**Reflective Piece**

Software Engineering Project Management – Assignment 3

Jordel Davidson – Swann

As I look back on the time spent doing this Software Engineering Project Management module many things have come to mind.

Chief among which is what I have learned and how well I can apply it. The first thing we are properly introduced to in this model is how to express our ideas to one another through collaborative discussions and seminars. However, due to the time difference between England and Turks & Caicos Islands along with a demanding job, I found myself unable to participate as much as I would have wanted to. Nonetheless during the time of this module, I found myself introduced to many different topics and methodologies that I believe will greatly aid me in my pursuit of furthering myself.

In reflection of my time doing this course I believe that it is best I speak on my experience on a team of individuals who were making the goal of completing an assignment that required us to create a product design for a hypothetical computer system. It was during the six (6) weeks that I began to learn how to properly engage with others in the field of software engineering project management. In the early on set of the project, I believed that it would have been like any other Project Management which mainly focused on the two things: The budget, that is how much the project would cost, and the allocation of time and resources. I was quite shocked to learn that in a Software Project, there is a little more to it than just that. For me I was introduced to methodologies such as Waterfall, Agile and Scrum. Thanks to my group members, I learned the importance of using these methodologies aided in properly getting a project organized while looking at the various needs that these methodologies can satisfy when they are applied.

The collaboration with a Team furthered helped me as I began to kind of come out of my shell, which allowed me to engage with the various members, in discussions of what the project would need to succeed along with given my input on various points in the project. Teamwork is very crucial to a project. In my reading to learn how to properly be a contributing team member, I learned of the impact that team quality can have on successful projects. Teamwork Quality (TWQ) is considered to be a critical factor in the success of a project management (Hoegl and Gemuenden, 2001; Hoegl et al., 2003; Malik et al., 2021; PMBOK, 2021). According to Diallo and Thuillier, 2005; Chiocchio et al., 2011, TWQ focuses on the role of communication, collaboration, trust, and motivation within a project team. With this in mind, I made it a kind of mission of mine to ensure that I embodied these very things. One of the biggest hurdles that we dealt with as a Team during the 6 weeks that we had to get this Project plan completed was the varying time differences that we had. This made organizing group meetings quite hard as many of us lived in varying time zones. To combat this, we created a WhatsApp group chat that we regularly spoke on as a means of keeping good communication with each other. Along with this we did our work in google docs, so that everyone would be able to view the work at their leisure while also making great contributions. None of us knew each other that well but we were able to trust in the common goal that we all wanted a good grade and thus we were highly motivated to work with each other and make the best of the situation.

One of the things that was touched on in the study conducted by Young Illies et al 2020 in the article Improving Students’ Teamwork Experience: Evaluating a Project Management Application, was the fact that students often received limited exposure to teamwork training. This was done as it is believed that once students step into the working world, they do not have the skills necessary to work in a Team. This I believe is true as I must say that during my time working with my team, while it was a seamless process, there were things that I found us very lacking in. One of which was the fact that we did not have a leader who properly kept us organized and on track. We had taken a very laidback approach in completing the different tasks that the project required. It is indeed true that the project was finished but upon looking back at the mark that we received there were things that could have been done better. I believe that one of the things that we could have done better is selecting a group leader. Of course, I am not blind to the fact that since we had no prior knowledge of each other, this would have proven to be quite tedious. There is not much I can further say as to the Group work aspect of this project, as it was only for 6 weeks. The group members do, however, keep in contact with each other on the WhatsApp group as a means of discussing what goes on in the module.

It would be remiss of me to only speak to the group at large while not taking the time to analyse how I have performed as an individual working with a group. To do so I have taken to using the Strength, Weakness, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis (Phadermrod, B. et al. 2019). In speaking of my strengths, I believe that I displayed great communication skills, a collaborative attitude and reliability. When the group was working on the project. I ensured that I was always in attendance for any of the group meetings, while also always contributing to any of the discussions that the group had within the WhatsApp messages. As it relates to my weaknesses, I would jokingly state that there are too many to just list them off but during this group project, I found myself very lacking in initiative and time management. One thing that I have a propensity to do is just going with the flow and never truly speaking up with my ideas or opinions. This was highlighted when it came to working on the budget with my group members. The other member who worked on the budget was fine with doing the bare minimum and although I wanted to take it further, I went along with what they felt appropriate. Tome management is also a great weakness of mine that I have not overcome, and this proved true within the group. There were times that I had put off doing things because I believed them easy and thus ended up working more than I had to complete certain task. By developing better time management strategies, such as prioritizing task and setting appropriate deadlines, I would have optimized my productivity in the group which would have allowed for the group task allotted to me to be completed consistently. In speaking of opportunities, I believe this group work led to me having the chance to learn more and in turn grow as a individual within a time while also ensuring that I understood that when working in a group, accountability and support are very important Lastly I will speak on the threats portion of the swot analysis which I have chosen to look at the things that would be catagorised as threats, would be the time difference that existed between the group member an I which made it quite hard to actually communicate with them at times, along with the fact that I had a dependence on what a particular members of the groups opinion were, which in turn lead to my lack of taking initiative.

At this point, I would also like to reflect on what has been learned in this module. Beginning with the various topics that we were introduced to, such as the different methodologies, and skills, I believe we had the chance of learning. This module allowed me to gain an appreciation for the skills that entail in project planning, estimation, and risk management. Good project planning is essential as it allows for the effective allocation of resources which will in turn allow for a project to progress smoothly. Estimation and Risk management I had found was a crucial skill to have in project management as this allowed for several things such as: Schedule planning and time management, budget and cost control, resource allocation, scope management and quality assurance. Being able to identify risk and plan to mitigate them is crucial when managing a project and this module introduced me to the various techniques in doing so. One of the things that we touched on in this module that really resonated with me was the impact that user experience and emotions can have on what one may catagorise as a successful project. If users are not satisfied, then the project can be seen as a failure. Personally, I had never taken the time to mull on this but as I began to work on a few projects at work that necessitated good user experience, I began to understand why this was so crucial.

The Software Engineering Project Management module has been a transformative experience, promoting deep learning and growth. Despite challenges such as time differences, collaborative engagement within the group demonstrated the importance of clear communication and teamwork. A SWOT analysis revealed strengths in communication and reliability, as well as weaknesses in initiative and time management. Nonetheless, the module taught me invaluable project management skills such as planning, estimation, and risk management, while emphasizing the value of user experience and stakeholder satisfaction. With my newfound insights and skills, I am ready to tackle future projects with confidence and efficacy, embodying a dedication to continuous improvement and professional excellence.

**References**

Diallo, A., & Thuillier, D. (2005). The success of international development projects, trust and communication: An African perspective. International Journal of Project Management, 23(3), 237-252.

Chiocchio, F., Forgues, D., Paradis, D., & Iordanova, I. (2011). Teamwork in integrated design projects: Understanding the effects of trust, conflict, and collaboration on performance. Project Management Journal, 42(6), 78-91.

Young Illies, M., & Stachowski, A. A. (2020). Improving Students’ Teamwork Experience: Evaluating a Project Management Application. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology, 6(1), 46–52.

Agbejule, A., & Lehtineva, L. (2022). The relationship between traditional project management, agile project management, and teamwork quality on project success. Journal of Project Management, 10(2), 123-136