**GEE Journal**

I have to begin by saying that I was very fortunate to have had a team where every member was enthusiastic and participative. From the very first email until after the proposal was handed in there was frequent communication from all team members which enabled our team to build our identity and create an amazing proposal. As the leader I was grateful that my team members were so onto it, but I also think that there were some things that I did in order to create the environment in which my team was able to work well in.

I thought that the setting up of the team would be crucial to the team performance as this is where member’s pre-conceptions can be changed and the individual members become team members.

There was a number of things I did before the GEE started in order to prepare for this setting up stage. The most important thing I did was getting together with a friend, also doing the GEE, and writing our introduction email. This was a friendly email which covered two main parts – the setting up of the team and the actual project. It introduced our team members, asked about preferred communication (including English as a preferred language), asked for ideas for a team name and outlined expectations for the team to agree upon and add to. A brainstorm for ideas was then proposed and I waited to hear back.

Within two days I had heard from every team member. Everyone enthusiastic, replying to questions and providing ideas, and this was probably when I was the busiest. In those first two days I had placed numerous documents on blackboard and sent out multiple emails in order to keep communication up.

There were two key things I did in this start up phase which I believe contributed to our team’s final proposal. On the first day, I utilised a family dinner with friends by having a brainstorming session. I did this because the people at dinner were widely different in professions and knowledge and we managed to come up with a few good ideas. I was able to use this to get the brainstorming going on Basecamp which some of our team members responded to. I thought that a real-time meeting would be more comfortable for team members so I set up a real-time for within 5 days of the GEE beginning. This ended up being 2 meetings (24hours apart) so that 7/8 team members could attend at least one meeting. We had an agenda for both meetings and I send out minutes after each meeting. I think brainstorming this was is much easier than just asking for ideas, as team members were able to agree or disagree with ideas if they were unable to think of any. The environment was less intimidating than, say, the document on Basecamp. I was quick to acknowledge all ideas and set up the team for an amazing proposal. Two days after the second meeting, and various emails (which became our preferred communication) we were able to settle on an idea.

The rest of the project went very smoothly. There were no team conflicts (that I was aware of, and I did often ask). Email was our preferred communication, although I was on Skype whenever I was on my computer so sometimes I would talk to members about the project and other things. We had another meeting to set up tasks for the proposal and everyone was keen to get started on their tasks. I was very respectful of everyone’s ideas and would always reply to an email as soon as I received it, even just to say I would look back in a few hours because I was aware of the different time zones.

Unfortunately we did lose one team member near the end of the project, but this was ok as has he had been consistently replying to my questioning emails explaining his absence. In the end I kindly let him know if he didn’t contribute he wouldn’t be included in our proposal and he nicely replied back that he didn’t mind.

Overall I was really happy with the GEE experience. I had no expectations on the group or the actual proposal as I felt that having any kind of expectation could limit me and my team later on. I owe a lot to my team for their constant support and eagerness. I spent a lot more time and effort on this project but I was happy to because I wanted to – my team were that good, I didn’t want to let them down. I am very happy with our final proposal and I would be very keen to implement something like our proposal in the future.