

# ICT10001 Problem Solving with ICT

## Assignment 4: Reflective journal template

### Introduction

There is a great need for analytical thinking, creativity, and team working, especially in the field of information technology. Programmers and entrepreneurs alike are required to solve difficult problems with the available resource; therefore, ICT10001 is the perfect course for freshmen to help them to develop a problem-solving framework that can be applied in their future careers. My name is Dang Vi Luan from Group 4, let's discuss the achievements and challenges that I and my team have had throughout this course.

## Project management concepts and team dynamics (1250 words)

Reflect on and discuss:

- How the project management concepts covered in Week 3 were used by your team.
- What worked and what did not work?

*You might like to reflect on specific processes, e.g. the problem identification process.*

Project management is defined as the management of a specific set of operations by a group of people working constructively to achieve a common goal within a limit of resources and times (Project Management Institute 2020). We believed that any successful project starts with the process of identifying the problems that need to be fixed, or the requirements that need to be done for that project. As Albert Einstein has stated, "If I had only one hour to save the world, I would spend fifty-five minutes defining the problem, and only five minutes finding the solution" (ASME 2016). Before getting down to fixing the problems for Baby Hut, I and my team had a meeting to identify the problem, assign roles, getting contact details to establish a solid connection among team members.

It was agreed among the team members that we will employ the waterfall methodology for this project. This methodology will map out a project into distinct, sequential phases, and an objective must be done before doing others.

After reaching an agreement on how to operate this project, our team then moved on to assign objectives to the specific role, this had worked more than perfect when each of my teammates had had a chance to focus on a specific task and enhance their skills in the process.

There were also challenges when I, as a team leader, was particularly new to the concept of team management and there had been delays in the process of finishing the project.

Reflect on and discuss:

- What worked and what did not work?
  - 'What tasks you completed during the semester. What technical issues did you face and what did you learn from the experience? Remember to reflect on how you resolved the issues
- What collaborative approaches did you use to communicate with your team? Were there any resources that you found useful from the Teamwork module?

Although we have completed creating a website that suits the need of Baby Hut, the process of doing that was not so easy, and we encountered many difficulties. After a discussion among the team members, we have decided to host our website on a free hosting server to save money, this is, however, a fatal mistake of our team. The website worked perfectly fine throughout the initial stage of the project. However, when we tried to integrate WooCommerce, which is a popular e-commerce plugin for WordPress with more than 3 million users (Keith 2021), the website was suspended due to an excess the limited bandwidth and storage. The server sent an email to me informing me that our website had been suspended; however, it would be reopened after 24 hours meaning that we can only work for 2 – 3 hours a day before the server suspends us again. At the time of these problems, it had been too late to change to another web server. This is a major if not painful experience for me as a team leader, I did not conduct careful research on the scalability of the webserver and got our time into hardships. After that, we had to arrange the time and resources for each member and make the best use of the limited storage.

The contact method of our team was mostly on Messenger, we also have a shared Google Drive to exchange files. We also agreed on having an update meeting every weekend. As a team leader, I am particularly impressed with the module about team dynamics, whereas a leader must recognize the strengths and weaknesses to influence team behaviors (Scottish Qualification Authority 2007)

Reflect on and discuss:

- What strengths and skills have each of your team members brought?
- What issues did you face both individually and as a team? How did you resolve any issues that you faced?
- How could you leverage each others' strengths moving forward?
- What benefits (regarding team interaction and project management) do you think came from completing a prototype before completing the final version.
- What collaborative approaches did you use to communicate with your team? Were there any resources that you found useful from the Teamwork module?

It was suggested by my team members that we should assign a specific role for each of the members and that role will be permanent throughout this course. As a result, we have assigned our team members to the role in accordance with their strengths. I was entrusted by my team to become the project. Minh Nhat is the designer of our project because his art design is superb, and he is willing to listen to others' opinions. Nhat Huy and Bao Huy worked together as the developer of our project, their synergy was the reason why we were able to finish this project despite the initial hardships. Bao Huy also took care of the video editing for our team.

As mentioned before in the second discussion, our website will be suspended for 24 hours after using 2-3 hours, so time was the biggest issue for our team. We managed to overcome this issue by arranging resources for the most important functions of our website, and each of us only has 30 minutes to an hour to complete most of our tasks a day to prevent the website from being suspended.

My team members are extremely responsible for each of the tasks that they have been assigned, as mentioned above we assign a permanent role for each of the members. Throughout the project their skills in that role have been enhanced and so does their teamwork.

Finishing the prototype before the final version can bring various benefits, by doing this the team can test how the website is functioning and spot any weaknesses that must be fixed (Babich 2017) . In the case of our team, we did not upload all the images to our website in the prototype, and this had become a hindrance in the final version.

- Consider and discuss one key learning that you have had during your journey in this unit. Describe in detail an event/situation/issue during this semester to illustrate this.
- Relate this to theory on teamwork and project management concepts you have learnt from the unit. Explain why you chose this theory.
- Explain how key learning from this analysis will influence your future and why.

The main objective of this course is to introduce to students the importance and the process of problem-solving, this is also the key learning point that I have had during the journey of this unit. The very first problem that needed to be solved is our ability to use WordPress, I and my team member have little to no experience with WordPress and this had hindered us from implementing our solution for Baby Hut. That is, however, the problem that we were able to fix easily. The most problematic issue of this project was the lack of vision and preparation from the team leader which is me.

During the first stage of our project, everything was working perfectly, we managed to finish the project proposal before the deadline, our prototype was completed, and we were all confident of finishing this course with ease. Nonetheless, our decision of choosing a free hosting service was a grave mistake. Because of the suspension, the designer and developer of our team were not allowed to fully demonstrate their skills and ideas. As a team leader, I have failed to ensure the continuity of the process and neither have I been able to ensure the availability of resources and workspace for my team members. However, it was the commitment and dedication of all the team members that helped us to overcome this problem. They have contributed to the solutions of solving the suspension problem. We decided to arrange the time and resources appropriate for each member, this would not have worked if we had not entrusted, respected, and believed in the capability of others. Although I had failed as an individual, we have accomplished the overall criteria and requirements of Baby Hut as a team.

I have learned a lot about team management and problem-solving during the journey of this course. Especially the seven-step guide on how to develop an effective team (Cardus 2020). In my opinion, when a problem occurs in a project, we cannot fix the problem alone, it would be more suitable to discuss this problem with our team. Therefore, developing a collaborative, efficient team will increase the chance of solving any problems.

Throughout this course, I have gained an understanding of the importance of problem-solving and team management. Although these understanding were learned the hard way, it will be an immensely valuable experience for my future, and never again will I hinder my team performance because of my lack of vision and preparation.

## Conclusion

For a freshman like me, ICT10001 has brought various beneficial lessons. Problem-solving, team management, and project management, this knowledge and skills will be extremely important for my studying career as well as my future occupation. It has also given me the chance to meet many collaboratives and intelligent yet humorous team members. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my team members and the lecturer who has provided us with dedicated lectures and useful advice.

## References

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