

As teamwork is seen as a key transferable skill in both academic and professional situations, universities have increased its role in assessments. Many projects, especially presentations, are done in teams. There are both advantages and disadvantages to working in teams, but all teams can work effectively when they pay attention to some basic principles.

TASK 1 Identifying advantages and disadvantages to teamwork

1 Try to think of as many advantages and disadvantages to working in a team as you can.

Advantages	Disadvantages

2 Look at reasons 1–8 about why groups fail. Select the three you think are most important. Give reasons for your selection.

- 1 The group is dominated by one or two people.
- 2 Rules are not made about when, where, and how the group will meet.
- 3 Meetings do not have an agenda.
- 4 Some group members say nothing.
- 5 Deadlines are not set.
- 6 Some people's ideas are ignored.
- 7 Some people do not do what they say they will do.
- 8 One or two people disagree and create a bad atmosphere.

TASK 2 Identifying strategies for effective teamwork

1 Look at tips 1–9 for making the most of group work in a meeting. Divide them into categories i–iii according to when the tasks should be done.

- i before the meeting
- ii during the meeting
- iii after the meeting

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Encourage others to make a point | 6 Plan the next meeting |
| 2 Plan when you will do your tasks | 7 Do background reading |
| 3 Do anything you agreed to do | 8 Be open to new ideas |
| 4 Decide on a chair for the meeting | 9 Clarify anything you don't understand |
| 5 Try to make some points | |

2 Listening is key to good teamwork. How can you do the following positively?

Use body language Encourage Ask questions Make suggestions Disagree

For example: Use body language – *head nodding, maintaining eye contact, smiling*

TASK 3 Incorporating teamwork as a study skill

1 Decide which teamworking strategies you plan to use in the future.

2 Write a short paragraph outlining how you can put these strategies into practice.