



Certificate of higher education in work for the work place

Assignment Title: Pathway Project 2

Lecturer: Dr Mushfiqur Rahman

Student name: Alireza Esmailtabar

Student number: 1703941

Introduction

In this essay I will be reflecting on what I have learnt and the experiences I have gained from taking part as the leader in the group in order to create a business plan for a Laundry. Lately I had the opportunity to work on a business plan with the members of my class as a team. Throughout the essay I will be explaining the personal experiences and skills that I have gained. Gibbs' reflection model (1988) as traced by Cooney (1999) will be the support of my assessment of this entire experience. It is an organised and structured method which will be a disciplined approach to describe what I have learned and experienced. The stages are as follows: description of the event, feelings of the event, evaluation of the event, action plan and finally the action plan.

Description

We were given five weeks to create a business plan. The first day we spent our time in performing numerous small group activities. The group members already knew each other from before because we are all a part of the same course. The group activities were divided into five assignments. During the five weeks period we created a business plan and gathered information about marketing management and financial management. In week five we summarised all the information we performed in previous weeks and were required to put it into PowerPoint as a presentation. The presentation was based on the entire process of the business plan and the information was collected during the past four weeks. Therefore we had to be prepared in advance and finalised a few points in order to put the work together and complete the presentation. As a team we communicated and networked frequently to ensure there is sufficient preparation to complete the task. In our initial meetings we all decided together on who will be representative of our team whilst working together to create the business plan. In the first meeting we all had a brief discussion about the work and had to share our ideas and opinions with each other.

Feelings

Overall the group meetings were a success, as everyone were seen to be genuinely interested and responsive to be a part of this experience. Everyone were seen to be exchanging ideas and spoke about topics related to the business plan. It was a great experience for me to be a part of this group work as the leader of the team. I was very active from the beginning as I am a confident person and spoke out about my ideas and shared information with the rest of the group. Although it was a new experience for me I maintained an effective communication with my fellow class mates throughout the sessions. Also I learned to become aware of my own strength and weaknesses which is very useful for my future work.

This method was beneficial to me as I was able to identify my own personal mistakes which I can make some changes to and not repeat them in the future when working as part of a team. .

.Learning from experiences helps us bring about changes in our actions as we learn on the basis of practical situations. These situations are based on practical settings we get a real picture of how our weaknesses might affect us and why we should eliminate them or turn them into our strengths (Moon, 1999).

Working in a multi-faceted environment had its own benefits for all of us. Each person comes with a different background and profession and were very knowledgeable in their own fields. By sharing our knowledge with each other we learned many new things from each other. With the work that all the team put together we successfully created the desired presentation that we were asked. The reason behind the vivid and inclusive conclusion was working together as a diverse group. The opportunity to work with students that belong to a different background helped me become aware of the great complexities that might possess. Throughout the time that I spent with the group this method helped to get the perspectives of the team members which turned out to be eye-opening in many ways. Our ways of planning were also very different because we are all from diverse backgrounds. However, in the end it was equally rewarding because our personal perspectives led to achieving the desired goal. The outcome was also for each individual to learn an excessive deal from various views than how we have perceived it ourselves if we were to read it on our own. I have become more broad-minded since I have worked as part of a group.

Evaluation

*However, in the end it was equally rewarding because our individualistic viewpoints complemented the plan. It also resulted into each of us learning a great deal on various subjects in a very different perspective than how we ourselves would have perceived it, if we'd have read it ourselves. Working in a group made me have a more open mind set than how I initially was.

The regrets that I have from this experience, is the fact that I wasn't as proactive during the group discussion as I know I had the potential of being. By the end of it, I found myself being much more comfortable and active compared to how I walked into the session.

Team Working

I found Belbins theory useful and applied it to my self-assessment while working on the business plan with the other members of the group. As a team we agreed on keeping in contact when not in class or from different locations online via social media such as email and the whatsapp group that was created by myself. I was very proactive at gathering information that was useful for the business plan progress. This gained me good points from the rest of the group. The group members considered me to be a good team leader. It showed that my hard work resulted in getting closer to achieving the desired goal and satisfaction of the team which is an overwhelming feeling. The group members considered me approachable, attentive, reliable yet enjoyable person to work with (Belbin, 2010).

Decision Making

We developed some protocol regarding how the group is going to function and reach a firm decision.

We agreed on splitting the tasks amongst ourselves and reached a firm a decision by discussing the best options.

We developed some processes that were used when coming to an agreement during the conclusion making process by all. The following part gives out these guidelines that we followed to avoid conflicts within the groups and come up with a final decision when in fix unanimously.

It was a five-step process that we came up with. The process is as follows:

1. We had to attend meetings and have a discussion and to come up with a firm decision as a group.
2. We all agreed on having a meeting every Thursday after class in the study area or in class to catch up with what we have done so far and the given tasks were completed.
3. The group members were also required to send their completed parts to me (team leader) to add on to the PowerPoint.
4. On Thursday the team agreed to meet at 1.15 P.M. in a common room to work on the presentation.
5. The student sent their parts via email in order to be added on to the PowerPoint.

By following these guidelines the planning process was carried out very clear and smooth and helped the team avoid any confusion or complications. At this stage I was familiarised with 'forming' stage process clarified in Group Development (Model, 1965). It was helpful to us to gain a better understanding about each other's views. It helped the collaboration within ourselves as well as escalating us to the 'storming' stage. It then escalated to the 'norming' stage which helps in making decisions that are approved by all the members of the group. These guides helped minimising issues and lifted the group's spirit which encouraged them to work harder to complete the plan.

Ethical Concerns

Respect is very important when an individual is working in a group. When respecting each other in the group the spirit of the team gets stronger. Therefore, I have always shown respect to my class mates when working with them as the leader of the group. For instance if somebody was delaying to send their

work to me I would ask them kindly rather than demanding it from him or her. And also the group members were very supportive and which helped me out so much and made things much easier.

One of the main ethical concerns that helped in building better teamwork was the implementation of showing respect. When people show respect to each other at a work place, the team spirit is only strengthened. Therefore, I always made it a point to show respect in whatever action I executed to my peers. This not only helped me in having a smooth sail overall, but also helped my peers when I conversed this well. Some of the small gestures that I put in were, asking my peers whether they are done with their work rather than demanding it from them. This helped me get a lot of cooperation from my peers during the time that I worked with them.

Diversity and Difference

By sharing our differences as diverse individuals it helped us to develop an interesting insight on the business plan and also other areas as well in general. I worked with people that had different views and different take on things in life and in general. This made the business plan process experience more enjoyable and rewarding. This resulted in improving the connection between me and my group members. (Klarsfeld, 2010).

Management of Power and Conflict

The responsibilities were fairly distributed between each member of the group. Surprisingly enough, as because the team involved individuals that came from different backgrounds. And despite our differences nobody tried to form any sort of authority on the other team members when working together. We all had a collaborative approach rather than authoritative approach whilst working together. Even if the ones that had strong personalities tried imposing their point of views it was always solved because of the collaborative approach the rest of the group had.

Conflict can usually arise when collaborating in a team work. Sometimes disagreements can occur due to the difference of personalities, skills and values. Luckily there was no major ones during the period of creating the business plan. In fact the few small disagreements within our group turned into a better and more interesting discussions. When some of us disagreed with something we all gathered and had a discussion about it which was very useful, therefore it helped motivate the group to share their views on certain topics. The conflicts just turned out to be the creator of more useful ideas which helped the business plan to be a unique and comprehensive one. The disagreements within the group never had a negative impact on the outlook and open mindedness that the group had towards all the topics put forth.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude my essay by saying that without a doubt it was a very beneficial and inspiring experience for me which will be very useful for me in the future as a professional and when participating in a team again. During this experience I learned a lot about my strength and weaknesses that I possess in a professional group work setting. Also the Gibbs model helped me more to gain a clear understanding of myself as it is a theoretical method for me to assess myself practically. In the future as professional and in my personal life I will be effectively applying my strength and the new experiences that I have learned when carrying out a task in a methodical manner.

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