



Quick Skills Tips >

Working in groups

Working in groups may be a new challenge that you need to meet in your studies. Managing the group work process and keeping everyone on task can be challenging. The following points will help facilitate productive group work and maximize your effectiveness in group.

Fostering group collaboration

- Make sure everyone in group feels equally valued.
- Encourage everyone to participate. Give everyone an opportunity to express ideas.
- Listen actively. Consciously concentrate on what other people are saying.
- Be responsive to each other. Directly acknowledge each other's communication.
- Try being curious. Ask for clarification when needed.

Principles for effective group work

- Establish clear common goals and identify specific roles for every group member.
- Commitment to attend, prepare and be on time for group meetings.
- Take responsibility for a share of the tasks and carry them out on time.
- Value multiple points of view. Respect others' alternative points of view.
- Pull together related ideas after they have been fully discussed. Make a decision or conclusion for the group to accept or reject.
- Keep minutes for group meetings. Make sure everyone is aware of the group's decisions, progress, and 'to do' list.

Problems in group work can occur if people in the group are

- Allowing apathetic participation
- Allowing one person to dominate the group
- Ignoring each other's ideas and contribution
- Being critical, judgemental, or aggressive
- Criticising ideas before they are fully expressed
- Disrupting the flow of thought by introducing new issues in group discussion.