

# Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Virtual Teams



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# What is a Virtual Team?

- Group of people working together for a common goal across boundaries of time and distance
- Can be intra-organizational or inter-organizational
- Members are selected for their expertise globally



# Why are Virtual Teams Important?

- Virtual teams enable communities
  - To respond faster and at lower cost to market changes
  - To respond to global competition
  - To shortened product life cycles
  - To outsource needs



# The MSU/FHSU Team Project

- Cross-Cultural Project
- Students from MSU/FHSU placed in teams
- Students communicate via e-mail
- Team submit a business plan and PowerPoint presentation



# Legal Issues

- Technical challenges
- Culture
- Security
- Tax
- Safety
- Intercultural clashes
- Building trust
- Privacy



# Considerations

- Immediate feedback
- Record of interaction
- Privacy
- Formality and priority
- Participation requirement
- Emotional stress
- Media
- Social presence
- Time commitment



# Communication Barriers

- Differences in perception
- Information overload
- Message complexity
- Differing status
- Unethical communication
- Lack of trust



# Effective Virtual Team

- Sense of purpose
  - Having a mission, clear goals, and a task
- Limit size of team
- Leadership
- Members' roles and guidelines
- Clear instruction
- Develop a plan or timeline
- Individual goals
- Communicating



# Cultural Project

- Executive Summary
  - History
  - Product Description
  - Marketing and Sales
  - Development
  - Operations
  - Management
  - Goals and Strategies
  - Financial Summary



- Market, Sales, and Development
  - Marketing strategy
  - Timetable
- Management
  - Company Organization
  - Management Team
  - Board of Directors



- Goals and Strategies
  - Future Plans
- Summary of Financials
  - Financial Forecasts



# Grade Classification

- Senior
  - Junior
  - Sophomore
  - Other
- 28 students
  - 16 students
  - 2 students
  - 1 student



# Age and Gender

- 19-21 years old
  - 22-25 years old
  - 26-28 years old
  - Over 28
  - Male
  - Female
- 16 students
  - 17 students
  - 9 students
  - 15 students
  - 20 students
  - 38 students



# First experience working on a Virtual Team Project

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 34 students
  - 8 students
  - 1 student
  - 7 students
  - 8 students



# Enjoyed working with a student from another university

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 11 students
  - 21 students
  - 10 students
  - 9 students
  - 7 students



# Working on a virtual team was much more difficult than working on a non-virtual team

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 27 students
  - 16 students
  - 4 students
  - 8 students
  - 3 students



# All members of the virtual team did an equal share of the project

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 12 students
  - 18 students
  - 5 student
  - 13 students
  - 11 students



# The quality of the virtual team was equal to or better than the quality of non-virtual teams

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 6 students
  - 14 students
  - 14 students
  - 13 students
  - 11 students



# Enjoyed working on the virtual team

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 7 students
  - 24 students
  - 8 students
  - 10 students
  - 9 students



# Working on the virtual team was a positive educational experience

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 11 students
  - 19 students
  - 11 students
  - 10 students
  - 3 students



# Would recommend working in virtual teams to others

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 6 students
  - 20 students
  - 15 students
  - 8 students
  - 11 students

