

Develop activities with the elderly who are being supported by institutions

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Learning Report

Abstract—This report describes the skills I gained and the challenges I overcome while volunteering for the Centro Paroquial do Campo Grande, which consisted on helping prepare kits that contained among other things, water and food for the elderly to go on a trip in the following week. I was also asked to teach some members of the organization how to use Excel. During this activity I learned how to adapt to a new environment, by working in an area which I knew very little about, learned to strive and not give up even when the work is tiresome and long and to organize and conduct a teaching exercise. This ultimately led to the development of soft skills like perseverance, adaptability, organization, communication, proactivity and of course, time management skills since I had to manage my study schedule and personal life with the activity.

Index Terms—Motivation, Management, Organization, Adaptability, Perseverance, Effective Communication, Time Management, Pro-Activity.

1 INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this semester I wanted to apply myself to some kind of volunteering. I applied to three activities this semester, each one with its own kind of volunteering, so that I could gain some insight of what it was like to be around people who were in need, and helping them brought me personal fulfillment and joy.

At the same time it taught me some very important soft skills, by putting me out of my comfort zone, that will surely come in handy in my professional future.

By going against obstacles that are not aligned with my technical skills I had to adapt and find the resources necessary to complete the challenges that appeared in front of me.

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Manuscript received June 4, 2015.

2 MOTIVATIONS

Studying for three years to complete my Bachelor, like all my colleagues, took away most of my time, so it was with great joy that I found out that the subject Portfolio IV (PPIV) would allow me to explore different perspectives, be around different people, hear new conversations about topics I know nothing about.

At the same time, helping others is self rewarding of course, so the work itself would not be so hard as I knew it was for a good reason.

Being in a kind of environment where people need help is always hard because we are faced with some cruel realities of life.

I knew this going in to the activity, but it was also because of that I chose it.

Me being there, facing those situations, supporting those people in difficult times, helped me grow. I strongly believe that when faced with a difficult environment, people can

LEARNINGS						DOCUMENT							
(1.0) Excellent	Context × 2	Skills × 1	Reflect × 4	Summ × .5	Concl × .5	SCORE	Struct × .25	Ortog × .25	Exec × 4	Form × .25	Titles × .5	File × .5	SCORE
(0.8) Very Good													
(0.6) Good													
(0.4) Fair													
(0.2) Weak													
	1.0	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.5		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.0	

overcome them and grow.

Other motivation was that while studying, we only focus on accomplishing a certain task, therefore, we make schedules only thinking of "When am I going to study for this ?" or "When am I going to do this project ?".

So having another task to conciliate was a challenge and took me organization and time management skills.

Finally, teaching other people is a very demanding activity as it requires calm and the ability to communicate your ideas in a clear and precise manner.

I wanted to test myself, see if I had what it took to overcome this challenge and ultimately those were the reasons why I chose this activity.

3 CHALLENGES

One big challenge that I had to overcome was the management of the time dedicated to the activity.

One of the most important parts of this activity was the creation of a guide for the members of the organization Centro Paroquial do Campo Grande could further improve their technical skills in regard to Excel.

This part of the activity, that was entirely done at home, required conciliation with the remaining activities of my daily life, from academic to social.

In both activities I had very little previous experience, meaning that I had to adapt and learn new skills and techniques in order to complete the tasks at hand.

4 SKILLS ACQUIRED

4.1 Adaptability

One of the most important skills that this experience has brought to me was adaptability,

the ability to work on a different environment than the one I am with every day and adapt myself efficiently and fast to changed circumstances.

The kind of work I had to do made me gain the skills to adapt to any further work I might have that requires me to perform outside of the spectrum of what was taught during the course.

4.2 Time Management

Having to schedule the days on which I would be doing the activity required me to organize my calendar, analyze, plan and exercise conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency and productivity.

I also distributed the work between me and my colleague Carlos Ribeiro, so that none of us would get overworked and the work would get done twice as fast.

I had to prioritize projects and make to-do lists to keep myself on track, which will prove to be a great asset in the future since now, more than ever, time is money.

4.3 Communication

Another skill I gained was to properly convey information to another effectively and efficiently. This became extremely important during the teaching of Excel to members of Centro Paroquial do Campo Grande.

The simple act of communicating with other people is a skill that needs refinement and through this activity I learned to properly communicate directly, or by mail, with other people while using the proper language and formalities.

I also learned to properly convey my thoughts through words and transmit my ideas in a calm and understandable way.

4.4 Organization

A very important skill that I obtained over the course of this activity was the ability to organize not just myself but the people around me.

In the first part of the activity, were I had to prepare kits for a trip, it was a very important skill for me and the people that were doing the activity with me.

We created an assembly line for the preparation of the kits, by assigning each person to a different station. This is a clear example of organization.

For the last part of the activity, in which we had to teach some members of Centro Paroquial do Campo Grande Excel skills, me and my colleague Carlos Ribeiro had to organize and prepare a guide and a set of concepts that we felt were vital for them to learn.

4.5 Proactivity

I was not given any deadlines, or any goals to achieve besides completing the activity.

Furthermore after the initial contact made by my coach team with the entity, all the rest of the interactions were made through me.

This circumstances required me to develop a vital skill that is one of the most important in the professional world, the ability to be proactive.

I had to make my own mails and make sure that the activity was set in motion. I also had to take charge of making my own decisions regarding the Excel guide and had to develop it with confidence in my ideas and opinions.

5 CONCLUSION

After we completed the activity me and Carlos Ribeiro reported back to Helena Presas stating

that the class had finished but unfortunately she was not available, so we left a note in reception with the results of the activity and a thank you to her for the opportunity.

This subject allowed me to gain a very helpful set of new skills which will surely contributed to my personal and professional growth.

I tried to take as much from this experience as I could, because I know that every day is a new opportunity to learn and prepare myself for the future.

It was surely another very important step that allowed me to gain more soft skills that will make me a better person to be around and work with.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the organization of Centro Paroquial do Campo Grande for welcoming me with opened arms, and for allowing me to work beside people who spend their days trying help others, from the little to the old, by any means they can.

This was truly a very enriching experience.

I would also like to thank Carlos Ribeiro for being a great partner doing the course of this activity and Professor Rui Cruz for giving me the opportunity to conduct this activity and introducing me to this great tool [1] that will surely be helpf when I write my thesis.

REFERENCES

- [1] L. Lamport, *L^TE_X: A Document Preparation System*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1986.



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