

PROJECT COLLABORATION - EFFECTIVE GROUP WORK IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD



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Business



Have you ever had to collaborate on a group project?

Group work, or **project collaboration**, is a hallmark of most professional and educational settings. It's commonplace!

As such, the answer to the original question is most likely a unanimous yes!

Well, these project collaboration skills that you developed all the way back in grade school are as important today as they were back then.

Below we'll delve into the importance of project collaboration skills and how they can translate into success in your professional adult life.

What is project collaboration?

Although some of your life lessons learned during your school days may have remained static, such as time management and research, others may have altered a bit over time. Case-in-point to this trend is group work.

Back in your younger days, it is quite possible that group work entailed jointly working on a collage, diorama, skit, or perennially overstuffed PowerPoint. In the professional workforce, sure, the base tenants of such work remains the same - inter-personal communication is key to any endeavor. However, the process now lives under a new, aforementioned, buzz-worthy moniker — Project Collaboration.

A project can obviously take many forms, from the vertical integration of supply chain management to the proposal to a prospective client. That said, the key word in this instance lies firmly in the realm of collaboration.

This is where the implication of project collaboration surpasses that of ordinary group work. Beyond achieving a shared goal, project collaboration suggests a **greater synergistic relationship between group members** that creates **better practices, ideas, and results**.

Which factors may influence project collaboration?

Much like how learning [how to run an effective meeting](#) requires a specific methodology, good project collaboration does not simply come into being, fully formed. Instead, it is cultivated by way of a series of influencing factors. These include **group culture** and **group organization**.

- **Group culture** refers to the facilitation of a collective safe space for ideas and constructive feedback.
- **Group organization** refers to the roles and relationships within the overall hierarchy, as well as established rules, routines, and procedures.

Through these overarching factors, collaboration is able to occur in the clearest and most concise manner possible, in any setting, between any members of the team.

While culture and organization are certainly important for project collaboration, those factors would be useless without other underlying components. Inter and intra-personal skills as well as project management skills also play a pivotal role in project collaboration. Without **personal skills**, for instance, the lack of self-awareness and the inability to maintain working relationships would hinder the successfulness of project collaboration.

Believe it or not, collaboration doesn't stand a chance of success without proper **project management skills**. The ability to **facilitate group productivity**, **delegate responsibility**, and **execute an overall vision** is not a universally innate trait. The same goes for **other useful strategies**, which can assist several factors influencing project collaboration. These strategies involve group communication, productivity, and management:

Key Influencing Factors:

- **Group Culture**
- **Group Organization**
- **Personal Skills**
- **Project Management Skills**
- **Other Useful Strategies**



How to improve project collaboration

Set Aims

If project collaboration is not going well, you should either set new aims or reassess your existing ones. When laid out correctly, aims provide a sense of unity and motivation to the team at-large. By having something to strive for, team members will want to collaborate fully and do their best.

Use the right tools

The key to good project collaboration is communication. Remote collaboration is becoming more commonplace and working with a remote team can make communication

difficult. Fortunately, there are tools available that can help with this issue. While tools like Skype, Trello, Asana, Basecamp, etc. have been go-to collaboration tools in the past, they can be limiting in terms of their professional collaboration capabilities. Fortunately, more advanced tools such as interactive displays and online whiteboard software are now able to offer a complete range of collaboration capabilities. We'll talk about the specifics of project collaboration hardware and software later in this article.

Encourage input from all sources

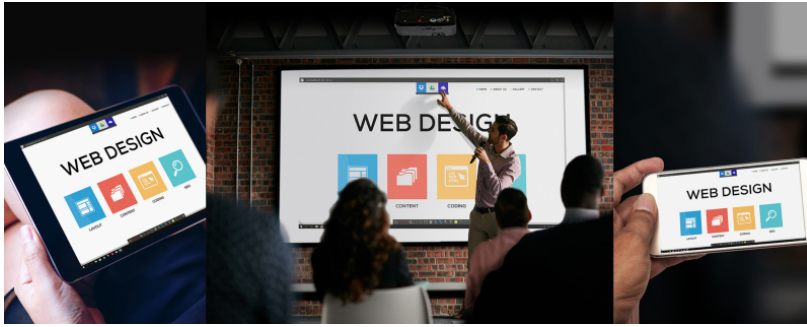
In and of itself, collaboration is necessary in order to collaborate. By encouraging input and feedback from all possible sources, including employees and clients, project collaboration can truly begin. Since effective input can come in a variety of forms, it is important that all sources be able to have their ideas heard.

Foster a supportive work environment

When employees and team members work together in a supportive environment, the benefit is undeniable. The construction of intra-group trust and other open conditions will help to create a sense of cohesion, investment, and dependability between all members of the team. This leads to more effective overall project collaboration and management.

Create the best possible team

Great teams are only as good as the people that they are comprised of. When constructing an effective team, look for those who have unique skill sets and compatible personalities. While these parameters may not always be entirely achievable, the aim is to organize a team ripe for project collaboration and a productive work environment.



What are the benefits of project collaboration?

Improved efficiency

Through project collaboration, the ease at which proper division of labor and project management are executed becomes much greater. Thereby, each member's strengths may be properly harnessed. With workflows optimized and streamlined, deadlines will become easier to meet, and time & money will be saved. As a result, collaboration directly improves team efficiency.

Boosted morale

By ensuring that group members are playing to their strengths and working productively, morale will see a boost. Along with proper engagement, this correlation is reinforced by collaborative strategies and processes that may result in the elimination of stressful elements. These may include clear feedback channels and procedures for increased individual engagement.

Employee flexibility

Flexibility and adaptability make for good project collaboration. Through clear communication and well-

organized project management, employees should be able to overcome last-minute hurdles and adapt to unforeseen changes in circumstance with ease - to the point of becoming second-nature. As a result, flexibility can result in an improved final product.

More successful teams

A successful team is only as good as the sum of its parts. When its members collaborate, their capacity for success skyrockets. However, successful teams do not come together overnight. Instead, through a process involving solid project management, workflow development, and procedure establishment, teams find a success one step at a time.

Faster results

Multiple minds are better than one, especially in regards to project collaboration. A properly collaborative team, for instance, will be able to avoid pitfalls that would ruin lesser groups. At the end of the day, this form of teamwork yields a faster work time, thus allowing deadlines to be met with ease.

Bolstered transparency

In any decent project collaboration scenario, an incredible benefit lies in the democratization of workflows. More specifically, each team member is aware of the project's complete details, goals, and updates. With such transparency comes easier problem solving, as the entire team can offer feedback and solutions, rather than just the management team.

Better communication

Project collaboration is a positive influence on intra-group communication. Even if there are tensions between individuals or difficulties with remote teams, collaborative communication processes are able to overcome these

through procedural clarity and open channels of contact. As a result, breakdowns in communication become a rarity in the face of collaboration.

Greater client satisfaction

Nothing is better for business than happy clients. Project collaboration, which works great for team members, also brings benefits to the company/client relationship. At the end of the day, by keeping the client in the collaborative loop and providing them with faster, higher-quality results, their satisfaction will rise in turn.



Project Collaboration Tools

As beneficial as it may be, project collaboration may not be enough when it is no more than a series of strategies and procedures. Sometimes, just as trying to hammer a nail is difficult without said hammer, a supporting tool might be necessary.

ViewBoard and ViewBoard 2.1

In terms of project collaboration, a good tool is something that not only makes the collaborative process more efficient, but is also fitting for the modern workplace. In terms of hardware, the [ViewBoard](#) by ViewSonic is a [collaboration display](#) with functionality specifically geared towards group collaboration. ViewBoard also comes with embedded Android based ViewBoard 2.1 annotation software.

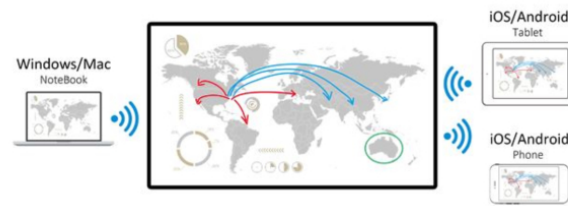


With an eye towards both education and corporate use, ViewBoard and ViewBoard 2.1 operate as a digital whiteboard complete with annotation and other helpful features. These include Microsoft Office support, annotation, screen recording, casting, and more. At the end of the day, whether you're seeking a collaborative tool for in-office brainstorming or for remote meetings, ViewBoard and ViewBoard 2.1 features can make your professional life as easy as possible.

Below is a list ViewBoard and ViewBoard 2.1 capabilities aimed at aiding project collaboration:

- **Digital annotation**
- **Microsoft Office integration**
- **Multimedia editing capability**
- **Handwriting recognition software**
- **Easy screen recording**
- **Casting to and from connected devices**
- **Video conferencing**

- Screen sharing



ViewBoard® Cast Content Sharing Software

Project Collaboration Software

Oftentimes, in the modern professional world, teams are not always based in a single office. It is common to see different parts of a team based remotely around the world. In order to properly coordinate and collaborate, a traditional project collaboration tool would be of little use. This is when digital project collaboration software becomes worth looking into. Much like the ViewBoard 2.1 software mentioned above, [myViewBoard](#) is a cloud based digital whiteboard solution geared towards collaboration.



myViewBoard

Unlike ViewBoard 2.1 software, myViewBoard is not confined to a ViewBoard interactive display. myViewBoard is a Google Chrome based software solution, which means any phone or laptop with Google Chrome can access the software. This is helpful as it offers simultaneous group access for conducting meetings, hosting brainstorming sessions, or simply conducting quick check-ins. In order to easily facilitate such uses, myViewBoard offers live annotation, cloud-based content distribution, online whiteboarding, and seamless meeting recording, amongst others.

When all is said and done, myViewBoard is a good project collaboration software because it solves the problems associated with its analog counterparts. In short, with this software, there will be no messing about with cables, no deciphering of messy handwriting, and no limited writing space. With myViewBoard, the options for collaboration are limitless and a free trial of the software is available when you [sign up for an account](#).

Below is a list some of the best project collaboration capabilities offered by myViewBoard:

- **Universal access**
- **Live annotation**
- **Integration with cloud-based technology**
- **Seamless meeting recording**
- **Easy content distribution**

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