

Team Expectations Agreement¹

Team work isn't always easy. When working in a team, problems occasionally arise. One source of problems is the differing expectations of team members. For example, one person may think that an email response should come within 2 hours, while another may think that 2 days is acceptable. But when teams work and communicate well, the benefits more than compensate for the difficulties.

At a first team meeting, create a Team Expectation Agreement. In the space below, put down a list of agreed upon rules and expectations you agree as a team to adopt. Include guidelines for the following:

- methods of communication (email, phone, messenger, text, . . .)
- communication response times (email, phone, messenger, text, . . .)
- meeting attendance (when to meet, whether all meetings are mandatory, . . .)
- running meetings (when, where, face-to-face vs. online, who takes minutes, . . .)
- meeting preparation (whether preparation is needed, what to prepare, . . .)
- version control (what to/not to commit, content of log messages, . . .)
- division of work (how to divide work, who will decide who does what, . . .)
- submitting assignments (when to submit, who will submit, who will review the submission, . . .)
- contingency planning (what if a team member drops out, what if a team member consistently misses meetings, what if a team member is academically dishonest, . . .) We suggest that in these cases, the team promptly seeks help from the instructor. It is important not to let such situations escalate.

The list above is just to get you started. Feel free to modify as you wish. Make your expectations fairly thorough without being unrealistic. If you had any team problems in the past, think about what went wrong and how expectations can be set to prevent those types of problems.

Contd.

¹Based on *Turning Groups into Effective Teams*, Barbara Oakley et al., 2004

We accept these guidelines and intend to fulfill them (sign below):

William Lam

Travis Shao

Xiaoran Yu

Zhuolin Fu

Review the guidelines with your TA and decide which member of your team will keep this form. In the event of team disagreements, you may be asked to show this form to your instructor.