

**Intellectual and Academic Integrity**

**Individual Assignment Cover Page**

**CHARACTER COUNTS !!**

The "Six Pillars of Character":

\* Trustworthiness \* Respect

\* Responsibility \* Fairness

\* Caring, and \* Good citizenship

*People of character do the right thing*

*because it is right*

*even when it costs more than they want to pay*

*and even when others may gain advantage*

*by their dishonorable conduct.*

Class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_MAN 4120\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title of Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_Basecamp\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Submission: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_June 23, 2016\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATION OF AUTHORSHIP:**

I pledge and affirm on my honor and certify that **I am the author of this learning assignment** and that any assistance I received in its preparation is fully acknowledged and disclosed in this **learning assignment**. I have also cited any sources from which I used data, ideas or words; either quoted directly or paraphrased. I also certify that **this learning assignment** **was prepared by me** specifically for this course.

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**Basecamp Review**

**1.** **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to review the software Basecamp and to elaborate on the key features and benefits that come with it. Basecamp is a private online space that groups can utilize to come together and accomplish tasks. Businesses of all types can use this software in order to meet their goals. There are six key features of Basecamp that maximize the productivity of teams and they are:

1. Message boards and comment threads
2. Real-time chat/pings
3. Automatic check-ins
4. To-do lists
5. Docs & file storage
6. A centralized schedule

These key features of Basecamp are what makes successful teams tick. Basecamp has integrated all of these features in order to come up with an online collaboration product that users can easily use.

**2.** **Which are the three most CRITICAL ISSUES for Basecamp?**

First of all, the most critical issue of Basecamp is the ability for team members to collaborate through the use of message boards and comment threads. Not everyone is available all the time or they may be assigned to another shift. Furthermore, they could be halfway around the world so they might be asleep at the time you are working. Message boards make it possible to write new ideas for the project and another user can give their input via comments. This allows all the ideas to get logged in an easy to use interface and nobody will miss anything. Users can logon at their own leisure and get tasks done in a timely manner from remote locations.

The next critical issue for Basecamp is the ability to chat in real-time and send pings to other group members. This is especially useful when users are online at the same time working from a remote location. It is crucial for timely collaboration and verifying work that has been done. Group chats can be created for more than two people in order for everyone to be on the same page and bounce ideas back and forth. Alternatively, pings are available if a user wanted to send a private message to another user.

Lastly, the third critical issue for Basecamp is the ability to schedule automatic check-ins to see what the group is up to. Automatically scheduling questions and answers for the group is useful because a manager can easily scroll through the progress of every member. A simple question like “What will you be working on this week” will keep the manager up to date on progress without micromanaging everyone. These questions will automatically reoccur on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis depending on the needs of the company. Furthermore, the ideas from the answers given can be expanded on and it could create even more ideas.

**3.** **Which are the three most relevant LESSONS LEARNED from Basecamp?**

The first most relevant lesson that I learned from Basecamp is that there is always a need for virtual team members to collaborate in real time. The Basecamp software lets you connect to a chat group with the members that are currently online to discuss things. This is great because there are so many platforms and different software options for online chat. Everyone needs to download the same software, which is a pain, but this is completely eliminated by having the chat software within the basecamp. All the user has to do is login to the Basecamp and begin communicating. The “ping” feature makes a message more personal if it doesn’t apply to the entire group. Two users can quickly discuss a matter amongst each other without broadcasting the message. The communication features that Basecamp provides make it easy for a virtual team to get their work done in a timely manner.

Another lesson learned from my Basecamp software review was the notifications. Notifications are a key player in keeping members alerted and up to date with the project. A user will be alerted when a new message, comment, or chat appears on the group site. These notifications can be received on your computer by email, your tablet, or even your smartphone. This allows virtual teams to thrive by keeping everyone informed on the new updates to the project. Of course people will need to separate their work from their leisure time, so Basecamp has features that allow the notifications to turn off for a certain time or even on weekends. Also, there is an ability to snooze the notification and it will remind you in a couple of hours. This is great when you are currently busy with other tasks and aren’t available to complete another one.

The last lesson learned from reviewing the Basecamp software was that it is important to keep track of the information on Basecamp via reports. Reports make it easy to see exactly what your team is up to. They show what needs to be done and when it is due. Basecamp makes it easy to go back and see exactly what work was produced last week or even a year ago. These reports can quickly be exported to a pdf file in order to be sent to the boss, sent via mobile devices, and even projected to a screen for a presentation.

**4.** **Which are the three most important BEST PRACTICES for Basecamp?**

The first most important “best practice” in regards to using this software is the document and file storage options that are available within Basecamp. It is hard to always keep everyone on the same page with the same files and the most up to date version of the file. Basecamp makes this possible by acting as a cloud file storage system and it will even tell you who edited the document last. Users can view PDF files and rearrange them by using a visual interface. It is a no brainer to edit a Microsoft Word document and upload it to the Basecamp for others to review or comment on. In the past, group members would have to send out mass emails in order to exchange files and the most up to date versions of the file would get confused with older ones. Basecamp can easily eliminate this problem by hosting the file on the Basecamp site at all times of the day.

Secondly, another “best practice” for Basecamp is to use the centralized scheduling system within the software. While working in a virtual team, it is very easy to become overwhelmed by all of the tasks that are being performed. Also, it is difficult to keep track of who is doing what, when it should get done, and what to do next. The calendar feature in Basecamp makes all of this possible and the users can even discuss tasks on the calendar directly from the calendar page. This simplifies and even eliminates the confusion among the tasks at hand. If there is an event coming up that requires a printout, a document can be attached to a specific event so that people will be up to speed and prepared on the day of the event. Also, a team member can export this Basecamp calendar to their Google calendar, iCal calendar, or even their Microsoft Outlook calendar. All three of these calendars can then be synced to a smartphone, tablet, or computer in order to always stay up to date.

The last most important best practice when using Basecamp is to use the “to-do” lists. This goes hand in hand with the calendar feature because it is very important to list who is supposed to do what and then figure out when they are supposed to do it. Basecamp can categorize these to-do lists and assign them to the appropriate people. The due dates can be modified if needed and the users will be notified accordingly. Sometimes the due dates do change and the to-do list needs to be reorganized in the correct order. Basecamp makes it easy to rearrange the to-do items. The to-do lists can also be directly commented on in case a group member disagrees with something. For the sake of added convenience and productivity, notes and file attachments can be pasted directly on the lists themselves.

**5.** **Recommendations**

 After reviewing the online collaboration software Basecamp, I have a few recommendations to make that can benefit many companies. First of all, affordability is the key to this group collaboration software. For the low monthly price of $29 dollars, any size organization can implement the power of the software with any amount of users. Even if a company added more users to the Basecamp, the price will remain the same with no additional charges. Also, the business clients can use the Basecamp software for $79 per month. Client emails will go directly through Basecamp so that every employee will be on the same page.

 Another recommendation that I have is to implement the Basecamp mobile application into all the smartphones of the business. It has become so easy and streamlined for a group of people to work on the same project. Also, a smartphone travels everywhere with an employee so you will know that they have access to the project at all times. This is a major benefit to medium sized organizations that want to keep everyone on the same page. The combination of emails, text messages, chat groups, voicemails, and everything else can become overwhelming at times. Essentially, Basecamp puts all of this information together and it is accessible from anywhere on a mobile device.

 The last recommendation that I have to make for Basecamp for a medium organization is to maintain an easy to follow schedule that team members can follow. This is possible with the Basecamp software via computers, emails, tablets, and even smartphones. Basecamp lists all of the different tasks in order of when they have to be done. Images, notes, and files can all be attached to the schedule that workers can access on the go from their phones. Google calendar or Microsoft Outlook can be used to synchronize Basecamp schedules to the schedules on all of the different technology devices.

**References**

<https://basecamp.com/>

<https://basecamp.com/3/features>