CPD

COMP 240

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Introduction

In this paper I will discuss five key skills, taken from my continuing professional development weekly report that I need to improve on to succeed on my course. Also by using SMART targets as a guide, I will first state the skill, and why it is important to increase my ability, not just for my course, but in terms of my future career as well. Secondly how I plan to improve that skill and how long I expect it to take me to reach my goals.

Learn C++ Game Programming Basics

As I get closer to the end of the course I become ever more aware and panicked that I still don't know the basics of game programming in C++. This becomes even more worrying when I look at jobs and realise they all want applicants to be an expert in C++. Over the summer I will be building prototypes for my 3rd year game and as I have no other tasks or assignments during that time it would be perfect to try and make them in Unreal Engine using C++. Watching YouTube tutorials and utilising any other online sources I can to help me. I can then hopefully during the new semester in September I can even make some C++ scripts and not rely on blueprints too much. I will start to prototype in C++ after my last assignment is due in and continue to do so until a prototype has been decided to take forward. After summer depending on how much I have learnt I hope to continue C++ programming the project even if its just minor things. I think this will raise my chances of getting a job in game development after the course ends and I think it will also raise my confidence in my ability to programme.

Assignment Prioritisation

This semester I have prioritised the group game above all other assignments. I think the reasons for this is that I don't want to let my group down, I want the game to be perfect if I see something wrong with the game I feel the need to fix it. I enjoy working on the game most of all so assignments that I find hard or not very interesting to me get put

off until the last moment. As most of the other assignments are worth more percent of a module this means that I am missing out on marks. My plan is to set aside one day a week to concentrate on assignments other that the group game. I will start setting aside one day a week as soon as I know what my assignments are for the next semester. If I can I will also start my research projects during the summer when I have a lot of spare time. This will help raise my marks during third year and hopefully the grade I achieve at the end of the course.

Increased Playtesting of Game Builds

I found that during the semester before Christmas the group game was play tested every week if not more but after Christmas there was little to know play testing at all. When play tests were organised we found a huge amount of bugs and for more than just 1 player the game was unplayable, most of the time the play tests had to be cancelled. In the last month of development a build was made at least once a day which the group would play numerous times, find bugs which were fixed that day and then a new build of the game was made. This process was repeated everyday until the game was ready to be handed in. I will start this task when the new academic year starts in September. As soon as there is a playable build of the game I plan to make at least one new build everyday let the designers play test and any bugs will be quickly resolved. This will improve the game development process not just with debugging but also balancing and keeping the whole team up to date with the projects current state. Also with a working build we can then ask non members of the team to play test and get important feedback that we can work on.

Down Time From Game Development

My usual work hours on week days during the last term were from 10 am until 8 pm, which became quite taxing on my health, the way I interacted with my peers became at times very negative. At the beginning of the last academic year up until Christmas I made sure to stop at 1 pm on Fridays but after Christmas I found myself staying later. This is excluding the last month of game development in which later working hours are to be expected. As I have more knowledge of the engine more important jobs and organising the programming jobs between the other programmers falls on my shoulders so if there are any problems I feel very responsible for them. I will begin the take Friday afternoons off again or just set them as play testing hours and try to resist the urge to develop at that time. I will begin stopping development on Friday afternoons at the beginning of term time. This will relieve some stress at the end of the week and raise my mood in and out of development hours and I think improve my work as well. This might also raise the scores in my other assignments.

Commenting Code/ Blueprints

Conclusion