

Inf2-SEPP 2025-26

Lab 1 (Week 2)

Getting Started in Your Coursework Team

Work on this lab sheet at the start of the first attended lab during week 2.

1 Introduction

The purpose of this lab is to bring the newly formed coursework groups together and start off their collaboration in a fun way, by tackling together ice breaker and team building tasks. The literature is abundant of evidence that such tasks can greatly help teams to collaborate more effectively and for better results. Doing them together with your team can lead to higher Inf2-SEPP coursework marks, and an overall positive experience with the course. Therefore, we recommend you treat these tasks with utmost seriosity!

For the entirety of this lab (and ideally, also for subsequent labs), sit next to your coursework teammates, including any that could not make it to the lab in person by using a videoconferencing system like Microsoft Teams. It is best if your entire team is present so that nobody misses out.

2 Task 1: Ice Breaker- Advertising Each Other

The purpose of this task is to learn about each other and your strengths.

Do the following activities in order, making sure you keep to the required time for each:

1. (3 min) Individually, prepare your answers to the following questions:

- What is your name?
- What degree are you studying?
- What are your hobbies? Why do you enjoy them?
- What are you particularly good at as a person?
- What are the main strengths you would say you bring to the team?

2. (5-7 min) Pick a teammate whom you did not know from before as your discussion partner. If in a team of 3, the remaining person should do something else (e.g. see Task 4 second bullet point) and not listen while the others discuss, waiting for their turn.

- (a) Pitch your answers to the above questions to your discussion partner.
- (b) Answer any questions they may have about your answers.
- (c) If in a team with even number of members (2 or 4), reverse roles: your discussion partner pitching and answering questions, you asking questions.
- (d) If in a team of 3, your previous discussion partner then becomes the discussion partner of the team member who waited, and do items a-b with them. Finally, the last team mate becomes your discussion partner and does items a-b with you.

3. (10 min) Each team member introduces their discussion partner to the rest of the team. In doing so, advertise this person as well as you can to your teammates. Answer any questions that they may have about them. Finally, your discussion partner can correct anything that you may have remembered incorrectly about them.

3 Task 2: Personal vs Team DOs and DON'Ts

The aim of this task is to clarify your preferences with regards to working together, and settle on DOs and DON'Ts at the level of the entire team. Do the following in order, making sure you keep to the required time for each:

1. (3-5 min) Individually, prepare 3-5 DOs and 3-5 DON'Ts of how your peers should work with you, making sure you keep the DON'Ts friendly and constructive. For example, a student might add under DOs "Give me regular updates on your progress, so that I know if my help is needed", and under DON'Ts "Please don't miss our meetings".
2. (5 min) Each team member presents and explains their list of DOs and DON'Ts to all the others. Notes are taken of common and contradictory statements.
3. (5 min) The team negotiate and reach a consensus on a common list of DOs and DON'Ts for the entire team. Compromises are made along the way where needed. It is recommended to write down the end list and keep it as an internal team document.

4 Task 3: Team Building Activity: Deciding on a Team Name and Motto

Now that you know each other and your needs better, and you started thinking more as a team, it is time to practice working together! Your task is to decide on a name and motto for your team, and then present these to the rest of the class. The name and motto should best reflect your team's strengths and values, in your collective view. Moreover, they can be as conventional or unconventional as you like, to best represent your different personalities. It is your decision which to focus on first (the name or the motto), and what approach to use to work together.

Do the following activities in order, making sure you keep to the required time for each:

1. (2 min) Start by planning how you are going to tackle this work, based on what you have learned about each other and your team in previous tasks. As part of the plan, decide on who will play the following roles while you are working on this task:
 - *Facilitator*: the person who ensures that everyone has a say, any misunderstandings are addressed and resolved, and the discussion is kept to the point.
 - *Presenter*: the person who presents the team's name and motto decisions and their justifications to the entire class.
2. (10 min) Carry out the planned work for the task, culminating in a decision on the team's name and motto.
3. (3 min) Once ready, the demonstrators will ask your presenter to introduce the team's name, motto and their justifications to the entire class.

5 What next?

It is your decision how to organise the rest of your teamwork, as no single solution fits all teams. However, here are some things you could try now or during your next meeting, *before starting work on CW1*:

- If your team values working together in an orderly fashion, you may want to decide together on the following logistics:
 - Meetings: where, when, how.
 - Other communication: means, frequency
 - How to share work
 - How to split responsibilities (in principle, as it will depend on your tasks too!)
 - How to keep track of progress
 - Who makes decisions in your team
 - How to handle misunderstandings
 - Any other logistical topics of interest for the team
- Start studying the numerous resources provided in the Teamwork Resources (click title for link) document. These can help you with everything from doing more ice breakers and team building activities, to seeking answers to the previous questions.