

Give to Those Who Need

Alexey Mazalov

Learnings Report

Abstract—The report describes my personal experience obtained as a result of realizing the "Give to Those Who Need" activity involving volunteers from Tecnico in preparing gift baskets for their further distribution among the needy. As a result I gained an insight into how several store operations, mainly stocktaking and breaking of bulk are carried out. It also gave me valuable experience of being engaged in a charity activity and developed my communication skills (getting along with working people).

Index Terms—Charity, "ENTRAJUDA", BBD, store, operation, stocks, experience.

1 INTRODUCTION

THIS report describes my personal experience obtained as a result of being engaged in one of the activities proposed within the Independent Studies IV course. Being a student of the Informatics Systems and Computing Engineering master program and devoting a lot of time to particular studies, I wanted to choose an activity which would give me a chance to develop my soft skills. From my point of view, such an activity might include participation in doing social work, mastering my Portuguese and fostering my communication skills in general, getting to know better the Portuguese customs and society as well as enriching my knowledge in the domains I was previously ignorant about. Having chosen the activity "Give to Those Who Need" promoted by the "ENTRAJUDA" foundation I think I managed to tackle all the mentioned issues. The main reasons for choosing the particular activity, the challenges confronted during its fulfillment as well as the results obtained in the context of my personal growth are discussed below in detail.

Document structure

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2 PERSONAL BACKGROUND AND THE GOALS PURSUED

Human personality is complex and multifaceted. *despite?* In spite of the years spent on studying computing I have always longed for enriching my personality and getting to know the subjects that are not related directly to my specialty. What is more, I consider social work very noble and important. Thus, I got interested in participating in one of the activities proposed by the "ENTRAJUDA" charity foundation. One more reason for my opting for the activities proposed by the mentioned foundation was that I had already had some experience of doing social work curated by "ENTRAJUDA" in the previous term and thus wanted to keep on doing it. That activity consisted in helping children from unhappy families in their school studies. However, due to reasons beyond my control I did not get confirmation of that I could continue doing that volunteer teaching activity. Hence I had to run the candidacy process from the start. In spite of being upset, I realized that the "Give to Those Who Need" activity proposed by the same institution was also a good way of developing my soft skills. It could help me meet the aspirations of improving my Portuguese thanks to the possibility of communicating with working people who might not be likely to master foreign languages. What is more, their way of expressing themselves is usually quite idiomatic and provides for

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

learning phrases that constitute an essential component of the language but might not be used within academic surroundings. Getting along with the store staff might also help me in broadening my horizons and developing an ability of communicating with different people.

I also expected that the activity would help me get acquainted with the way main stock operations are performed and optimized. This experience might be of practical importance to me in case I decide to take a course from the field of industrial management or other related matters.

3 BEFORE STARTING THE ACTIVITY

Before all the matters concerning the attendance schedule and the exact location where the activity would take place were settled I had to be in correspondence with the members of Coaching Team VI. This period gave me some personal experience. It was my initiative to use solely Portuguese while corresponding with my colleagues from the Coaching Team. Doing so, I wanted to improve my written Portuguese which still was not perfect. The letters of my colleagues to me represented a valuable example of a formal-style written language produced by its native speakers.

4 IN THE COURSE OF THE ACTIVITY

4.1 Communicating with the "ENTRAJUDA" Representatives

From my point of view, communicating with Patricia, the "ENTRAJUDA" Representative, was a valuable source of knowledge concerning the organization of social service in Portugal. I was also impressed by how wide the range of the activities curated by "ENTRAJUDA" is. She also told me about the mission of BBD as well as a lot of new things about the way donated goods are accumulated at BBD, who the benefactors mainly are and whom the goods are dispatched to. Patricia also gave me an overview of the main stock operations and their main phases.

4.2 Working at BBD

While working at BBD I could see how stock operations are implemented in practice. I also enriched my insight into how the personnel works in team to achieve efficiency. The work gave me a chance to get involved in the processes of breaking of bulk and stocktaking.

Speaking more precisely, I was engaged in separating and counting units of different articles of clothing and domestic electric appliances, took part in loading those items to the vehicle that would take them to the corresponding consignee. I also ~~learnt to operate~~ a container loader which was unforgettable experience for me.

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While working at BBD, I took an effort to make my activity as diverse as possible asking my tutor not to entrust me with executing only one particular operation. However, I realized that the store workers could not charge me with the execution of a number of operations due to my lack of experience, special training and, as a result, the risk of operational injuries.

I would also like to note that practicing physical labour at the BBD store was a good way to introduce change into the mostly sedentary lifestyle Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) have to dwell due to the academic workload. There was one more matter I realized thanks to doing social work at BBD. Having got acquainted with distributing second-hand clothes and other goods we, people coming mostly from middle class families, learn to value what we have and what we sometimes tend to take for granted.

Subject?

4.3 Communicating with the stock workers

As I had expected, dealing with the stock workers enriched my Portuguese as well as fostered my communication skills. My stock tutor, besides introducing me into the good practices of how to perform stock operation and being very helpful in clarifying all my doubts, proved to be a very good man who also possessed a keen sense of humour.

5 WRITING THE REPORT

To my mind, writing the Independent Studies report is useful in terms of developing the

ability of expressing ourselves in writing. What is more, for me it was a good chance to practice my written English, describing the matters I neither speak nor write about in everyday life.

Using LaTeX [1] was one more positive experience for me. This tool is widely used by engineers for designing documents rigorously following the provided formatting pattern. It is worth mentioning, that LaTeX enables creating both documents having simple and complex formatting requiring practically the same amount of effort. It becomes really easy to use this tool once a person is accustomed to it. Although the Independent Studies report could be easily written using any other popular text editor/processor, it is very important to introduce ourselves to LaTeX taking a document of a relatively simple layout structure to be able to proceed to more complex ones in the future.

6 CONCLUSION

In the context of the Independent Studies IV course the “Give to Those Who Need” activity was fulfilled. The main reasons for my applying for the activity included my interest towards charity work, organisation of social services in Portugal, the Portuguese language, the desire to foster my communication skills and to broaden my horizons (to know more about how stock operations are carried out).

To my mind, all the stated goals were achieved as a result of the work performed. I also think that writing the reports is a good opportunity for a student to practice his/her written language skills. Finally, using the the LaTeX tool is also a good idea as these skills will for sure come in handy during preparing the master thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to address a word of thanks to the members of Coaching Team VI who devoted their time to help me get in contact with the “ENTRAJUDA” institution’s representatives and always showed their disposition to clear up the doubts I had.

I would also like to thank the staff members of “ENTRAJUDA” for making the realization

of my activity and thus helping me broaden my horizon. Special gratitude to Patricia, the “ENTRAJUDA” foundation’s representative who approved of my having a flexible attendance timetable and was always ready to answer all the questions.

Many thanks to my mentor João for his guidance and getting me introduced in the field of stores marshalling.

Finally, I express my gratitude to the Professor responsible for the Independent Studies IV course for his wise tuition, valuable advice, never-ending patience and understanding.

REFERENCES

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

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