Setting goals and establishing commitments

* Make quality project commitments
* Make collaboration commitments
* Make effective habits of the mind commitments
* Use the *Commitments Think-Sheet*

One of the basic tenets of project-based learning is to develop in students a commitment to quality, thus, goal-setting is an essential component of the planning process. Very important is that students actually record their goals in a concrete way. These goals might be written on a piece of paper, or students can use something like the “Commitments Think-sheet.” This form can be used, you can design your own, or better yet, teachers can collaborate with their students to help them design their own.

**Using the *Commitments Think-sheet***

The *Commitments Think-sheet* is composed of three parts. In the first section, students sign their name to indicate their commitment to quality. The figure below illustrates this think-sheet.

The second section provides a list of essential social skills associated with effective collaboration. One of the ways to use this section is to have the team target three specific collaboration techniques as goals. Throughout the project, the team then focuses on implementing all of the collaboration techniques listed, but also especially attends to the three that were targeted as goals. Later, as each team is involved with project activities, the teacher can cue students to reflect and evaluate how well they are attaining their collaboration goals. As teams are self-evaluating the effectiveness of their collaboration, they can attend specifically to the three collaboration goals. Likewise, later, when the teacher assesses the team for the purposes of assigning a grade, part of the grade can be based on how well the team implemented the three areas of collaboration they targeted. Since each team may select as goals different areas of collaboration, assessment should be differentiated among different groups.
### Commitments to quality of project and presentation

By signing my name below, I am making a commitment to:

1. Developing a high quality product that I will be proud of.
2. Creating a product that will make sense, be interesting and informative to my audience.
4. Doing my share on time.
5. Doing my best.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signatures of team members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leon Haynes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aman Scott</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Goals for collaborating effectively

- Listening without interrupting
- Turn-taking & involving everyone
- Offering assistance
- Communicating about difficulties
- Respecting different opinions, skills & abilities
- Encouraging & complimenting others
- Recognizing and celebrating others’ successes
- Recognizing unique talents of others
- Giving “I” messages
- Consensus building
- Giving negative feedback
- Peacefully resolving conflicts

**Check 3 that will be primary goals:**

#### Goals for using effective habits of the mind

- Using & keeping timelines
- Resisting impulsiveness
- Engaging in challenging tasks
- Persisting during tough times
- Organizing ideas & being clear
- Being accurate
- Noticing how you & others think
- Using information resources
- Being open minded
- Being creative
- Viewing an idea in unusual ways
- Presenting an idea in usual ways

**Check 3 that will be primary goals:**

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Similar to the second section, the third area of the **Commitments Think Sheet** focuses on effective habits of the mind. Students can also select three specific behaviors to target for extra effort as well.

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**Note:** Some students find it helpful when the strategies and tactics associated with planning projects are organized into a mnemonic device which depicts key steps in the process. The “**PATH: A project strategy**” is found in PBL materials. You may wish to provide students with a copy of this strategy and/or recreate it as a poster or bulletin board that can be viewed by the whole class.