



***Significance of the global team in
effective problem solving***

Contemporary
Challenges: Making a
Difference

Assignment 2

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Section 1 – Notes on the Presentation

Collaboration is the act of individuals or groups coming together to achieve shared objectives by combining their skills, knowledge, and resources (Scoular et al., n.d.). By working as a team, sharing knowledge, and communicating effectively, they create outcomes that exceed individual efforts. Within collaborative efforts, the role of diplomacy, persuasion, and negotiation are of paramount importance, each playing a unique role in achieving common goals.

Diplomacy is a strategic art of tactful communication and negotiation and stands as a linchpin in orchestrating effective collaboration among diverse stakeholders (Bolewski, 2018). Employing various approaches, including active listening and constructive discussions, diplomacy fosters open channels of communication and mutual understanding (Sachs et al., 2019). As an example, my team, consisting of members from Singapore, Malaysia, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK), was involved in developing a Litterati app. During the brainstorming session, Singapore and German members prioritized minimalist design for precision, while Malaysian and UK members recommended adding vibrant colours and interactive elements, aligning with their cultural inclination for creativity and user engagement. As the discussion progressed, design differences surfaced, causing conflicts. Hence, we used diplomatic techniques like active listening and constructive discussions to ensure everyone's opinions were heard and considered. This helped defuse potential conflicts stemming from differing priorities, enabling us to finalize a design that balances efficiency and creativity. Over time, these techniques cultivated trust, encouraging sustained participation and resource sharing to develop collective solutions (Bolewski, 2008). Additionally, embracing and understanding diverse perspectives and behaviours played an indispensable role in fostering harmony and effective communication (Taylan & Weber, 2023). By valuing the nuances of distinct cultural norms and values, we nurtured an environment where each participant feels not only acknowledged but also empowered.

Besides that, persuasion, a dynamic mechanism of communication, holds a crucial role in shaping collaborators' opinions and decisions within collaborative endeavours aimed at addressing the single-use plastics issue (Nejad & Sharifi, 2016). Persuasion, often compared to the art of guiding minds, becomes the driving force that steers individuals and groups toward a common objective through the skilful use of persuasive evidence and ethical communication.

In addressing the challenge of single-use plastics, both, effective persuasion and ethical persuasion wield the power to transcend differences and harmonize diverse viewpoints.

Ethical persuasion enriches collaboration by honouring the collaborators' autonomy and ensuring voluntary decision-making (Dubov, 2015). This approach establishes a bedrock of trust and credibility, fostering more genuine engagement. When collaborators feel their autonomy is respected, their commitment is grounded in choice rather than compulsion, bolstering the collaboration's authenticity. Moreover, this ethical foundation nurtures enduring dedication, as stakeholders acknowledge the sincerity of the collaboration's purpose and their role in shaping its trajectory. Meanwhile, the efficacy of effective persuasion becomes evident when contemplating the influence of persuasive data on the environmental impact of single-use plastics. For example, I convinced my team to support the Litterati app since they had concerns about the costs and effectiveness involved. To convince them, I used strong evidence, like studies from Williams et al. (2019), showing how the app could make our work easier and more efficient. I also shared success stories of companies that used similar apps to reduce waste and save money. By presenting solid evidence, I got my team to support the initiative.

Apart from that, negotiation, a strategic process of dialogue and compromise, holds a pivotal role within collaborative projects aimed at addressing the single-use plastics crisis. Its ability to temper clashing interests and ensure fair solutions through expert compromise and conflict resolution is crucial for balancing the diverse interests at play (Villarin & Cuaresman, 2020). Skilled negotiation is essential for balancing stakeholders with differing perspectives and achieving outcomes that are beneficial to all parties involved. This is where the principles of fairness and open communication, inherent in principled negotiation, come into play, aiding in the development of unbiased policies.

In addition to the strategic roles within collaborative projects, negotiation involves various approaches that contribute to successful outcomes. One of the strategies involves pursuing win-win solutions, where parties collaboratively seek resolutions that cater to the interests of all involved. For example, I negotiated with WillowTree, an app development company. Initially, they proposed different designs for the Litterati app, which were quite different from our original idea. Through negotiations, I discussed each design's look and user experience to ensure it matched my team's vision. Additionally, I negotiated with my team to allocate funds for the app's research

and development. This negotiation ensured that the capacities and commitments of members were taken into account when sharing responsibilities. This fair allocation not only improves efficiency but also fosters a sense of collective ownership, thereby bolstering our determination to eliminate single-use plastic.

Finally, the interplay of diplomacy, persuasion, and negotiation forms a dynamic synergy within our collaborative project aimed at combating the challenges posed by single-use plastics. These three elements seamlessly complement and reinforce one another, contributing to a more comprehensive and effective approach throughout the process. This is because diplomacy serves as the foundational layer by fostering an atmosphere of open communication and mutual respect. This facilitates healthy dialogues and builds a sense of trust among the team members. As a result, persuasion and negotiation are empowered. By creating an environment in which diverse viewpoints are acknowledged and valued, diplomacy lays the groundwork for successful persuasion. In return, the efforts of persuasion gain strength from the groundwork laid by diplomatic actions. Diplomatic communication makes a space where we are more open to considering different viewpoints and evidence. This openness to new ideas makes our persuasive arguments work better and increases the chances that arguments supporting the reduction of single-use plastics are well-received among us. Also, the relationships formed through diplomacy give us a strong base for successful negotiations (Galluccio, 2021). Furthermore, we can also see the effective interaction of these skills in the Paris Climate Accord agreement. In this case, diplomacy laid the foundation for countries to promise to decrease emissions (Amini, 2018). After that, persuasion and negotiation entered the picture, uniting nations around shared environmental aims.

Presentation link:

https://iumwgroup-my.sharepoint.com/personal/23020011_student_iumw_edu_my/_layouts/15/stream.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2F23020011%5Fstudent%5Fiumw%5Fedu%5Fmy%2FDocuments%2FASSIGNMENT%202%5FVIDEO%20PRESENTATION%5FCONTEMPORARY%20CHALLENGES%2EMOV&ga=1

Section 2 – Reflection

Description:

In our first meeting, we focused on planning our pitch and I was not physically well during this phase. Nevertheless, I was determined to participate and contribute actively. We discussed the harmful effects of single-use plastics and how to present our ideas persuasively. This has made me more aware of the issue's severity and motivated me to find solutions. Overall, engaging with team members from diverse backgrounds, each bringing unique perspectives, was both exciting and challenging.

Feelings:

I felt curious, determined, and a bit challenged during the process. Although the team's passion motivated me, the sheer scale of the problem left me somewhat unsettled. The seriousness of the environmental crisis weighed heavily on me and I often questioned whether our efforts could genuinely bring about a significant impact. Amidst this emotional rollercoaster and evolving doubts, I consistently remained positive and focused on practical steps.

Evaluation:

As I looked back on the experience, I saw both positive and not-so-great parts. The good part was our group brainstorming helped generate new ideas and foster creativity. We talked about our suggested plans, research, and had interesting discussions that helped us see things differently. But there were also challenges where some of us did not understand our parts well, so we kept changing our ideas. As a result, this led to occasional frustrations.

Analysis:

Analysing the situation revealed patterns that made our team work better. Firstly, collaborating with individuals from different cultures and areas of expertise encourages us to embrace diversity and seek holistic solutions. Secondly, our exploration into plastic waste statistics and its repercussions, like plastic pollution, showed us why finding a solution was so necessary. The integration of the Litterati app, a powerful tool for documenting and addressing litter and plastic waste, also proved to be a pivotal addition to our strategies. This profound analysis highlighted the

importance of approaching the problem in many different ways, including consumer behaviour and industry practices.

Conclusion:

This experience shaped my views on environmental issues, teamwork, communication, planning, resilience, and adaptability. I have learned that solving global issues might feel overwhelming, but success can be achieved through empathy, effective communication, teamwork, careful planning, and resilience. Thinking forward, we could have managed our time better in discussions, teamwork, and pitching. Allocating specific time slots for ideas would have kept us focused. Also, seeking clarity from Madam Myfanwy before starting our task would provide a clearer direction and reduce excessive changes to our ideas.

Action Plan:

To make teamwork smoother, I will use better communication strategies. This means checking in with team members regularly to talk about progress, clear up questions, and make sure we all understand the project's goals. By dealing with challenges early on, we can create a more helpful and focused team atmosphere. Also, I will work on refining my persuasive communication skills to explain complex ideas clearly and strongly during pitches.

In addition, I want to learn more about waste management and sustainable practices. To achieve this, I plan to attend webinars hosted by renowned experts in the field, like the upcoming "Innovations in Recycling Techniques" webinar. I will also research organizations pioneering alternatives to reduce single-use plastics. This will give me a better idea of eco-friendly solutions like biodegradable materials, innovative packaging, and reusable options. Learning about these alternatives will help me contribute more effectively to similar projects in the future and make positive changes in my community.

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Appendix: Plan for the Presentation

This appendix offers a comprehensive breakdown of the responsibilities assigned to each team member for the presentation.

No	Task	Assigned to
1.	Wicked Problems: <i>The Challenge of Difficult or Impossible Problems where the Affecting Variables are not Known or Quantifiable</i>	Izzati Nadhrah binti Al Malek
2.	Design Thinking to Investigate, Define, Propose and Evaluate Problem Solutions	Izzati Nadhrah binti Al Malek
3.	Decision-Making Frameworks and Techniques	Shivarni Nair
4.	Recognising Individual Differences and the Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Management of Conflict	Maria Isabelle Rockerfeller
5.	The Role of Diplomacy, Persuasion and Negotiation in Effective Collaboration	Priyanka
6.	The Significance of Interdisciplinary Thinking in Finding Effective Solutions to Problems	Yumna Afzal Ahmad
7.	The Role of Ethics in Identifying Solutions	Nur Insyirah binti Johan Ariffi
8.	Collective Decision-making.	Nur Insyirah binti Johan Ariffin