



Lecture 7

- Advantages of Team Work
- Working as a Team
- Team Roles
- Version Control
- Reviewing Team Performance
- Suggested Reading



Advantages of Team Work

- More people mean more gets done
 - Assuming everyone does their fair share
- The team will have a wider range of skills and expertise
 - Everyone has different backgrounds
- More chance of having good ideas
 - Everyone thinks differently
- Greater than the sum of the parts...



Benefit from the Experience

- Most jobs in industry or academia will involve some form of team-work
 - Good experience for CV
- You can learn a lot from working closely with others
 - Transfer skills, experience, etc.
- You will be able to create a much better product than you could on your own



Working as a Team

- First find four other students...
- Arrange regular meeting times
 - Email is good, but ...
- Know your Team
 - Get the most out of your team
- Divide up the tasks sensibly
 - But involve all members in everything
- Draw up ground-rules



Know Your Team

- Check out what you have to work with
 - Strengths & weakness
 - Collectively & individually
 - Capabilities
 - Existing skills, new skills
 - Reliability
 - Don't let your team-mates down!
- Play to strengths, and compensate for any weaknesses



Divide and Conquer

- All team members should contribute to all aspects of the project
- Split what needs doing into a series of tasks and sub-tasks
- Allocate tasks to individuals
 - One person per task? Pairs?
 - Perform each task twice and pick best?
- Consider the key managerial roles



Managerial Roles

Some key managerial roles might best be assigned to particular team members:

- Managing Director
 - Keeps everything on schedule
- Documentation Manager
 - Keeper of records, documentation, etc.
- Equipment Manager
 - Keeper of borrowed video camera, etc.



Managerial Roles

- Research Director
 - Makes sure appropriate research is done
- Production Manager
 - In charge of putting product together
- Presentation Director
 - Manages preparation of presentation
- Report Editor
 - Manages preparation of written report



Deciding Who does What

- Who wants to do what?
- Who has the skills to do what?
- Involve everyone in all components
- Allocate the hard specialist roles first, that not everyone can do well
- Use smaller/easier tasks to even out the overall loads
- How do you balance varied tasks?



Ground-rules

- Team work can be extremely frustrating!
- Compromise
 - What is good for one, is bad for another
- Negotiate
 - Agree appropriate compromises
- Trust
 - Have confidence in your team-mates
- Let everyone have a go at everything



Making Decisions

- Keep your team-mates informed of your progress, and be honest!
- Face-to-face meetings are often more effective than email discussions
- Be prompt, punctual, polite, ...
- Let everyone have their say
- Unanimous decisions are best, but often majority opinions will have to do



Version Control

- Which is the latest version of the team's product, report, presentation?
- How should changes/updates be made and merged?
- Not usually a good idea to have many people working on the same file at once
- Make regular backups!
- *CVS* and *Subversion* software may help



Review Team Performance

- What did the team do well? How?
- Did everyone contribute equally?
 - Overall? On each component?
- Was the management effective?
 - Was it clear who was doing what?
 - Were conflicts avoided? How?
- Was the whole really greater than the sum of the parts?



Rewarding the Team Stars

- Individual marks depend on the team mark, *and* their contribution to the team
- How to measure the contributions?
 - Brilliant key ideas
 - Essential skills and expertise
 - Exceptional hard/time consuming work
 - Great management
- Team members will be asked to assess their relative contributions



In Case of Problems

- Sometimes teams run into difficulty
 - Someone not doing their fair share
 - Someone being excluded from team work
 - Management/leadership conflicts
 - Failure to agree on what to do
- Discuss problems at weekly meetings with Team Tutor
- Discuss problems with Module Lecturer



Suggested Reading

- Team Roles at Work
 - R. Meredith Belbin
 - Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003
- When Teams Work Best: 6,000 Team Members and Leaders Tell What It Takes to Excel
 - Frank M.J. Lafasto & Carl E. Larson
 - SAGE Publications, 2001