

How to get along with Group

Ok, we had a group selected randomly and that's how you guys will probably be assigned.

You may be lucky and get really nice and smart people who do work without any problem, whereas some of you will get slackers that does not come to any meeting and has no interest in project. Whatever the case is, YOU have to deal with it.

My group had conflicts and I ended up deciding to take final by myself. I had no problem taking by myself, but the fact that this occurred last minute hurt the feeling.

To avoid this misfortune the very first important step is to make appropriate contracts for your team. Make sure everyone in the group agrees, and you say whatever you have to say. There is no going back after you sign the contract and turn it in.

Once you get a group, you are with the members rest of the semester so try to be friendly and encourage others to work. This is VERY Important: If you have anything to say, SAY. They are going to assume that everything is fine if you do not tell them anything.

Make sure there's a weekly meeting and come to every meeting. Be up-to-date and divide the work to whatever seems to work. Make sure every member is doing what they are supposed to do, and if anyone doesn't, warn them: "we are going to kick you out of the group if you keep up like this" or something worse. If it continues talk to professor and have things figured out.

There is a peer evaluation at the end of the semester. There may be some people who want to say something but are too shy to say in front of the other's face. To avoid this issue, have periodical peer evaluation that makes sure there is no problem. Our group had decided to do this but did not do it, which made me assume, again that everything was fine.

Once you have your work divided into what seems appropriate, start on it. DON'T Just Start on it whatever and whenever you like and blame on others that they did not do as much work as you. Two of our group members just decided to meet up in random day by themselves and do the coding one night without telling others and shows up later boasting about their work. If you did that, well you did what you really were not assign to do and did extra. I myself like coding but ended up not doing any of the main coding because they kept saying they are the only one who can handle it.

Ok, enough talking about my team. Let me summarize:

1. Whoever is in the team, you have to deal with it. Try to be as friendly as possible (maybe give fake smile).
2. Team Contract: Your team has to make a contract for the team. Make sure you agree everything that is on it and say what you want to be on there. This is the LAW for your team.
3. Plan ahead and divide up the work appropriately. Do not wait until last minute. Meet up weekly and at the meeting talk how you want to split the work and everyone agrees to it. If everyone does what they are supposed to do, good. If not, see the contract and punish them accordingly.
4. Have periodical peer evaluation. This will identify the problem if there is any.
5. Do not complain after dividing up the work. Ok, we are at Georgia Tech, and not everyone's on same level. If you are good, you may think others are not doing as much work as you. If this happens, just have a group meeting and work on the project when everyone's there. This way, you make sure that everyone's giving in same amount of time and effort.
6. Do not make anyone feel left behind. Do not ignore anyone's suggestion and consider everyone's idea. You may be the smartest person in the world, but that does not mean you can do whatever you want.
7. If you have conflicts, first try to solve within the team first. Threaten them if you have to. If nothing improves, then there's an ultimate commissioner: professor. Talk to him and see what can be done.

This class is supposed to be fun class so try to have fun and avoid any conflicts. Good luck!