

## TIME MANAGMENT

There are many aspects of good teamwork cooperating on a project, but I would like to discuss the problem of time management. The evaluation made by the students showed that process of organizing and planning how to divide the time between specific activities and tasks, and how to avoid time traps is one of the most problematic aspects of the project work. It influenced the effectiveness of all group.

Firstly I would like to present some practical tips you could apply to your own work with students.

- Limit the number of different tasks your team works on, according to students' skills and knowledge. Try to set priorities.
- Subdivide big, tough tasks into smaller, easily accomplished parts
- Explain and set personal goals for every group member
- Listen to the concerns and needs of the team, try to develop constructive criticism and value their contribution.
- Write down all tasks, ideas, preliminary results, make check lists. It helps to control the success and makes your work transparent.
- Identify and avoid time thieves and time traps.

It seems unlikely to avoid problems, so I would like to talk about common management mistakes. Even when the tasks are divided, the time priority is forgotten and the timeframes for the tasks are unrealistic. I personally experienced that a group thinks very often about the deadline for the project, but not about the deadlines for specific tasks.

Another problem is a time-keeping ability of the group members, the students should learn they need to get things done to go to the next phase of work. They should feel the responsibility and the risk that the project might fall through. The procrastination can destroy the teamwork.

Being busy is not the same as being effective. On the one hand, teamwork is better to control, on the other hand it can be a wasted time. In some cases it is more effective to let the students work alone at home and discuss the results via on-line meetings.

A big mistake in time management is taking too much by the group leader, who can't or doesn't want to trust anyone else. It can be caused by different levels of motivation of group members. I could see, that some students were highly motivated to achieve a high quality product, the others were content with just gaining a pass.

I hope I reviewed common problems that we can meet as teachers . I believe my suggestions will be useful in context of teamwork and time management.

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