CPD Report

COMP330 CPD Report

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1 Career Goals

In this final semester I have encountered a lot of new challenges compared to previous years, especially emotional and mental problems due to the pressure of final year, and the effect this semesters grade has on my life. My career goals for after university are to start seeking employment within the games industry, whether that be indie or AAA. If that fails, I may start looking for an IT tech job just to get some work experience, as they seem to be more common.

2 Summary of Key Challenges

2.1 Not Feeling Intelligent Enough to Carry out Complex Programming Tasks

Throughout this semester I spent a lot of time working on tasks that I thought I was not intelligent enough to learn, just because there was a very steep learning curve associated to some of the projects I have been working on this semester. Learning how to approach new complex tasks is important because in this industry, new complex software is being

developed all the time, so being able to feel confident enough to start learning is an important skill.

This issue effected both my dissertation and group game project, for my dissertation, there are a lot of very complex terms and AI techniques that I felt overwhelmed by.

I know that this issue is less to do with my intelligence and more to do with my attitude to learning, as I know if I put the time into learning something, I can do it.

When I was researching how to overcome this issue, I found a reddit post that many people in the comments stated that the best way to grasp concepts is to be exposed to them multiple times with space between them [1].

So over this summer I will start researching more complex topics that I have felt to be too unintelligent for, such as design patterns, and complex C++ OOP designs, then sit down and read about these topics at least once a week so their concepts will eventually sink in, by the end of summer, I will reflect on my progress towards these topics by viewing my new coding styles for my game project that I am working on.

2.2 Engaging More in Group Discussions

At my time in college and university I have always been more of a listener than a talker, and I often find it hard to engage in group discussions. This effects my learning because being able to engage in group discussions can lead to new ideas and perspectives, as well as being able to solve more complex problems that I would not be able to sole on my own.

Discussing complex dissertation topics, such as statistical analysis and the use of R within my year group could have given me better insights and understanding towards these complex topics. I should have started doing this at the start of first year, but I just asumed that I would gradually get better, but this seems not to have happened.

When researching methods to overcome these issues, one source [2] suggests to use a methods of conversation that gathers viewpoints from everyone in the group by using

"Circle stories", which is done by asking everyone questions. I will try and apply this by the next time I am in an enviroment of co-workers, whenever that will next be.

2.3 Stopping a Task Because I Think I Have Done Enough for One Day

Throughout this year, when there are no looming deadlines, I tend to stop working on my uni work when I feel I have accomplished something, no matter how small.

This generally effects my work as when I get something done, it disrupts the flow of my work and takes a lot longer to finish a task. Moreover, it also means I tend to leave more work to do nearer the project deadline.

To overcome this it depends on what type of job I get after university, if I get a 9-5 job, then this will solve that problem, because I will not have the temptation to leave early. However if I get a freelance job etc, the motivation of getting paid should be enough to motivate me to spend more time working on the project.

2.4 Becoming Familiar With Other Game Engines

Since being at Falmouth, I have only learnt how to use the Unity game engine, I have not even tried the Unreal Engine or lumberyard etc. This will limit my employability after university, as many games companies will be using some of the other big game engines.

I have seen a lot of very good looking games that have been developed using the unreal engine, and I would like to gather some experience with these engines before applying for jobs, as it is one more thing that I can put on my CV.

There was talk amongst the other third year BSc students to work on a project together over the summer, as well as doing some game jams. This will be done using the Unreal Engine, as most of the year group is familiar with it, apart from me. So over the first few weeks after all the deadlines are handeded in, I will download and create a small game in the Unreal Engine, as well as participate in some game jams with the other 3rd

years.

2.5 Prioritising Tasks

In this semester I spent quite a lot of time working on things that never actually lead anywhere, for instance in the group game I worked on a few various features that never got implemented, and in the dissertation I was working on the visualization stuff, that had no relation to the final product.

This meant that I essentially wasted all that time, even though I thought I was being productive.

To avoid this in the future, over the summer when creating user stories, I will have a priority label on each user story, this will help make sure I spent time working on the items that need to be worked on, rather than items that I would prefer to work on, that may not actually end up being implemented.

3 Conclusion

These are my main weaknesses I faced this year, which I should address before getting an industry job, so I don't take them with me to my career in the software industry.

References

[1] 1loveee, "Reddit learn programming subreddit." [Online]. Available: `https://www.reddit.com/r/learnprogramming/comments/6o11lz/feeling_like_im_not_smart_enough/`. [Accessed: 09-May-2018].

[2] Vera Woodhead, "9 reasons to engage in group discussions and 10 ways to generate good ones." [Online]. Available: `https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/9-reasons-engage-group-discussions-10-ways-generate-good-woodhead`. [Accessed: 09-May-2018].