



REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Module: Managing Enterprise in the 21st Century

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Introduction

This essay was prepared as a reflective work of my team preparation and business plan presentation for the Managing Enterprise in the 21st Century module. The purpose of this reflective essay is to redirect how the team and I worked while undertaking this assignment. The essay contains my thoughts, reactions, and development from what I have learned during the process. Secondly, this reflective journal contains personal records of my learning experiences. The focused of this essay was based on my team preparation and the presentation of our “Online Healthy Food Supplier” company proposal. This essay illustrates some of the skills, knowledge, and understanding I had acquired throughout the project. It reflects my work, individual achievement, and team working engagements. In this paper, I attempted to be as specific and persuasive as possible. It includes some of my inspiration, how I made use of ideas, and contribution towards the team presentation and business awareness. Our team was comprised of five members.

Unfortunately, I was admitted to the team late due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, I had no choice but to take on whatever task was assigned to me. The business plan presented was based on an online health food supplier for a specific audience/customers. In this presentation, we highlighted and analysed all the major areas of the business plan and how it was going to target potential customers and generates sales. The journal described the experience objectively of what happened from my perspective. I have tried to convey the events by explaining what I saw, heard, my insight, connections to other learning resources and my conclusion. Furthermore, I have described how I addressed team issues, interpreted my role, how I faced challenges and what I have learnt being a part of the team. In this paper, I also identified and discussed my understanding of relevant theories, concepts, techniques, and models. In addition, what I would do differently in the near future whenever I am engaged in team exercises and personal research. Furthermore, I have also discussed and explained how I sourced and applied knowledge from other modules.

MY EXPERIENCE

I was assigned to a team comprised of five members to prepare a business plan presentation for a selected online business. I wanted to be a part of a team of my choice, however, I was randomly placed in a team due to my late admission into the course module. Nevertheless, I quickly adapted to the team environment. Eager to participate in the assigned task with an open mind made my transition easy and engaging. Initially, my first thoughts of the team were how organised and structured it appeared. However, as time progressed, I had noticed some disorganisation of the team due to the lack of regular in-person meetings. Therefore, I made it my duty to keep in contact with members as regularly as possible to ensure that I am up to date with our progress.

My Feelings

I believe it would have been more effective and beneficial if the team had regular face to face meetings to discuss and finalise decisions. Our team mainly communicated via Whatsapp group chat. Personally, I reasoned that a face to face interaction would have allowed a more detail interactive discussion between members on the agenda at hand. Moreover, it would have fostered a stronger relationship among members, and would have made sharing information and personal views more effective. Apparently, it was not so because member's had other commitments which made it difficult to meet up. This made me realise how important it is to consider other means of face to face interaction. Our team did not consider such approach. For example, when people engage in face to face interaction it encourages everyone to participate in whatever is going on. According to Guo, Z & Turner, T.L (2009, p.8) “ research has demonstrated that when communicators possess shared experience or social constructions, a lean medium such as computer-mediated communication (CMC)”, Zoom and telegram can be used as effectively as face-to-face meetings.

However, as it relates to my final mark, I felt cognitive dissonance because the grade that I have gotten was not what I deserve. I felt that my grade for my assignment should have been much higher. It can be argued, despite being admitted late I was still able to present useful and meaningful information for my assigned task. I believed the information I presented was sufficient and detailed enough to give me a better grade as oppose to the assigned mark. Nevertheless, I believed that as a team we had done our best considering the limited time and our research ability.

Evaluation of My Experience

I believe, our in-class meetings were very productive as we were able to discuss and resolve concerns. Additionally, I believe that a more structured decision-making process would have maximised our team output and presentation quality. If we had applied Litvaj, I., and Stancekova, D. (2015) illustration on the stages of the decision-making process, by first identify the problem(s) and then prepare the variants of the problems. Finally, select the most suitable alternative and introduce the most appropriate action plan. Whereas all did what came naturally, which is to begin listing and discussing the problems and possible solutions. From these experiences, I developed skills of report writing, quick responsive thinking and taking a proactive approach to various situations. Likewise, I learnt the importance of having a plan of action, notwithstanding the possibilities of changes in the process when working towards a common goal with different individuals. For example, during team discussion, I tried to be as professional and open-minded towards everyone's opinions on their individual work, while sharing constructive comments on how we can improve and better present our presentation. From this, I have learnt that openness within a team allows everyone to make better use of their differences and perform better (Astrid C. Homan, A. C; Hollenbeck, J.R; Humphrey, S.E; Knippenberg, D.V; Ilgen, D.R Van Kleef, G.A , 2008).

This practice made it easier for me to better communicate with professionals outside the classroom a self-employed barber and part-time actor. These experiences have pushed me beyond my comfort zone. Despite the uncomfortable position, I learned to appreciate and screened positivity from every seemingly negative situation. Now, I feel more prepared for a different stage in my career personally and professionally. Therefore, I made the decision to step out of my comfort zone in order to maximise my outputs and knowledge in any situation. What I have found rather helpful is the way in which our team shared information. By this I mean, when a member finds helpful resources in regards for our individual research this information would be circulate among members. Hence, I became much more comfortable and enthusiastic within the team.

The Analysis

The experiences allowed me to develop a deeper appreciation of our diverse backgrounds and individuality, along with the challenges it brought. The reason for this is due to the fact that each member had a chance to utilise their skills in their areas of interest through researching and sourcing information. This challenged our creative thinking and our ability to think critically. As a result, we were able to overcome our problems and address concerns. It can be agreed that there were disagreements within the team as it relates to how the information should be organised and presented. Person A, suggested that we all should introduce ourselves individually then present our assigned parts for 2 minutes. Whereas, I suggested that after someone presents their section, they should introduce the next person. This would have produced a smoother transition from one person to the next. Hence, as a result of our discussions and team engagements our working relationships became more effective, organised and innovative. Moreover, I believe we all approached our individual tasks quite well. I also believed that our collective strength and skills made resolving team issues easier. As an entrepreneur, I better understood the articulation of the capacity, materials, and expertise a team needs in order to operate effectively in the business world today.

On the other hand, our team members had limited knowledge in conducting proper research and effective critical analysis during the research process. Also, I had limited time for my assigned task due to my late admission to the team. As a consequence, members selected tasks based on their strengths and interest, whereas I had no choice regarding my task. These experiences gave me a clearer and deeper understanding of what makes a team successful, and the importance of adaptability and time management. It became apparent to me that in today's world challenges are inevitable with the existence of individualism being prominent. This tested my readiness, flexibility, adaptability, and willingness to face new challenges professionally and personally. Now, I am better able to handle similar and varying scenarios during my journey whether as an entrepreneur or as an employee. It can be agreed that each member of the team played a very important part for the success of the presentation. We all brought unique skills, knowledge, and experiences. In fact, everyone came with energy, drive, passion, and determination that complemented our strengths and improve our weaknesses.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the experience had thought the essence of time in any walks of life, especially when it comes to managing academics, family and work. I further understood the importance of interaction and communication when working towards a common goal within a team. Additionally, I learned that being a part of a team, we need to appreciate the diversity of shared views. This means understanding that everyone is unique, and they are going to have their own individual perspective. We must be open-minded not only individually, but collectively to receive and filter information to arrive at a common consensus/ goal. In other words, adaptability, flexibility, communication and understanding are needed within any team. Knowing this, I am now conscious of the personal and professional approach necessary when working within a diverse team. This experience reinforced why it is important to be ready and foster good working relationships. Nonetheless, I would have like to choose a task that I was most comfortable with and encourage members to use other method of communication such as the CMC, Zoom and telegram. Above all, I enjoyed the time spent putting the presentation together with my teammates. Finally, I believe that despite we lacked some of necessary skills and knowledge in conducting proper research we tried our best.

Action Plan

While conducting research both individually and as a team I began to see the theory of the module practical application in our assignment. It boosted my confidence because I can now see the relationship between the theory and practical approach to research involving a business plan. Some of my personal entrepreneurial experiences came in handy. Moreover, I began to see the importance of a business plan. The knowledge gained allowed us as a team to appreciate the complexity of what information and thoughts that needs to go into a business plan in order to produce a realistic business. In return, the project dialog among members increased considerably that ensured the good quality of work.

As a team we have improved our communication skills and team working relationship, both professionally and personally. I have noticed and learned that different parts of a business plan need to correlate regardless of which part come first. However, it is ideal that the plan be done in a logical sequence that informs the next part following. I recognise the importance of constant

communication with team members in order for this to be possible. In return, I gained a better understanding of members approach on research and information gathering. Personally, the project was challenging and rewarding. This broadens my understanding of what I need to know and how I should go about presenting information to a specific audience. By this I mean, how to conduct research into specific areas, analyse and source relevant information. This I know will help me in my future endeavours.

References

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