Major Reflection: Part 2

PLEASE READ THROUGH THIS INFORMATION CAREFULLY BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH YOUR REFLECTION.

For each of the questions below, take some time to reflect on the key concepts from this course that have been particularly helpful and meaningful. You may find it helpful to review the course modules and previous assignments as each question asks you to include references to specific content addressed in this course. If you were not employed this term, consider experiences you may have had in other work or academic terms, or via extracurricular activities (i.e., Working in a group, presentations, volunteering positions, personal experience, etc.).

Question 1

Select one of the prompts below and address it in detail, drawing from your learning and experiences this term.

Use the DEAL Model of Reflection to respond to your chosen prompt. Information on how to use the DEAL model to reflect can be found on the "How to Write a D.E.A.L. Reflection" page located in the Assignment section of Learn and linked to from the Major Reflective Report assignment page.

Prompt A

A: Describe how some aspect of your work experience this term helped you understand a PD5 concept, skill/technique, or tool better.

Sometimes we learn things in a course but do not fully understand them until we have an unplanned but related real-life experience. For example, maybe you worked with someone who was a really good (or really poor) project manager, or you found yourself juggling various people's expectations about a task you were assigned (stakeholder management), or you were part of a project that went over time or over budget. Perhaps your supervisor (or a professor, friend, or family member) shared stories about their own project experiences.

1. **Describe:** Describe the concept, skill/technique, or tool, and describe the experience in detail (who, what, where, when).

2. **Examine:** Explain how your experience helped you better understand the concept, skill/technique, or tool – reference specific course material where applicable.
3. **Articulate Learning:** How will this experience (what you've learned) impact how you act or approach project management situations in the future? How might this learning transfer to different contexts (e.g. online vs. in person) or workplaces?

Prompt B

B: Describe how you deliberately sought to practice (or observe) what you learned in this course in your workplace this term (If you were not employed this term, perhaps you tried practicing in a different context). What did you (or someone else) intend to achieve? What actually happened? For example, maybe you tried (or observed) techniques for managing stakeholders, scheduling, communicating amongst project team members, or managing scope.

Prompt C

WORD *COUNT: Your answer should be between 300 and 500 words.*

WHICH PROMPT ARE YOU ANSWERING (A, B, or C): A

INCLUDE YOUR ANSWER TO Q1 HERE:

Describe

The skill/concept that I wanted to describe is budgeting/planning/ticket scope (time/money costs). During this co-op term, I had a ticket that had to deal with login issues for some certain user types. We have different types of users which have access to different permissions within the web application. I remember this being an issue and had previously taken a *quick* look at some of the implementation for it. I went to do this ticket and got to the last part of the ticket and thought to myself that it should take about half a day. I had not planned or costed this ticket out before starting this ticket. I just recognized that it was something I had worked on previously and I didn't do any deep dives or proper analysis on the ticket. Due to this, I thought that it should be an easy fix. However, this whole implementation that I was talking about was made for a different user type. The routing, view pages, controllers, functions,

styling, testing etc was not even made. A fix that would take less than half the day almost took four days. This was 8x the initial cost/time predicted.

Examine

This experience helped me better understand the concept as it showed me first hand the implication it has and how drastic they could be if I was to not plan and budget beforehand. This was thankfully not an issue that would affect normal users and was for the admin side, but having something take 8x your initial estimate (and ONLY estimate, which is something that shouldn't happen as you should re-evaluate a few times) can inflict substantial losses to the company and their stakeholders. An example would be Facebook (Meta) in 2021 where their systems were shut down for 5.5 hours and the firm lost over $50 million and -5% on their stock price. -5% is billions of dollars of market cap value. We can also look at the game company Rockstar Gaming and the release of GTA6. Many, many people were hyped for GTA6 to release to the public. However, it has taken a tremendous amount of time (it still isn't out yet) and the hype and appeal has gone down over the years. When you delay your implementations/deliverables, the public eye and perception of the company also gets affected. I never was in the point of view of the person developing something that is getting delivered late until now and helped me better understand how planning and budgeting would have saved me the headache.

Articulate Learning

This experience will impact my approach to project management situations as I am going to now have a rule that I cannot come to my conclusion on how long something is going to take on my first prediction. There must be reasoning as to why it will take the length of time it will take. This will require me to properly have a deep dive and come to a conclusion which would more accurately reflect the time it should/is going to take. This learning will transfer onto the workplace as I will be using these skills to cost/plan tickets and form a plan of action. Without the planning, you are running into a dark tunnel and finding the exit is going to take you some extra time.

We are typically most satisfied when we are doing work that we enjoy and/or feel is important or fulfilling in some way. Consider what you enjoy about your work (type of work, work environment, etc.). Describe how concepts you learned about in PD5 helped you better understand what you enjoy or find fulfilling in your work.

When answering, incorporate **at least three** of the prompts into your answer. Please separate each prompt into its own paragraph. **Highlight** the prompts you reference.

Note: You are **not** expected to use the DEAL format for this question. To clarify, this question is about what you enjoy in your work regardless of your skill, knowledge, or confidence while Q3 is about your knowledge and confidence regardless of your enjoyment.

- Unit 2 explored the qualities related to leadership and being an effective project manager. How may the presence or absence of these qualities (in supervisors, teammates, or others) be connected to what you enjoy or find fulfilling in your work or work environment?

- Do you prefer to work in organizations with a particular organizational structure or approach to project management? Why do you prefer that approach?

- In PD5 you learned that stakeholder management is critical for project success. How do the elements of stakeholder management (e.g., communication, stakeholder analysis, expectations, responsibilities) relate to what you enjoy (or don't enjoy) in work and work environments?

- Consider a work experience you did or did not find fulfilling. How do concepts covered in PD5 (such as project leadership, managing project scope, decomposition, team dynamics, etc.) help you better understand why you did or did not find that work experience fulfilling?

- How does what you enjoy or find fulfilling influence the types of projects you are most interested in and motivated to contribute to?

- Unit 10's Think Bigger section discusses the UN's has a list of 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) that all member states agree are key to ensuring a sustainable, peaceful, and prosperous future for the world. How might these be connected to connected to the type of work you find fulfilling, and how could you use project management skills to support these goals?

WORD COUNT: Your answer should be between 300 and 500 words.

INCLUDE YOUR ANSWER TO Q2 HERE:

Having the presence of an effective project manager helps me be connected to what I enjoy. For my co-op, my boss is our project manager and knows which types of tasks each person enjoys doing. There are tickets in which no one wants to do, but knowing our preferences on types of tasks really excels everyone's efficiency. This is due to everyone being on task as they are working on something they are enjoying. If there was an absence in these qualities, and communication was low, employees would be getting task they don't want to work on which is going to decrease the productivity as people tend to work better on tasks they actually enjoy working on. I enjoy the type of tickets I'm assigned and I

know that if I was to get other tickets, I would do them (as I am employed) but, I know that the level of work put into it is going to be lower as I wouldn't be enjoying it. It is human nature and we tend to put more effort and care into something we enjoy.

I prefer to work in organizations that are in a semi agile or agile. I prefer this approach because you are constantly collaborating with other people/teams, have transparency and have everyone accountable. This makes work a lot more enjoyable because you know the responsibility of your self and your deliverables and know the timeline its set it. Also, in these work structures, everyone is given a chance to voice their opinions and this is very important as everyone on the team should be given the same type of treatment. I would not want to work at a company where I have to sit and listen to orders all day and fulfill them without at least having a chance to voice out my opinions. Being in a company that values communication (like this term) is something that makes me enjoy working.

I think that all the elements of stakeholder management relate to what I enjoy at work. The communication between teams/project managers is high which lets you feel like you have a voice and aren't a nobody on the team/company. Also, having expectations and responsibilities are actually a good thing for me and help me enjoy work. Having expectations sets the bar for what you should be achieving and responsibilities make you feel accountable. This for some may be a negative, but I would rather feel accountable and have something I'm responsible for than be a nobody with some menial tasks.

Lastly, project leadership is something that helped me understand why I hated my first co-op. The job wasn't the worst as it was a machine learning job. However, the tasks that were assigned were sporadic and random. One repository one day, a different the next. This was due to the whole story/epic (Jira management tool labels) tasks were not even created. The whole project was getting added to on the fly and nothing was planned properly beforehand. This made the job extremely un-enjoyable as I would some days get almost nothing but other days I would get piled with tickets and have to work under stress. Having a good project leader who plans ahead is something that is mandatory for the ultimate success of a project as it will help plan the future while keeping employees happy and looking forward to the future.

Question 3

We also tend to feel more satisfied when we are doing work we are good at. Your future work will definitely require project management skills – perhaps a little, perhaps a lot. Describe how competent and confident you currently feel about your project management skills and how you can build on what you have learned in this course.

When answering, integrate **all** of the following prompts into your answer. Each prompt should be addressed in its own paragraph.

It may be helpful to review the "Future-Proofing Your Skills" content from Unit 10 to see examples of how project management skills covered in PD5 are related to career competencies.

WORD COUNT: Your answer should be between 300 and 500 words.

INCLUDE YOUR ANSWER TO Q3 HERE:

Before taking PD5, I was not knowledgeable or confident about my project management skills. However, by taking this course, it has highlighted sections of the workplace that are so important. This course impacted my feeling of confidence by talking about the key factors of project management. This paired with being on a co-op term really helps as it gives a first-person point of view and I can make connections. Also, this course helped my sense of competence as it gave me the steps needed to facilitate a project and manage it. Having communication, expectations, mitigating scoop creep etc are all steps that one should be taking, whether it's a big project or a smaller task. I do now feel that I would have the basis down for being a project manager and would have the competencies to steer a project toward the goal (on time).

One experience that highlighted gaps was communication. I had a problem that I was working on for two days. I thought that the problem was actually bigger than it was. I went into deep dive of doing extra work that was not even needed and was actually going to be useless as the fix for the problem didn't need any of the extra components. If I was to just ask one of my co-workers earlier about the issue, they would have told me that they actually faced the exact same problem and could solve it for me in about thirty minutes. Had I just asked after being stuck on it for a bit, a lot of lost time could have been recovered. A thirty-minute fix plugged up my task log by two days.

One way that I think that I can improve my project management skills is by using an online project manager for my daily tasks and to-dos. I could use something like Notion or Jira. This would help improve my planning and scoping skills. This would leave me with more free time as I would be able to efficiently plan out the tasks that are needed to be finished. I've also done a few projects with some friends, incorporating this planning (Jira/Notion) would help with making everyone have responsibilities and be accountable. This would create smaller real-life scenarios and examples of project managing, and with more practice, the better you become. This would pair with collaboration and would be the ultimate scenario to improve my project management skills.