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### **Collaboration**

Collaboration is something that sounds simple in theory but can be complicated in practice. Throughout my classes—especially ones that involve film production or creative projects—I have learned that working with others can bring both great ideas and real challenges. Everyone brings their own work style, level of motivation, and expectations into a group. Because of that, collaboration requires patience, communication, and sometimes the willingness to step up and guide the process.

One experience that stands out to me was collaborating with classmates on a group project where our work ethics were very different. Some people were treating the project casually, while I saw it as something important that deserved real effort. Because of that difference, I often felt like I had to take charge of the group. I was usually the one initiating conversations, asking when people were available, and reminding everyone about deadlines. If I didn't start those conversations, the project would sometimes stall. At first, that situation was frustrating. Collaboration is supposed to mean sharing the workload and ideas, but it started to feel like I was doing most of the organizing and pushing things forward. Eventually, I realized that avoiding the issue wouldn't help the project succeed. I had to communicate with my group more directly and let them know that this was a serious assignment that required everyone to

make time and contribute effort. Being stern wasn't something I naturally wanted to do, but it was necessary. Once expectations were clearly communicated, the group was able to move forward more productively. That experience taught me that communication is one of the most important parts of collaboration. It's easy to assume everyone is on the same page, but that isn't always the case. Sometimes people need clarity about expectations, responsibilities, and deadlines. Speaking up—even when it feels uncomfortable—can help prevent bigger problems later in the project.

Another important idea about collaboration that stuck with me came from previous classes. One thing that was emphasized is that while it's important to care about your work, it's also important not to become too attached to it. When working on creative projects, it's easy to feel like your ideas are a reflection of you personally. However, collaboration requires being open to feedback and other perspectives. Being committed to the project is important, but if you become too attached to your own ideas, it can make collaboration harder. Learning when to detach from the work is something I'm still practicing. Detaching doesn't mean you stop caring about the quality of the project. Instead, it means understanding that the goal is to make the project better overall, even if that means changing or letting go of your original idea. When everyone in a group is able to approach the work with that mindset, collaboration becomes more productive and less personal.

Collaboration can also be incredibly rewarding when it works well. In film and documentary projects especially, every person contributes something unique to the process. One person might be great with cameras, another with interviewing subjects, and another with editing or sound. When everyone brings their strengths together, the final result can be much stronger than anything one person could create alone.

Through these experiences, I've learned that collaboration isn't just about working together—it's about learning how to navigate differences. Communication, accountability, and flexibility all play a huge role in whether a group project succeeds. Even when collaboration is challenging, it can teach valuable lessons about leadership, teamwork, and creative openness. Those lessons are something I know will continue to be important in future projects and professional environments.

## Related Links

- <https://hbr.org/2016/01/collaborative-overload>
- <https://www.ideou.com/blogs/inspiration/what-is-collaboration>
- <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/documentary-filmmaking-guide>