Teamwork Summary

The ground rules of the group project fall under five norms. The first norm is called the “Work Norms” where you discuss how the work will be distributed, who will set the deadlines, and what happens if someone falls short in doing their part in the group project. The second norm is the “Facilitator Norms” where the group decides if there will be a facilitator of the group, and if so who will it be. Next is the “Communication Norms” in which you will decide how the group will communicate (e.g. phone, via email, in person etc.). The fourth norm is called the “Meeting Norms”, which is making sure that everyone can coordinate schedules and find a proper meeting time. Finally the fifth norm is the “Consideration Norms”, in which everyone finds a middle ground on what is acceptable behavior at the meeting such as eating or smoking.

When working with a group, it is quite common for there to be a member in the group who can be difficult. There are times where a person can be a little overtalkative and can cause the other members feel like they cannot get a word in. When dealing with this, it is best try to cut in, and once the over talker has paused, try and direct the conversation towards another member in the group so they can start speaking. There can also be issues with people who are too quiet in the group, so it is important to try and encourage them to speak up and voice their opinions. When it comes to people who argue or complain, it is important that you make it known in the group that that everyone’s opinions matter, and it is necessary for everyone to express their opinions positively, and with lack of judgment. I personally remember working in a group two semesters ago in which one of the members would always argue with anyone who brought up an opposing idea. This caused a lot of tension among the group, and we ended up working on each of our parts separately.

Another difficulty of working in a group can be when the group as a whole is struggling to work together. There are times in which group may begin to flounder, or lack progression, so the group must come together and make a decision that will help them move forward in the project work. There are other cases in which you have to get the group to regain focus because the group may have gone off on a tangent that is not relevant to work. There may also be situations where the group might make a decision too quick or not be able to make a decision at all. In these situations it is important to make sure the group weighs all its options, and acknowledges everyone’s ideas.

Another common problem when it comes to working as a group is conflict. This can involve two members feuding, in which you should diffuse the situation before moving on with the project, or if the group is ignoring or ridiculing a member in the group, and in that case you should acknowledge this as a problem and make sure no one is excluded from the group work. Along with these struggles, another difficulty that the group may experience is if someone in their group is not doing their assigned portion of the work. I remember a situation in high school where I was in a group where one of our members did not show up for our group presentation, and because no one expected him to be absent, we could not present that part of the project, and it hurt our grade severely. This is why it is important to communicate with everyone in the group to make sure everyone is doing their part to make sure the project turns out well.

Working in groups has its ups and downs. It can be a great opportunity to meet new people and improve your social skills. However, it can also be a negative experience in which the group just cannot seem to get themselves together. In order to prevent this, the group must have ground rules that everyone has to abide by, and everyone must have an equal respect for each other. If these agreements are met by everyone, working in a group can be a great excellent.