

Guidelines and Questions for Groups

A. Upon first meeting:

1. **Ice-breakers:** Names, previous experience in the subject, previous experiences in group work
2. **Contact information:** phone # and email; possibly set up a group chat group (on D2L, using Messenger, What's App, etc.)
3. **Identify Roles:** What are your strengths when it comes to team work? Do you prefer to lead, listen, write or visualize?
Common roles include: Organizer, facilitator, researcher, writer, editor, designer
What are the tasks to complete? Divide and organize who will do what.
4. Agree and sign a team contract. (See sample next page)

B. Examine the assignment/task:

1. What are the assignment objectives?
2. What are the criteria required to be successful? Refer to instructor assessment tools if possible and or previous samples/models of successful, high-quality work.
3. When is it due? How much time do you have? Work backwards with specific target dates/times in mind for various task completion. Write out a schedule/ fill in a task management log for your team. (See sample page 3). If the task is to be done in one class/block of time, clearly identify the process and when and who is responsible.

C. Provide appropriate feedback:

Communication is everything! **When giving feedback...**

When giving feedback...

- Try to be **specific, useful and kind.**
- The more descriptive, the better.
- Give specific examples, so your receiver understands what you are referring to.
- Be gentle – don't pile on too much at once!
- Be positive in your tone and attitude.
- Balance the good with the bad.

When receiving feedback...

- Try not to be defensive. Trust the intentions are good and be grateful for the help. Don't take things personally!
- Ask for specific examples.
- Repeat or summarize the comment to make sure you understand.
- Take notes to help you remember.
- You can disregard the feedback or apply it! It's up to you!

Good luck in your team work!

Please find more materials on our MSS website under Academic English Support/Self Access Study Resources.



Team Contract¹

TEAM CONTRACT	
LAB Name:	
Team members:	

Our Agreement

- We all promise to listen to each other's ideas with respect.
- We all promise to do our work as best as we can.
- We all promise to do our work on time.
- We all promise to ask for help if we need it.
- We all promise to _____

If someone on our team breaks one or more of our rules, the team may have a meeting and ask the person to follow our agreement. If the person still breaks the rules, we will ask our instructor to help find a solution.

Date: _____

Team Member Signatures and Contact Information:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

¹ bie.org 2011 Buck Institute for Education

Task Management Log²

TEAM TASK MANAGEMENT LOG	
LAB Name:	
Team Members:	

Task	Who is responsible	Due Date	Status	Done

² Source: bie.org 2011 Buck Institute for Education

Additional suggestions for managing group work:

Prepare & Review.

Identify a note-taker.

Clarify.

Make note of what is unclear. Are there aspects of the work you don't believe you have fully understood?

Value.

What do you see in this work that you find to be particularly impressive, innovative or strong? Use the guidelines for assignment inform your feedback.

Offer concerns.

What potential problems or challenges do you see in the work? Use the guidelines for the assignment to inform your feedback.

Suggest.

Do you have suggestions on how to address the concerns you noted?

- Ensure you are allowing each team member to speak.
- Allow for a clarification throughout the process.
- Share what you like.
- Share what you are wondering about.
- Share what you have to offer (ideas or resources).
- Respond, always ensuring a professional and considerate view.
- Always ask if you are uncertain!

