

Driving For Charity

Delivering Meals Right To Your Doorstep

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Activities Report

Abstract—The challenge of this course consisted in the enrollment of an extracurricular activity with the aim of developing *soft-skills* transversal to the knowledge acquired in the rest of our courses. For my chosen activity, I decided to work on something completely unrelated to engineering. Something that put me more in contact with people. For these reasons, I resolved to be in charity work, aiding the institution **Centro Paroquial do Campo Grande** making home deliveries to the elderly. Throughout the month of December and January, biweekly or triweekly, I was responsible for making several routes all over **Campo Grande**, delivering their meals right to the doorstep.

Index Terms—Charity, Elderly, Meal, Van, Campo Grande, Attendant, Driver.

1 INTRODUCTION

WITH this report, I intend to elaborate on the subject of study for the **Portfólio Pessoal III**, and share the experiences I had while working for the **Centro Paroquial do Campo Grande** institution. This activity involved driving and memorizing several routes and street names all over **Campo Grande** with the purpose of providing care to the elderly in their homes. In the end, I received a certificate for the task performed.

2 HOW IT CAME ABOUT

From the beginning, I knew I wanted to work with the **Entreajuda** organization in order to do work related in someway to charity. I also knew that that kind of experience was something that always lacked in my life.

Another motivation for this was that in charity work, you get in touch with many different people with many different experiences in life, and I thought that it would be a good social experience.

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Initially, I was accepted to perform the **Connect the elderly** activity, which involved presenting a workshop about the various technologies available that allows them to connect with their family, however, by the time I met with the person responsible for the activity, their schedule was already fully booked due to the Christmas festivities. This led to another offer, this one simpler, but much needed. I was to drive other helpers and assistants all over **Campo Grande** so that they could reach these people in their homes.

3 CHALLENGES

I decided, right from the outset, that I would better myself by striving to engage and talk with other people in order to alleviate problems of my social anxiety. One way I did this was by forcing myself to remember everyone's names, from the security guard, to every member of the attendant staff to drivers of other routes. I would also greet them every time I saw them and ask them questions while we were not busy.

Another critical challenge in this venture involved learning to deal with stressful situations, since I would be driving in very busy sections of town and having to perform maneuvers in tight roads made even tighter by

(1.0) Excelent	ACTIVITY					DOCUMENT						
	Objectives x2	Options x1	Execution x4	S+C x1	SCORE	Structure x0.25	Ortogr. x0.25	Gramm. x0.25	Format x0.25	Title x0.5	Filename x0.5	SCORE
	(0.8) Very Good											
	(0.6) Good											
	(0.4) Fair											
(0.2) Weak	2	1	4	1	8	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.8

parked cars on each side.

4 ROUTES

4.1 Route 1

This route was the one I did the most. Every Monday and Friday, at 12:20h I met with, usually, two or three attendants, and waited while they loaded up the van.

A closer look at the van can be found in the next figure:



Figure 1. The Ford Transit assigned to Route 1.

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Once I got in the van, I was directed to the next stop, and I would find a place to stop or park while the attendants delivered the food. The following map gives a clear idea of the route: The number of stops rounded 10, and each stop would take about 5 to 10 minutes while the attendants delivered the meals door to door. As such, the total time for the route usually took around one hour and a half to two hours.

4.2 Route 2

After three weeks doing route 1, there was a need to fill a position during Saturdays as well, since the previous driver became unavailable at the time. Thus, I decided to also take it up.

The van used in this route was a new *Citroen Berlingo*, which had the benefit of being smaller and having sensors for determining the distance to other objects, which was very welcome since I would often drive down tight streets and had to perform many *U-turns*.

You can see the van more closely in the next figure:

This route made fewer stops than the previous one, since during the weekends there are



Figure 2. Map with the usual stops and route taken. The blue marker marks the start and the yellow marker marks the end of the route.

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Figure 3. The fancy Citroen Berlingo assigned to Route 2.

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less meals to give out, but it covered more ground to make up for it, thus it also took about 2 hours to finish.

The following figure gives a clearer idea of the route taken. Note that this trip varied a bit more than the first, since on more than several occasions we had new people to deliver to, or they were unavailable at their homes due to a worsening of their condition.

? Which ones?

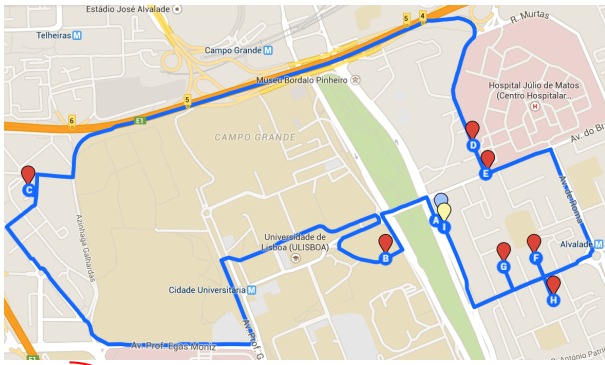


Figure 4. Map with the usual stops and route taken. The blue marker marks the start and the yellow marker marks the end of the route.

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5 CONCLUSION

By the time this report is delivered, I will have gone on 15 route deliveries, which will mean over 300 meals delivered to the people that need it most, which is quite an achievement.

Over the course of this journey, I met many new people from all walks of life, and had the pleasure of gaining a few friends in the process. I knew right from the outset that I wanted to do an activity related in some way to charity, and even though this was not the activity I had in mind, I still come away with an experience that will likely stay with me for the rest of my life.

It also allowed me to become more aware of the difficulties faced by people with very low income and spend most of their days alone at the twilight of their lives. That allowed me to realize that maybe the most important part of this work is not just the meals but the human contact they get from us. It allowed me to be a part of something selfless and bigger than myself.

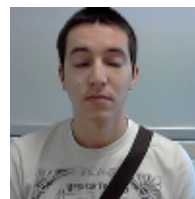
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Finally, the author would like to thank the

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Eu Me Moi Here I am. I am pursuing my Engineering studies at **IST!** (IST!).