

# Give to Those Who Need

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## Activities Report

**Abstract**—The report describes the "Give to Those Who Need" activity involving volunteers from Tecnico in preparing gift baskets for their further distribution among the needy.

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

## 1 INTRODUCTION

THIS report describes the institutional activity I was engaged in within the Independent Studies IV course. This course gives the students an excellent chance to broaden their horizons. One has to note that doing a master course at Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) requires permanent concentration and hard work so that such a deep immersion into the studies may sometimes lead to a lopsided development of students' personalities. As a result of the enrollment process I found myself involved in the "Give to Those Who Need" activity dedicated to preparing gift baskets for their further distribution among the needy - an opportunity promoted by the representatives of the "ENTRAJUDA" foundation. The reasons for my opting for this particular activity as well as the description of the work fulfilled are given a detailed coverage below.

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## 2 CHOOSING THE ACTIVITY

### 2.1 General Motivation

While choosing the activity several goals were pursued. Firstly, I wanted to develop my soft skills with the help of the Independent Studies course. Secondly, being a newcomer in Portugal I wanted to get to know different spheres of

life in the country depending on the activity my candidacy would be considered appropriate for. Finally, I thought that doing something useful on a voluntary basis was kind and emotionally gratifying. It was due to my wish to develop my soft skills that I decided against getting involved in an activity requiring participating in an IT project implementation as a programmer. In my case, I was thinking of fostering my communication abilities as well as improving my Portuguese language skills. Trying to satisfy my second desire, I paid attention at the activities promoted by the "ENTRAJUDA" charity institution. I was also interested in the proposals related to participating in organizing events aimed at helping IST students to get to know about the available employment possibilities and, ultimately, to start their professional career. Finally, taking into account my third desire and the fact that I had already had some experience of charity work I was really interested in getting enrolled in one of the activities implying volunteering.

### 2.2 Choosing the particular activity

After pointing out the three activities I was interested in it was necessary to order them according to my preferences. I would further present this arrangement in the process of announcing the candidacy. Doing so, I bared in mind the goals I intended to reach as a result of doing the Independent Studies course.

As I have already mentioned, I was interested in getting engaged in one of the activities associated with charity work. It might be

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

relevant to say that in the previous term in the context of the Independent Studies III course I had already served as a volunteer helping children from unhappy families with their school studies. I was particularly motivated to go on with it in this term taking into account my bent for teaching and working with children. What is more, that activity had also been coordinated by the "ENTRAJUDA" foundation and therefore I thought that in my case getting a position of a volunteer teacher would not constitute a problem. I also had the contacts of the "Tercena" charity institution responsible for working with children and tried to get into touch with them directly. However, due to reasons beyond my control, I did not get any response from neither of the two organizations in reasonable time. In spite of the miss, I was still interested in charity work and therefore did not abandon the idea of getting involved in an activity promoted by the "ENTRAJUDA" foundation.

Besides my propensity for charity and the fact that I had previously had some experience of working with the "ENTRAJUDA" institution there was one more reason for mentioning a charity activity as my number one priority. I presumed that to get accepted for the other two activities I had to prove a very good level of spoken and written Portuguese. The approval of my participating in the activity could have therefore turned out not just mere formality but a more prolonged process.

Upon taking the decision of opting for one of the "ENTRAJUDA"'s proposals I had to specify the activity I would prefer. To tell the truth, at that time I had no particular passion for doing the "Give to Those Who Need" activity. However, there were not so many charity proposals made by "ENTRAJUDA" at the beginning of this term and the available vacancies were being filled very quickly. However, even then I could see a lot of advantages of getting enrolled into that activity. Later I realized that it was the right choice as I managed to acquire new knowledge and skills. This aspect will be discussed in detail in the Learning Report.

### 3 THE COURSE OF THE ACTIVITY

#### 3.1 "ENTRAJUDA" and BBD

The main point of the activity was to participate in arranging the non-alimentary products available in the store in gift baskets for their further dispatching. Those products were donated by enterprises, hotels, shops and private individuals. Although having slight defects or simply being second hand products they could be surely reused. To manage the storage and distribution of the stocks "ENTRAJUDA" created the Donated Goods Bank ("Banco de Bens Doados", BBD in Portuguese).



Figure 1. The BBD store.

*figures MUST be referenced in Text!*

The creation of BBD allowed for performing the stocktaking operations in an efficient way producing, thus, a double positive effect. Firstly, it facilitated and accelerated the distribution of goods among the associate social charity institutions. Predictably, this way these goods were likely to reach the unhappy families who needed them in a shorter space of time. Secondly, the mission of BBD was of great importance in terms of environment protection as the prolongation of the lifespan of goods helped to avoid unnecessary environment pollution inherent in their untimely destruction.

#### 3.2 My Participation

The activity consisted of 14 hours of working at the BBD store. The total amount of time spent on the activity realization was determined by the Professor responsible for the course. However, we could schedule our attendance according to our school curriculum. Unfortunately, I

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obtain that Report?*

could not always stick to the stated schedule. It was mainly due to heavy academic workload, periodic occurrence of extraordinary classes and the necessity of coordinating the timetable with my colleagues whom I developed projects in other subjects with.

Luckily, the "ENTRAJUDA" representatives proved to be more than cooperative in terms of setting up my attendance schedule. I also realized that punctuality was one of the required qualities for successful activity realization. I tried to be as punctual as possible, but I have to confess that I did not always come on time. Fortunately, my "ENTRAJUDA" mentors never showed disapproval of that. What is more, after once I told them that the reason for my coming late was that I had spent too much time at the University canteen standing in a queue they said that next time I could count on having a meal at BBD with them.

The most significant challenge I faced during working at the BBD store was to maintain a certain level of diversity of the operations performed. It is quite comprehensible that the store workers responsible for carrying out stocktaking operations could not entrust me with execution of some of them due to my lack of experience, special training and, as a result, the risk of operational injuries. However, the work did not turn into a routine. My mentors demonstrated a lot of flexibility in reaching compromise between what I was capable of doing and the operations that interested me.

First, I was engaged in separating and counting units of different articles of clothing and domestic electric appliances. Next time, I took part in loading those items to the vehicle that would take them to the corresponding consignee. I even learnt to operate a container loader which was unforgettable experience for me. Besides doing these pieces of physical labor, I also enriched my insight into how day-to-day activities in a store are organized and how the personnel works in team to achieve efficiency. I also came to know the stages stock-taking and breaking of bulk processes are, what they composed of as well as got acquainted with the most conventional points of the life-cycle of goods kept in a store. The experience and the skills obtained are covered in the

Learning Report in more detail.

## 4 CONCLUSION

In this term the "Give to Those Who Need" activity was realized. I feel satisfied because I managed to achieve all the goals I had set at the stage of submitting my candidacy. Firstly, the activity proved to contribute a lot to my soft skills development (this topic is given detailed coverage in the Learning Report). Secondly, I have learnt a lot of new things concerning the functioning of social charity institutions in Portugal in comparison with charity institutions' activities in my country, as well as came to know how the most important operations in a store are carried out. Finally, I realize that the activity gave me an opportunity to devote myself to noble work which is emotionally gratifying in itself. The report design using the LaTeX tool [1] was also very interesting and useful.

## 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.

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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.