention is paid to both interpersonal and task functions.

The Team Must Decide how to Communicate Effectively (Interpersonal)

Each Team must set up their own guidelines for good communication and a Team Charter. Through discussion and negotiation, the members choose the items that are most important for their clear communication as a Team. These often include commitment to:

- Respect and Listen to others
- Not blame (work hard on the problem, not on the person)
- Group members and Project process
- Supportive and Constructive Feedback
- Agreed upon Goals and Clear Timelines
- Positive interdependence (sink or swim together)
- Individual Accountability (say what you will do and do it)
- Analysis of work done and Planning for next steps
- Process for conflict and Problem Management

The Team Must Decide what is Important and Measure This (Task)

Early in the formation of the group, the members must decide what will be measured in the process. These items are generally critical to success and for the group to become an Effective Team.

- Came prepared
- Offered ideas and suggestions
- Provided information
- Asked for clarification/feedback
- Identified resources
- Solicited others' participation
- Kept group on task
- Was easy to work with
- Prepared materials
- Made presentation
- Participated in discussions
- Managed group conflict

The Team Must Acknowledge Success and Aim for Improvement

What have we done (individually and collectively) to meet our goals and keep the Team Charter?

How can we do better for next time? (Next steps)

The Team Celebrates!

Celebrate what you have accomplished and then refocus your efforts for greater success!