

Tips for Working in a Group

Working in a group is hard, whether this is your first time trying to complete a project with a team of classmates or if you've done it 100 times. Although it is hard to mesh together many different opinions and ideas, try to view your differences as a strength, not a weakness. Your varied experiences will give you a more well-rounded view of the topic at hand.

To help create a quality, well-polished product, we have highlighted several tips for improving your experience when working in groups!

COMMUNICATION

- Exchange phone numbers and email addresses. Always remember to copy everyone in the group if you send an email!
- Exchange class, work, and extra-curricular activity schedules.
- Include everyone. Let the group be involved in making the decisions.
- When facing problems, try to take care of it yourselves and work it out as a group. Don't wait until the end of the project to take care of complaints! You will get the best product when the whole group works together effectively. Only go to the professor if you cannot solve a problem on your own.
- Maintain a positive attitude!

PLANNING

- Select a group leader. He or she should be someone who can manage the group and make sure your deadlines will be met.
- In addition to selecting a group leader, select a note-keeper to keep a record of what you talk about in meetings. You may also want to assign other roles, like a checker (to double check all of the facts and references in your project), an editor (to review the group's writing) or a reporter (to be the group's liaison with the professor).
- Separate the work as evenly as possible. This includes everything: the research, the writing, etc.
- Set deadlines and stick to them! Try to set your deadlines early so that you have plenty of time to revise.

MEETINGS

- Have regular group meetings to discuss your progress on the project. If everyone is not able to meet at the same time, set up a rotating meeting schedule so that the same group member is not absent every time.
- Show up ON TIME!
- If your group is not able to meet in person, try to meet using Google Hangouts (available through your VIU email account), Skype, Oovoo, or some other video service.

- Keep your records: When you're meeting, have someone take minutes so that you can record decisions that are made and the ideas that come up. You should also write down when you plan to meet again. Share all of this information with everyone via email. Make sure that everyone's responsibilities are written down clearly and shared with the whole group so everyone knows what they need to do.
- Make your meetings count. Know what you want to accomplish, stay on topic, make decisions, and resolve conflicts or disagreements immediately within that meeting!

WRITING

- Work together to create an outline before writing your sections individually. This will ensure that everyone is on the same page, that your paper will have a clear focus, and that everyone is writing toward the same goal.
- After you have written your section, share it with your group. Let everyone in your group have a chance to review your writing and offer suggestions.
- After all of the parts are written, work as a group to put everything together. Do all of the sections flow together? Are there effective transitions? Do the introduction and conclusion paragraphs make sense with the writing in the body?
- If you need help, visit the WRMC! Our coaches are ready to work with you individually or with your entire group. Come see us at any point in your writing process!