

COACHING TEAM for Independent Studies

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Learning Report

Abstract—This report highlights the soft-skills learned and enhanced through the experience provided by the Coaching Team activity, in the context of the PPIII course. It describes the work that was done during the semester as a member of the team, and how situations were handled both from an individual perspective and as a team. The activity consisted in supporting PPIII students clarifying possible doubts regarding the course, helping with the proposals to activities, getting feedback from the state of the activity both from the students and the promoters, approving initiatives, and evaluating the final reports.

Index Terms—portfolio, suporte académico, equipa de acompanhamento, DEI

1 INTRODUCTION

ANOTHER semester has passed, and with it a lot of experiences associated. During the same, I decided to embrace the challenge of being part of a Coaching Team. Still, I can not say that I was properly new to this kind of activity, since in the past semester I have been part of a two element team, named "Equipa de Acompanhamento" and done some similar activities throughout it. However, after a first conversation with the professor at the beginning of the semester, the promise of a more complete activity, and the rewards that would outcome of it, in terms of development of skills such as human interaction, personal growth, and profile enrichment through a variety of new situations, immediately led me to accept it, in a tentative to fulfill the gap left from the past one, and further develop soft-skills gathered. This activity revealed itself to be profitable and different from the past one, in the following aspects:

- 1) A group of three persons.

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- 2) Initial pre-approval of self-initiative activities.
- 3) Establishment of activities by communication with the promoters.

Adding to the aforementioned and like the past activity, it consisted in a weekly feedback request to the assigned students, and from the promoters of their activities, the latter was not addressed on the past activity. Throughout the document, I will emphasize the skills learned with the activities performed.

2 TEAM WORK

Since this activity was to be developed as a "Group", it was obviously expected that the relationship between its elements, and individual responsibility, and capacity of each element would play a major factor regarding the success of the activity.

The activity was performed along with the students Diogo Rosado, and Filipe Relvas. Filipe Relvas was already a known friend of mine, but I did not know Diogo Rosado at the start. Despite it, he easily integrated, and together we formed Coach Team number 6.

During the flow of the activity, the team acted as a whole harmonic, and like past experiences, it highly contributed to a more fluid development of the tasks assigned, due to the capacity of each member compensating the other when needed.

(1.0) Excelent	ACTIVITY					DOCUMENT						
(0.8) Very Good	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
(0.6) Good	2	1	4	0.7	7.7	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.5	0.5	2
(0.4) Fair												
(0.2) Weak												

2.1 Tasks delegation

At the very beginning of the activity, and since this was a group of 3 persons, the distribution of tasks between each member was an aspect to take into account.

As soon as possible we had to decide for every student that were assigned to our group, which member will be responsible for who. This would reveal to be of extremely importance and provided an effective load-balancing between the elements of the group.

Other important decisions were, e.g.:

- Which element would communicate with the professor on behalf of the group
- Which element would deliver the overall feedback message to the promoters

This experience allowed to enhance previous acquired skills such as organization, team work, management of resources, and capacity of communication.

2.2 Scheduling and Communication

Along the activity, a lot of synchronization and communication had to be done. Hence, the selection of the best tools, and the pro-activity of the members would be important to assure good communication, and set deadlines to each task, e.g., if we need to communicate with a promoter that is responsible for students shared by more than one element of the group, one of us would warn the others that he will handle this issue, being unnecessary to do more than one communication with the promoter.

This approach made the work easier, and allowed to grant that each assignment is effectively being taking care, allowing for a more fluid and less fastidious work flow.

The tools used were the following: *facebook* (essentially tasks delegation, important info, or doubts), *google drive* (synchronization of documents), *skype* (reunions, required for a situation/topic longer/harder to text).

These tools, along with the attitude of each proved useful, and granted the improvement of capabilities such as management, professionalism, pro-activity, and cooperation.

3 COACHING

The activity of coaching itself, consisted in feedback from students and promoters, pre-approval of self-initiative activities, and establishment of activities with the promoters.

In this section it will be highlighted the soft-skills developed throughout the semester earned from coaching.

3.1 Responsibility

One of the obvious attributes developed was responsibility. Along the semester I felt the pressure of handling important tasks, specially during the establishment of activities with promoters. The latter was a period of large pressure, since the approval of an activity for which a student has applied would largely depend on our work, i.e., part of a coacher's work was to receive the applications from the students, and communicate with the respective promoters to inquire if a student is whether approved or not. When I felt the impact that my actions as a coach can have to determine the success of solving this type of situations, and the repercussions that could outcome from such, I recognized that this activity brought a lot more than what I have done previously.

3.2 Activities approval

The approval of activities was also an interesting and somewhat complex experience, in the sense that sometimes it is not easy to distinguish the line between what it is worth approving and what is just small talk.

This phase revealed itself as complicated, since, **after all, it is the approval of a person's proposal that is on the line, as so my judgment should take the importance of such in consideration.**

Overall, It allowed me to improve the maturity, and professionalism at which I face this kind of matters.

3.3 Communication

During the activity the communication with both students and promoters had a major role. Contrary to what happened in the previous

semester, I can not say that I had some troubling cases, except of course, from some students that lacked the pro-activity to approach the promoter, and still December arrived, and they had no activity.

The most common interactions with students were for gathering of feedback, or at an initial phase, to inform how the application process was developing, in a tentative to send some feedback to the students.

The communication with the promoters was a first experience, and required a different more formal approach by my side.

I had to communicate with them, in two distinct situations:

- 1) provide applications of students interested in their activities.
- 2) ask for an appreciative evaluation of the students performance on the activity.

This experience mostly improved my professionalism, organization, and social skills.

3.4 Evaluation capability

In the previous semester I emphasized that "assigning a fixed grade to a work" is definitely not an easy task. Of course, I have only did it once, as so I was not expecting to feel so differently from the first time, and I still confirm that is difficult, and sometimes feels unfair.

Like in the past semester, I felt the need to re-read already evaluated works, just to assure that I properly evaluated them, taking into account the parameters provided by the professor, and the grades assigned.

This evaluation part allowed me to further develop gained evaluation skills, and rigorousness.

4 CONCLUSION

In short, and like initially planned, it was undoubtedly a rich experience, with much more variety of situations and circumstances than the previous one.

Like aforementioned in this report, it allowed me to develop several skills ranging from team work, management..., to responsibility, maturity, professionalism.

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In this type of document (technical), the conclusion should start with a summary of the subject addressed and then should highlight the results.