1. What are two reasons why group collaboration over e-mail can be a cumbersome process?

Email is essentially a compose and wait process. Akin to smoke signals, email takes time and is devoid of expression, tone and inflection which are essential to good communication. In fact, communication is 55 percent non-verbal, 38 percent vocal (tone and inflection) and 7 percent words according to Albert Mehrabian, a researcher who pioneered studies on body language. Email is neither effective nor efficient.

1. Name two ways in which collaborating with wikis are an improvement over collaborating over email.

In addition to being more real-time, wikis allow a contributor to re-phrase their submissions quickly in the event someone has not correctly “read” their tone or inflection. Wikis also allow for the full armor and power of the team to be employed against any obstacle or issue. Collaborative work styles, while still new in the grand scheme, continue to prove their value. When we think of teams we may also think of diversity, and rightly so. A diverse team will produce a better and longer-lasting solution to a problem than a non-diverse team. This is because of the way each person approaches problem solving. Each team member may have different values for any resources and unique ways of employing those resources.

1. Wikis contribute to the Web 2.0 culture of participation because they enable people to easily share their ideas and knowledge on the Web. Besides a Wiki, name at least two other Web 2.0 tools which cultivate an atmosphere for participation.

The advent of video conferencing, using software such as MS Teams, Zoom and Skype, is a giant leap forward for efficient collaboration. The team members can have direct conversations featuring body language, inflection and tone. In some cases they can actively collaborate on the product like a spreadsheet or Power Point presentation. I am a big fan of working remotely and I believe this will be the future of work soon.

Social media, when used responsibly, is another great way to gather and engage an audience. Although social media is fraught with issues, I have seen (and joined) many groups that focus on learning, providing information and supporting their members.