

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE GROUP WRITING





Several brains are better than 1.

This presentation will offer an overview of the collaborative process, tips for writing successfully as a group and pitfalls to avoid.



1 PRE-WRITING PROCESS

- Share ideas and brainstorm together.
- Formulate a draft plan together.
 - What is the purpose?
 - Who is the intended audience?
 - Possible sources of information?

2 PLANNING AND LOGISTICS

- Who will write which parts?
- What will the final product look like?
- Decide how often you will meet and schedule the meetings.
- Create a working timeline for the project keeping the important milestones in mind.



3

RESEARCH/DATA COLLECTION



How will you find appropriate sources of information?



Who will read and process the information? What will you include in your report?



Who will analyze the data? How will you interpret the findings?



Remember!

Think critically about the sources and their contributions. What do they contribute to your report?

4

DRAFTING/WRITING



OR



Separate?

Brainstorming the main points as a group is helpful, even if the writing is done individually.

Care will need to be taken during the next stage to ensure that the report is cohesive.

Together?

Writing together ensures that the finished report has one cohesive voice. That said, it may not be practical.

If attempting to write together, agree in advance on goals and process for the session.

It may be helpful to start with ideas first and then work on phrasing.

5

REVISING, EDITING, & PROOFREADING



First, combine the sections and work on structural issues:

- Argument clear?
- Smooth transitions?
- Evidence logically presented?



Next, smooth over any stylistic differences that could be distracting to the reader.



Finally, work on sentence level errors. Proofread for typos, spelling errors, word choice, punctuation, formatting, etc.

6

HELPFUL STRATEGIES

Attitude Counts



Working in a group can be challenging. Keeping a positive attitude and respecting what everyone brings to the table is the first step in a successful team effort.

Start Early



Just because you have several months doesn't mean you should start tomorrow. Start early and allow for plenty of time for the revision process.

Sharing Files



As a team, decide on the method(s) you plan to use to share files. Also discuss common nomenclature for the various drafts/versions you will be producing.

Divide and Conquer



Dividing the work for all stages will be helpful. This includes the proofreading stage. Consider assigning specific parts of the proofreading process to certain individuals.

7

PITFALLS



Immediately dividing writing into pieces.

Start with brainstorming main points and crating an outline of the report, then divide the writing.

Procrastination

Don't underestimate how much time it will take to juggle schedules to accommodate team calls. Start early.

Becoming a group of one.

If you are having difficulty working in a group, discuss your concerns with the group first and work together to resolve issues.

Leaving all the end work to one person.

Don't fall into the trap of leaving all the proofreading work to one person. Try assigning different parts of the task to team members.

Waiting for others to do all the work.

Everyone is busy. Don't think that you are any busier than others on your team. Do your share and plan accordingly.

Entirely negative critiques.

Try to highlight the positive parts as well as commenting on the parts that need work.

QUESTIONS

SOURCE

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/group-writing/>