



TEAM ORGANIZATION



Finding the right student members to make-up the design team can sometimes be one of the most challenging aspects of participating in this program. Student teams come together as a group of individuals who may not be used to working closely alongside other students. And oftentimes the team is "assigned" to work together by the course instructor. Learning to draw upon each team member's strengths while maintaining good group dynamics is critical to team success.

NASA has strong history of putting successful teams together to accomplish a monumental goal. Experts in team organization offer the following tips to getting a student design team off on a good start.

- **Get Acquainted.** Make an effort to get to know each other and learn what each team member brings to the table. Meet outside class to watch a space-themed movie like APOLLO XIII.
- **Establish Group Goals.** Sometimes the "big picture" can overwhelm less experienced team members; therefore, use **DESIGN CHALLENGE** milestones to help the team set incremental goals.
- **Strike an Expectation Agreement.** The team, as a group, will not be successful if team members don't agree on what is to be expected from individuals and the group as a whole. It works best if expectations are established early:
 - o Establish overall team expectations immediately.
 - What is expected from each team member?
 - Will your team need someone to "parent" less dependable team members?
 - What level of participation is required from each member to guarantee success?
 - o Establish roles for individual teams members and set expectations for each.
 - Read through the list of milestones in each Level/Option Area to see if specific requirements suit the talents of someone on the team.
 - Assign someone to track budget, design website, plan outreach, take team photos, proofread, etc.
- **Be organized!** Although each team designates a team leader - - the "leader" cannot get the team successfully from BASE to Showcase alone. A successful design requires the entire team to devote substantial time and effort to the project. A one-man project shows a lack of strength when compared to what an entire team can accomplish when working together.
- **Communicate, Communicate, Communicate.** Make sure everyone knows what's going on with the team and the design. The team leader will be the primary contact with TSGC - - and be responsible for communicating news to the rest of the team. The alternate team leader serves as a back-up. Some teams use a team website as a forum to post progress and share ideas.
- **Address Problems Early.** Keep your faculty advisor informed of any problems that arise. Plan a strategy for keeping problems from impacting the team's design effort and course grade.