

GETTING FROGS TO MARKET IN A WHEELBARROW:

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING ELEARNING PROJECTS WITH FACULTY-DRIVEN TEAMS

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Your "Frog"	Advance Project Management Strategy	Just in Time Project Management Strategy
Team members who leave or become unresponsive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure clear guidelines around the sharing of materials from the outset of your project. Identify additional experts who can contribute to the project in the event that someone leaves. Create a shared electronic space for the materials that can be used for the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find a replacement that has the same type or level of expertise -- otherwise you will find yourself reconfiguring your project midway through. Understand the consequences of not completing given tasks and keep them in perspective. Know that you may just have to let go. Bring your own personal supports into your communications and decisions so they understand why you are making this decision.
A team member who is overcommitted and has no time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegate roles and contributions early in the project. Identify support staff (often students) to help with drafts of eLearning content and its organization. Set up preliminary, secondary, and third-round deadlines for Project Management (but only advertise the initial one!) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up with your busy team member at least 48 hours before a major deadline. Keep a running list of priorities so that you can make modifications to the expected delivery as needed. Ensure that "tech tasks" do not weigh down your content experts.
A team member who wants to dominate the process or the conversation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set clear expectations for roles (and their scope) early in the project lifespan. Establish a variety of communication systems that allow for active and passive input across your team. Consider using co-instructors or co-developers for modules, courses, and programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively listen to the concern(s). Guide discussions back to the objectives and deliverables for your project. Actively enlist the input of individuals with differing perspectives. Be willing to speak up to your team member privately if you think their approach to the project is negatively impacting other team members or the process.
A silent team member.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the initial concept, try to understand what each team member envisions for the project. Explore this over group and individual meetings. Prepare your team that you will be following up with them and soliciting opinions throughout the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to understand the silence - is it dissatisfaction? Communication preference? Ambivalence? Reach out in a variety of ways to give all team members a comfortable way to communicate back. Become comfortable with the silence.
A team member who will not listen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the time to get to know your team members in advance and know how they prefer to communicate while accomplishing a project. Identify a "champion" that can help you deliver messages across your team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diagnose: Who is not being heard or listened to? What are the reasons for the breakdown in communication and what (who?) might make a difference. Be willing to alter your approach -- as long as you can still complete the project.
A team member who is bringing down the whole team with a bad attitude.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear objectives and deliverables for the project. These should be the focus of the work. If you foresee an issue with a team member, try to assign tasks early on to balance some of the challenges you have identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to focus on the project outputs and outcomes, not the people. Confront the negativity - explain to your team member the impact of the attitude on team functioning. Seek guidance from your supports.

<p>A team member who is constantly changing his or her mind.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build some flexibility into your initial design - but understand the implications of those changes on budget, timeline, team functioning, and final product. ● Establish expertise in the group and discuss a decision making structure for different aspects of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Question if the changes will help your team to better accomplish the project objectives. If yes, be open to the changes. ● Set “final answer” deadlines. ● Enlist the input and support of a collegiate partner who can weigh in on difficult decisions.
<p>Your team member(s) want to do way more than you can afford.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a well-informed budget for your project; ask to be at the table if faculty are working on funding proposals. ● Make sure the budget is revisited and discussed at project inception. Provide a chance for people to ask questions about money usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revisit your budget. Use the numbers to help make your case with your team. ● Investigate other/supplemental funding sources. If additional money is seen as an investment, you may receive funds. ● Try to recruit students who are building the necessary expertise you’d need to add “bells and whistles”.
<p>A team member who is trying to “move the money”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand your funding (and be involved in the proposal process if possible) so that you are familiar with the ways that allocating (or reallocating) funds will impact the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on the sustainability of the project and its outcomes; do the changes really impact what you can accomplish? ● Be creative. If you have less funding, use student staff, post-docs, and residents -- whoever might be able to help for a lower cost.
<p>A multi-lingual team (and audience).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not assume that “it will work out” - make a plan that includes native and fluent speakers of your target language. ● Identify bilingual actors at all levels of the project -- from student support through a faculty champion. ● Know the existing resources for learning materials in your target language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather your resources - colleagues, students, dictionaries, Google Translate, transcription software. ● Assume that there will be misunderstandings and miscommunications. ● Enlist the help of a proofreading and editor with fluency in the target language (and ideally, the target culture.)
<p>Your team members are across a region/country/ the globe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Think broadly about the resources that each team member is bringing to the project - cultural knowledge, content expertise, tech investments, ec. ● Set up a check-in system from Day 1 (Email? Conference calls? Video calls?) ● Work with your team on intercultural development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish a schedule that works for communication -- do not cling to a schedule that is ineffective. ● Continuously evaluate team dynamics and communication flows. ● Designate a point person in each location.

