

Pros and Cons of Group Work

Group work as we know it is at the cornerstone of much of undergraduate work we do here at James Madison University, especially embedded within the Communication Studies Major. That being said there are a lot of great things to take away from group work, paired with there can be many negative outcomes that come along as well. For starters, group work is a great way to be able to gather diverse opinions. It allows the group to be able to grab opinions from different backgrounds and bring unique viewpoints. It also allows for people to showcase their creativity. Within a group, there are certain roles and expectations that need to be met in order to keep the group running smoothly. There should always be someone in the group who takes the lead role, this is the most important role, think about if a train did not have a conductor, the train wouldn't go very far, this person also has the role of delegating tasks to others which is equally as important. Following that there needs to be a person who goes with the flow and does what is asked of them, a floater if you will, lastly, there needs to be a note taker who does the meat and potatoes of the project, these are all essential roles and they need to be executed by all members to create a sense of accountability. On the other hand, group work can be troublesome for people because of a few reasons. One group more often than not has a member who is a free rider and does not contribute to the group and that is frustrating to the other members and doesn't upturn that sense of accountability. This is also troublesome because that member can affect the grades of other members. That's why collaborative work can be a better option because each participant does their own work then they collaborate together for the final project. In the end, there are many pros and cons to groupwork, but overall, I believe groupwork is crucial to gaining social skills, obtaining knowledge, and applying concepts that will be used often in the professional world.