

10 Principles of Effective Teamwork

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
GXP COMPLIANCE, PRODUCT REALIZATION,
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ASQ SIX-SIGMA BLACKBELT



Decision points in your development process should be driven by past experience in monitoring the status of your project. It's important to make corrections before they are too costly. Behind simple graphs and illustrations are a lot of work by a lot of people who must work together with great communication. Their teamwork should embody the true principles of working together.

Principles of working together include:

- Constructive communication
- Collaboration
- Consciousness
- Inclusion
- Accountability
- Justification with explanation
- Transparency
- Public knowledge of objectives
- Talk things out; understand each other's culture
- Appropriate work distribution

I've seen some mention competition within a team. I can't say that I've ever seen this work well in development. There is a tendency to become deeply rooted in one's idea that can be detrimental to the team later if that idea isn't chosen. One should not hold onto negative things - learn from them but don't let them eat away at you.

Communication should be constructive, open and honest. With the ultimate goal of project success, we as team members should become one force in the face of daily challenges. Imagine your breathing worked against your heart rate - you would not be well. Similarly, the team should work cohesively and in tandem. Everyone will have a job to do and some sub-teams will have overlap. It's important to work together to continue to hear each other's concerns and opinions.

AUTHOR:

Contact: Devin Mack, Owner
C: 585-360-9184 // **E:** devin.mack@enqual.us // **W:** www.enqual.us



The visual workspace should encompass not only team progress but also team rules and philosophies to work together. Collaboration means that we can work forward and make progress despite differences of opinion and cultural backgrounds. A progress first approach is the beacon by which the team should be guided.

Everyone should be included when practically possible in to activities of the team. There is no apparent reason to build silos. Football is a team of offense and defense but yet either side has visibility to what the other is doing; how they're performing. This helps the team together to recognize challenges. In some cases, input from a different sub team member will be solicited for their point of view. Truly working together as a team naturally creates transparency. Talking things out - not only strategies but also opinions is essential. The more we talk things out the better the team will perform and grow. Definitely everyone has a job to do and they should do it well but don't sit there and watch your team member struggle. Watching them struggle creates delays and increases non-productive time. It's important to have consciousness flow throughout the team and to have the mentality to keeping things moving and flowing. Keep the team active, be mindful to the team takt time - minimize non-productive activities.