

DigiYouth Tips for Remote Communication and Group Work

DigiYouth is a project of international student startups. It involves Estonian, Latvian and Finnish upper secondary school students who work in teams to develop digital products and services -- from ideation to prototyping and marketing plans.

For a year and a half, teams of 3 to 6 meet and work mostly in different online environments: Facebook, Skype, Zoom etc. Here are their tips for better teamwork for all e-learners during lockdown.

Long distance communication

- Practice makes perfect. Or, at least, much better -- like with any other activity. There are many environments for online communication. Skype and Zoom are the best for team meetings, but you can also meet in FB Messenger or Google Hangouts.
- Agree with your teammates on what environment to use and when to meet. Make sure that all the team members have access: their account is active and they remember the password.
- Set the length of the meeting, so that all participants can plan their agenda.
- Agree on the agenda and the talking points of the meeting. This can be done in a shared document in Google Drive. Also make sure that one team member takes notes.
- Divide big tasks into smaller activities. Set deadlines and responsibilities for each of them. Time management tools like Trello or shared tasks in Google Calendar help to keep track of your responsibilities.
- During a video call, turn on the cameras – this makes it much easier to understand each other.
- Speak into the microphone. Speak clearly and loudly. If you can't hear or see, let the team or the speaker know at once.
- If you are not talking, mute your microphone to eliminate background noise.

Group work

- Group work means that everybody contributes. Divide the tasks and responsibilities between team members.
- Discuss your progress in e-meetings: are you ahead or behind the schedule, does anybody need help or wants to discuss or change their role.
- Talk to your group, not just about your assignment but also how you are doing. Sharing life events and activities with your team members helps to understand each other better. That way, the team members will also understand when you are in trouble or need to change your task.
- Have clear rules for meetings, but be prepared to change them, if needed. Pay attention and support each other during e-meetings. Offer help and be open -

that way you will understand each other better, avoid confusion and be more effective in your work.

- During the e-meetings, use full sentences to express yourself. This will help others to understand your ideas more clearly.

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