

Sunday, February 13, 2022

Project #1 - Lab 3 Discussion Summary

Discussion over the Dimensions of Teamwork

First Topic: Describe a time when you were on a team (at school, work, sports, etc.) that functioned particularly well - give an example of how team members contributed in each of the 5 categories.

- All group members have experienced a team that worked together successfully before. Justin and Thresa's teams both operated in a school environment, Justin's being a professional experience class producing a film project in high school and Thresa's being this EECS 448 group. Alice and Maggie both experienced a team working well in a professional environment - Alice volunteered with a human rights group focusing on the 2022 Olympics in Beijing, and Maggie experienced successful teams while working as a hydraulic fracturing engineering in Colorado. Minwoo noted that the experience working on school team projects is beneficial to a professional career, when collaboration with colleagues occurs frequently.
- All successful teams described included members who regularly contributed to the team's work and completion of tasks. Additionally, all successful teams applied prior knowledge to current tasks. Maggie and Alice worked on teams with great diversity of skills and background, which led to successful outcomes for the project overall. Another aspect of all the successful teams described was consistent and clear communication, which improved interactions between team members. Successful teams were also found to set clear deadlines, allowing the participants to stay on track with tasks to be completed. Finally, all successful teams expected high quality work, for both themselves and their teammates. Justin, Thresa, and Minwoo noted that this mutual understanding made all aspects of teamwork easier, as it created common goals.

Second Topic: Which dimensions of teamwork come naturally to you? Which ones do you need to work at to contribute well?

- Minwoo and Alice both can put in a lot of work and contribute heavily to team deliverables. Additionally, Alice and Thresa both have a mind for details and ensuring completion of project requirements. Thresa and Justin both expect high quality work and put in the effort to contribute their absolute best. Maggie finds communication and task organization to be a natural skill.
- Minwoo struggles with communication and assigning and understanding team member roles. Alice, Maggie, and Thresa sometimes struggle to frame their tasks and contributions as group-oriented and what will best support the team. Justin can find keeping on task difficult, especially as changing circumstances require changes.

- Overall, this team experiences a healthy blend of strengths and weaknesses. If all team members can focus on their areas of strength, while also working to improve their weak areas, all projects should be very successful.

Discussion over Conflict

First Topic: What could be some potential sources of conflict within your team? What steps can you take to resolve it if it arises?

- Currently, our team is choosing to function under the democratic approach with no clear leadership role. Justin and Alice noted this may cause conflict with no real designated leader in particular areas of the project. Maggie noted that as the semester continues, and all members become busier, personal deadlines may interfere with group deadlines. Minwoo and Thresa focused on technical areas that may cause conflict. For example, Minwoo noted that group members may disagree on implementation of ideas, while Thresa focused specifically on the difficulty the team may experience in merging the C++ code with the Qt platform.
- Overall, the best strategies to resolve most areas of team conflict is communication. This communication should occur early and often. The exchange of different ideas should happen frequently and often, with feedback offered by team members. All team members understand that deadlines may need to change based on personal schedules, but all changes must be communicated. Additionally, the group may find that more defined team roles may suit our team better as the semester continues.

Second Topic: What additions to your team contract could you make regarding conflict?

- After discussing the previous topic, it is clear the communication is very important to a team's success. However, the area of the team contract discussing communication is rather vague. More details may be needed. Additionally, if the team moves away from the democratic approach, defined team roles could be added to the contract. Finally, the team contract detailed a collaborative conflict-solving strategy. However, as with communication, the contract could go into more detail about how this collaborative approach should occur.

Discussion over Peer Review

First Topic: Think about the difference between rating someone generically as a "good teammate" and rating someone according to the 5 dimensions of teamwork. How might this be more insightful? How might it be more difficult to perform the peer review according to the 5 dimensions?

- All team members agreed that evaluating according to the 5 dimensions is more difficult due to increased effort and time needed to use the metric. However, because the metric is more detailed, it provides opportunities for more tailored feedback, which can be used for better team member performance in the future. The metric also demonstrates the diversity team members may have, and how their strengths can be utilized more effectively for future projects. Additionally, using a metric removes some of the "personal element" of a peer review. It allows for greater constructive feedback without hurting group member's feelings.

Second Topic: Why is it important to conduct multiple peer reviews?

- All team members noted the benefit of continuing to work on EECS 448 projects with the same group as the semester continues. This allows for the peer reviews to show individual evolution, which can lead to lasting impacts on students' performance which they can carry into the start of their careers. Additionally, multiple peer reviews from different members allow individuals to see how different members view them. They can focus on areas of improvement common across the peer evaluations.