

GROUP PROJECT SUCCESS TIPS

In today's digitally connected society, employees virtually collaborate on projects to achieve a shared goal. Students experience this when asked to be a member of a diverse team in order to successfully complete a class project. Group projects can be particularly challenging given varying schedules, learners who are geographically separated, or reside in different time zones; however, group projects don't have to be daunting! Use these success tips to ensure your group is off to a positive start that will lead to the submission of a successful project!

Scheduling Meetings:

What Time is Good for You?

It will be important to develop an approach to the project in which all are involved equally. Group members may live in various time zones, hold jobs outside standard working hours, and have competing demands. With this in mind, the next item of business should be to determine when to meet. Preference may be to meet in real time but this may not always be possible. If it isn't, ensure good notes are taken during the meeting, action items recorded, and meeting notes immediately shared afterward with everyone.

Develop a Communication Plan:

How and when will you connect?

Communication is key to any project involving several people. The first step should be to determine the method the group will use to connect and keep each other updated along with what tools will be used to collaborate on the project. Webex to MS Teams are two tools provided by CMU at no cost that facilitate virtual meetings and allow content sharing and collaboration.

Build Community:

We're in this together.

The most critical element to a successful group project is each member recognizing their responsibility to the group. Use these Team Tips to provide needed direction for your group. Achieving an excellent grade is a reflection of everyone completing their assigned tasks, consistently communicating with the group, and actively collaborating with others. Great care should be taken by each student to show a high level of respect to fellow team members, a willingness to listen, and acceptance of the decisions the group has made as a whole. Working as a team will require all participants to be open and engaged with each other in order to actively learn from each other.

Making a Contribution:

Meeting Deadlines and Completing Assigned Tasks

Learners should identify the date the project is due to the instructor and work backwards to determine key elements of the project to be completed. Decide on due dates for these items, and which team member will be responsible for which item. It is important to pad the timeline to ensure a sufficient amount of time is allotted and to allow for the unexpected. Also ensure time is allocated to submit written work to the [CMU Writing Center](#) for help with polishing suggestions.

Create a calendar with these deadline dates clearly noted along with each task a team member is responsible for. A shared group calendar can easily be created through the use of an iCal feature which will import due dates into each student's personal calendar, regardless of type of calendar used.

It is also important to identify up front the areas of interest each group member has. Some students really enjoy doing research, others excel at organizing and editing a project and some are strong time managers. Determine the role each member would like to play and capitalize on those skills! Such collaboration will ensure that each group member has an equal share of the group responsibilities, that everyone can contribute, and that one person is not tasked with the majority of the work.

Project Coordinator:

The Glue Holding the Team Together

One member of the team should be identified as the team leader who will collect each member's completed work to collate together into the finalized project. The Project Coordinator will also ensure members are meeting deadlines along the way, provide reminders of upcoming due dates, and keep the group updated and informed on the status of the project. Lastly, this role can also submit the group's completed work into Blackboard for grading.



CENTRAL
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY