Team collaboration best practices.

Working with teams can sometimes be overwhelming, but the best team collaboration situations can provide some very valuable experiences and provide you with the greatest academic successes! :D

Some of the best practices that we have learned over time include:

1. Realize that that first team meeting is extremely important!
2. First of all, establish a time (keep in mind the time zone differences) for a recurring weekly meeting to which all team members agree. Then set that recurring meeting up as a Google Calendar event. Don’t let this step hinder your progress! Get an agreed upon time set up as soon as you can (within the first week).
3. During that first meeting, establish the subject and research objectives (these are rough drafts) for your paper/project. End each meeting with what is expected from each team member (task items, deliverables or “homework”) between then and the next meeting.
4. During each subsequent meeting, assess the progress of those tasks that you established during the last meeting, and set new tasks so that the project can always be progressing from week to week.
5. As soon as possible (should be in the first or second week), find a target submission for your paper (workshop, conference, journal). When you have a deadline to meet, it keeps the project going along nicely.
6. If a team member did not deliver on a delegated deliverable, call them out (respectfully). Things happen in life, but if a team member consistently does not deliver, it may be time to ask them to leave your project.
7. Decide upon a mentor or advisor for your paper/project. This should be a PhD within cosmos. When you decide which to choose, propose your paper/project idea in an email that includes all team members along with the desired mentor/advisor. Be sure to fully explain your proposed idea, data collection methodology, and initial research objectives (again, these can all change based on the advice that you subsequently receive, no worries!).
8. Ensure that all team members are signed up on the COSMOS slack platform. This will ensure that every team member is visible and reachable for continual communications regarding your project.
9. Also ensure that each team member is utilizing some university affiliated email address so that there is no reason why at any time a team member is not receiving important team project communications. Always ensure that with all communications, you start with including all members in the “to:” and if replying, click “reply all”.
10. Designate a “team lead” for your project. This person will be responsible for the additional tasks of:
    1. Creating the recurring Google meeting on Google calendar which includes and invites all team members.
    2. Creating a Google drive folder for your project and sharing the link to that drive with all team members and chosen mentor/advisor (ensuring edit privileges are enabled).
    3. Creating a meeting notes file on that drive.
    4. Initiating the recording of each meeting. This ensures that if a team member was unable to attend, they can review and get all the instructions that they need to provide their respective deliverables before the next meeting.
    5. Leading all team meetings to ensure that at the beginning of each meeting the progress on the last assigned tasks were assessed and noted and that the next tasks are delegated/assigned.
    6. Contacting the chosen mentor/advisor when any additional advice/guidance is needed and/or when things go wrong.
    7. Creating and maintaining a file on the paper/project drive that lists all of the links to the meeting recordings.