# Leadership and Collaboration

## TERMS

**programmer (n.)** A team member responsible for producing the underlying code of the game, or using a scripting language to produce certain game behaviors. Also known as an "engineer."

**art director (n.)** A team member responsible for determining the overall visual aesthetic of the game. Often doubles as an artist on the project.

**character artist (n.)** A team member responsible for doing concept sketches for the characters and enemies within the game, then producing the digital art assets that become animate objects in the game world.

**environment artist (n.)** A team member responsible for doing concept sketches of the game world itself, then producing the digital assets that become the terrain, buildings, and backgrounds.

**sound designer (n.)** A team member responsible for determining and producing any audio elements within your game, including effects, music, and user interface queues.

**user interface designer (n.)** A team member responsible for designing the menus, overlays, and other non-diegetic elements a player uses to navigate and interact with the game world.

**A**s the lead designer on a project, your primary responsibility is to ensure a smooth production process. Establish procedures for how decisions get made early in the life of the project. While you'll sometimes be forced to play the dictator and make tough unilateral decisions, ideally you'll be making choices in collaboration.

1. **Seek design insight from your entire team**. Foster an environment in which everyone feels empowered to offer their opinion on the experience you are creating together. Look for team members who are candid, clear, and honest. When you find design talent, make it visible to other team members and offer those people more responsibility.

2. **Use a wiki or a living Game Design Document to keep track of the project** as it evolves over time. Use your GDD in concert with task management software to minimize the amount of meetings your team has to have.

3. **Become comfortable with criticism, and even seek it out when you can.** When offering criticism yourself, present alternatives to the ideas in place rather than just breaking them down.

## LEARN MORE

Legendary comedian John Cleese developed theories on Creativity in Management, which outline how collaboration requires traveling through "open" and "closed" states. In the open state, you seek to hear and generate as many ideas as possible, build on other suggestions, and ignore important but stifling parameters such as budget and time. In the closed mode, you select a given idea and execute on it. Teams run into problems when they use closed thinking in the open state and vice versa.

"On a lot of the larger games I've worked on, everybody on the team was contributing to the design."

## ASSIGNMENTS

Assemble your team for your Capstone Game. Find collaborators who can fulfill these roles at a minimum: designer, programmer, artist, and sound designer. Review Chapter 15: Pitching Ideas on how to pitch to potential collaborators. Then, fill out the Team Roster section (6.a) of your Game Design Document.