

# Putting Your Heads Together

Working in groups seems to be more loved by instructors than students. However, learning to work effectively as part of a group is a valuable skill you will use frequently in your career as a student and after college.



**So how can I make working in groups less painful?**

- Get an idea of the talents and skills of group members by getting to know them.
- Exchange phone numbers and email addresses.
- Set a schedule that works for all members and make sure it is distributed to everyone in the group.

Get to know  
one another

Create a  
Time Line

- During your first meeting, make a list of everything that needs to be done in order to complete the project.
- Divide up and assign the tasks appropriately so you can hold all members accountable for their portion of the work.

- Get the finished product done a day or two in advance so you have plenty of time to make sure everything is ready to be turned in.
- Discuss grades and group performances throughout the project to clarify individual roles and allow individuals to make improvements.

Wrap It Up

## What about dealing with my group members?

- ❖ **Effective Communication:** There will be times when the work is being done differently than you think it should, and that's okay. Being sensitive to the thoughts, opinions, and ideas of others is part of learning to work in a group setting and keeping the interaction of all group members productive.
- ❖ **Doing Your Part:** It's as simple as attending all meetings and completing the work you commit to doing. If you have to miss a meeting, send your work ahead of time to the other members of the group.

**Uncooperative Group Members:** In nearly every group, there is usually one person who may not cooperate. Carefully evaluate to see if your criticism of a member is merely a personality conflict, or if there really is a specific problem. If other group members have similar reactions, then it may be useful to consult with the instructor to develop a solution.

Adapted from Utah State University – Skills for Group Projects