Team Meetings

Team meetings will play an important role not only in your work in design project but in your professional career as well. In Design Project, class periods don't give you enough time to work on your project, so your team should meet at least once a week outside of class to plan tasks, analyze information, write reports, and practice presentations. In addition, your team will have formal meetings with faculty to discuss team progress.

Setting an Agenda

Prepare an agenda, with input from team members, to make the best use of your time. Set the agenda by having team members contribute items. The agenda should include:

- Meeting date, time, and location
- Meeting objective
- Key roles.
- Discussion topics

Conducting the Meeting

Below is a list of responsibilities for members holding major roles in a team meeting.

Leader

- Set the agenda.
- Send the agenda electronically 24 to 48 hours before the meeting so participants can adequately prepare.
- Make sure the meeting starts and ends on time.
- Keep the discussion focused on the topic and tactfully steer it back when it drifts.
- Encourage everyone to participate by having each person say something on the topic at hand.
- Make sure all agenda items are discussed. If that isn't possible, ask individual members to circulate material on items that will carry over to the next meeting.
- Help the team reach a consensus. Ask if anyone disagrees with a decision that has emerged from the discussion. If so, ask for further discussion to clarify and resolve the disagreement.
- Help the team identify what actions need to be taken based on decisions made at the meeting, who will be responsible for those action items, and when they will be completed.
- File a copy of the meeting agenda in your project notebook.

Timekeeper

- Let the facilitator know when discussion time is up for an agenda topic. At that point, the leader, with the concurrence of the participants, can decide to continue the discussion, and thus modify the agenda, or table the discussion and continue with the original agenda.

Scribe

- Take notes on key points of items discussed, decisions reached, and actions to be taken (along with who is responsible for those actions and when they should be completed). Review the action items with the team at the end of the meeting.
- Type up your meeting notes (called minutes) and email them to the team within 24 hours so members can offer additions, corrections, or clarifications. Then post the revised minutes to team members and your instructors. After all corrections are made, file a copy of the meeting notes in the project notebook.

Topic presenter:

- Prepare the material specified in the agenda and bring it to the meeting. If something unexpected comes up to prevent you from doing that, notify the rest of the team as soon as possible and try to arrange for someone else to prepare the material. If you've prepared the material but find you can't attend the meeting, make sure to get it to a teammate before the meeting.

General guidelines for participation in team meetings

Follow these guidelines to ensure a productive meeting:

- Have everyone participate.
- Don't interrupt.
- Don't reject ideas out of hand.
- Require consensus, not majority rule, on all decisions

Keeping Meeting Minutes

Minutes serve as a record of key ideas discussed, decisions reached, and tasks assigned. In this way, minutes help keep the project on track. Instructors can refer to these minutes (in the project notebook) to make sure everyone on the team is involved in the project. And the team can refer to the minutes when they plan email updates to the client. Meeting minutes shouldn't be a record of everything that is said at the meeting. Instead, they should include the following information:

- Location, date, and time of meeting.
- Names of people present and absent.
- Name of scribe.
- Topics discussed, plus a brief summary of the major points and decisions made in regard to each.
- Actions planned, the names of team members assigned to them, and the deadline.

The minutes should be posted shortly after the meeting for review and use by team members.

Conducting Meetings with Instructors

In spring/fall quarter, each team will conduct at least two half-hour meetings with their instructors. The purpose of these meetings is to review team decisions, plans, and questions so that your instructors can offer constructive advice for your project work and evaluate your project management and teamwork. The team is responsible for planning and conducting the meeting. As you do that planning, keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Focus the meeting on key design decisions and plans for the upcoming weeks.
- Have team member take an active and equal role in the meeting
- Review action items from the previous meeting
- Meet as a team beforehand to develop an agenda
- Bring all support materials to meeting