**Prompt 1**

Describe your team's dynamics as they relate to the effectiveness in designing, building, and delivering software to real users.

* What sorts of strengths do *you* bring to the team as a contributor in your role? List out anything that highlights how you've helped push this project along.
  + My strengths are in public speaking, project management, CSS, searches, and anything to do with back end.
  + Having owned and operated a transcription business for over a decade, every transcript order is a separate project, and there is a definite workflow you can build to maximize your time doing paid things and minimize unpaid time. I've done a ton of research in my life for my own business on project management and productivity. My favorite book in this genre is Getting Things Done by David Allen; I've read it probably eight times. I implemented its principles into my Access database via VB automation.
  + In my business, if I don't type, I don't get paid, so having a family to support, having no family myself to rely on, and my immigrant husband not being able to work for some of the time meant I needed to produce a certain amount of money in a certain amount of hours, and leave me enough time to give customers great service after they've been 'screened' by my receptionists (I outsourced that to a company in PEI, Canada).
  + So a high extremely correct and consistent output with minimal amount of time spent on unpaid tasks was my highest priority in building the software I built, so I did all sorts of research into project management and productivity, still do. I tried all kinds of project management software and ideas in my business to manage my transcription workflow. I would give it a shot and, if it didn't work, I simply just moved on to the next idea until I found what worked.
  + So all of these skills together with my ability to connect with people, I feel, make me a great project manager.
  + Although I used them to create a workflow for my court transcription service, you can very much apply all these productivity and management principles to software development, so I've taken right to it. I feel right at home. I've done a ton of the Trello board maintenance; I'm fairly thorough on card creation, in these journal entries, in any paperwork I've done, because this stuff all was SO applicable in my business and I've used here what I learned while running my business.
  + I'm so productive that many people in my industry don't believe me, which is fine. Being underestimated is a 'you' problem, not a 'me' problem.
  + I did go into Labs hoping to get some chances to speak publicly, and I did, everything I've learned in my life about public speaking came back to me, and right now I feel like I could walk out in front of 200 people or more and give speeches, no problem. I can't believe I'm saying that, but I would put it as a strength now, which I would have laughed at a few weeks ago. Everybody else in my group hates doing it, so I've leaned RIGHT IN on that and it has helped me overcome my fears about it. I listen to people in court all day, so I hear people's nervous ticks and stuff while they talk in court, I know what nervousness sounds like, and that helped me a lot in being a good public speaker. I simply just didn't do any of those things.
  + My contributions to this project haven't necessarily been reflected in the commits. One, I've tried to do my part to help manage the project or take as much of that from the team lead as he allows/suggests. Two, I've done a lot or most of the public speaking opportunities such as canvas approvals and product vision presentation. I prepared PowerPoint presentations and speeches beforehand for each one and plan to continue doing that through Labs and whenever I get the opportunity. So there'll likely be at least two more to give, one for the second release canvas and one for the final; I don't expect to do either but if I do get to it will be an honor.
  + The practice is invaluable for what's to come. I need to be unafraid to walk into a room full of people that all know way more than me about software development, be confident, work stuff out in front of them, and say "I don't know" when I don't know something.
* What are some of your weaknesses as a member of your team? How have you worked to overcome some of your individual weaknesses? Be specific.
  + This isn't what you asked exactly but my biggest weakness during Labs has been oversleeping. I've had a really hard time falling asleep at my appointed time and it causes me to oversleep through my extremely loud alarm. Working for myself and having nobody else at my company, this isn't a weakness and doesn't matter one bit as long as I get the work done, so this isn't something that just popped up at Lambda, okay, but here at Lambda, it's a weakness. Going to try to reset my sleeping pattern this weekend and then also try to start exercising, see if that helps.
  + I haven't been anxious about all the current covid circumstances in a while, but I am extremely nervous about whether or not I'll get everything studied that I want to study before I am done here at Lambda. I really want to get a job at Microsoft or work somewhere where I will make a certain amount of money for personal reasons, and I very much need to grease the wheels as much as possible. Exercising and resetting my sleep pattern might help me be less anxious.
  + A second weakness is, I don't like it when people get really sidetracked and especially in meetings. It's hard for me to empathize, so I don't always respond to it in the most constructive way possible. I'm pretty sure this happened this week. Now, the other person didn't say anything about it or I never heard about it; just that's my own opinion about it.
  + What happened was, we were talking about how to implement a feature and that person made a suggestion I thought was pretty absurd; would invite bad behavior from users; and I said as much, but I phrased it as a question, something like, what's to stop X from happening. The person didn't really answer me; they did say something, but it wasn't an answer to my question, so I asked the question again and I'm pretty sure my exasperation came out in the question the second time, which is what I am saying is a weakness. I felt like we were spinning our wheels having this conversation and didn't like it, but I should have been more patient. I might have come across as beligerent. I talk like this to my spouse all the time and he to me and neither of us consider it disrespectful, but of course we're familiar with each other and can dispense with the niceties; I need to remember where I'm at and be more patient.
* Describe a teamwork problem that you as a team have had to overcome. How did you contribute to the problem itself? How did you contribute to the solution to the problem? Be specific.
  + Our team has a great story for this question.
  + We had a HUGE conversation about what to do in regards to events in the Swaap app. That was a big one, and everybody disagreed with each other at some point during the process, hah. It was a constructive disagreement because as I said before, our teamwork's been excellent, so people have been extremely professional and all that, but it was definitely a very involved and lively process. Everyone on the team was involved.
  + Mr. Alex Jones, our stakeholder, got involved as well because this whole issue was extremely highly debated and we needed additional input as a way to swing the pendulum one way or the other. I mean, LOL, we probably spent a week debating that, agreeing on something, working it out in pseudocode or the general process to 'convert' it to Trello cards, and then would realize how much work it was, or someone would start on it and run into some issue which meant we had to go back and figure out a different route.
  + I don't remember exactly what we asked him, but Mr. Jones stepped in a couple times during this process because we had to make some hard decisions about the direction of the app.
  + The thing is, this app used to be called Conference Contacts, and it was geared towards people using this app instead of collecting business cards at an event or something like that. That's what was originally envisioned.
  + So the events portion of this app was not implemented in any previous Labs groups, and we discussed wanting to implement it. That was going to be its own release canvas, the second one, a new feature, after doing the bug-fix canvas.
  + So we had to figure out how to implement events into the app. This was a very long discussion, many hours, hah. Were we going to do it somewhat location based, tag based, Facebook events based, calendar based? Did we want location tracking on calendar-based contact management per event? We discussed event implementation into the ground.
  + Then the coronavirus stuff happened and suddenly we lost a week to possibly do some work on this canvas, so that more or less settled it. We went with the option we felt we could get done in the time left, and the app is no longer going to be as conference based.
  + We elected to just add and enhance current features which will make Swaaping much easier in general:
    - Search/filter function significantly beefed up, can filter/search by all profile fields AND contact fields.
    - Provide a way for non-swaap users to access a swaap user's information; this will also be an invitation to use the app
      * This in itself was a fairly lively discussion/debate which took us a full couple days to sort out how we were going to accomplish it.
    - Add user onboarding to show user how to do major tasks in Swaap
  + We all recognize this is not the events-related thing we wanted, but it does enhance use of it at conferences and more. And that is the part that changed about this app; it's no longer focused as narrowly on conferences as it used to be.
  + Another example would be a lot of duplication of work over this labs project because some of our teammates weren't communicating very much, weren't keeping the Trello board updated, frequently didn't even read it or pay attention to what was on it, and didn't listen when people told them they completed tasks.
  + I did a lot of work on the Trello board, told everyone what I did, and then after that I guess nobody listened because almost none of the work I did is still on the board; they deleted most of it because they didn't communicate about how they were doing things; so the team thought it was separated out in a certain way, and I did cards assuming it would be set up that way and so other people on the team could work on the stuff on the cards. But it wasn't separated out the way the team thought, and they didn't keep the board or the team updated on the tasks they were doing, so after not communicating, they then deleted other people's work and substituted their own.
  + I was really annoyed by that, having such little respect for other people's time. These two people on my team created a huge bottleneck, and then went and did a bunch of side stuff instead of solving the bottleneck, and didn't tell anybody what they were doing. It's hard to explain without a convoluted story because of how convoluted they made everything when it didn't need to be. So the rest of us ended up doing absolutely nothing for several days while they were doing w/e they were doing.
  + My contribution was to just keep doing the right thing and keep my cool. I'm not going to stop using the Trello board because some other person on my team can't manage their time or communicate.
* How is your team measuring the success of your product? How do you know you are solving user problems? How are you using these measurements to inform what to build next?
  + We are measuring it with key results in the release canvas. For example, for the second release canvas, our key results are as follows:
    - At least 30% of users interviewed have a clearer understanding of how to create and manage contacts
    - 60% of users interviewed use the link feature the first time using the app
  + We know we are solving user problems because we have drawn on previous Labs' groups research, input from the stakeholder, who actually worked on this project previously, and because we've run into these issues while searching for bugs on the app. I've been fairly non-tech savvy focused in my input for practically this whole project, this problem included, because our userbase is going to be older more affluent career-focused professionals who might not be all that great with tech.
  + Since my "day" job or business operation is working with attorneys and judges, I know ALL ABOUT working with people who are leery of learning new tech, okay? I work with people who are much older than the target audience for this app, have lots of money, go to lots of business-funded conferences, and hate tech every day all day, hah, so I'll admit I've felt like I know what I'm talking about when it comes to users who aren't tech savvy.
  + Frankly, the next group will probably have a great time, because we worked out a ton of UI and bug fixes, and it's a pretty clean app now. The next group will probably be able to implement TWO new features if they want to; they won't need to do many bug/UI fixes. We will not be building anything else because we are on our second canvas and that is all we are going to be able to accomplish with the time left. We have written more than two release canvases, but there is pretty much no chance we will get to those.