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Module Code **: XITM6329**

Module Name **: WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING**

Institution **: Rosebank College (Polokwane)**

Assessment Type **: Project - Portfolio of Evidence (POE)**

Date **: 11 November 2024**

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3. Introduction:

My Understanding and expectations from this Work Integrated Learning (WIL) was that the institution is preparing us students for the work environment. They want us to have a deeper understanding oof the course's modules and concepts and prepare us for the future career we will go for either by expecting proper documentations from scenarios, formal presentation and simulations. It requires all the hard skills, soft skills, knowledge and skills we've acquired thus far in the journey of completing our qualification and also improve or develop the abilities we've learned further.

The purpose of this WIL activity is to gather the skills and knowledge we have acquired into a project which will allow us to exercise the academic content we gained resulting in an evaluation that will determine if we have really understood everything we have done to this certain point.

4. Skills Learned:

- **Practical Skills:**

  During the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activity, I acquired various practical skills that are directly applicable in a professional setting. One notable skill is the ability to configure and connect virtual machines using Azure Lab Services, integrating them into the same domain. Additionally, I gained proficiency in managing user accounts on client machines administered by a server machine. This technical know-how is invaluable for tasks involving system administration, network configuration, and user management in a workplace environment. The practical experience in illustrating proximity diagram, floor plan and network diagrams using Microsoft Visio enhances my ability to communicate complex technical concepts visually, a skill often required in collaborative projects and presentations.

- **Interpersonal Skills:**

  Through interactions during the WIL activity, I learned the importance of dealing with team members who may not actively contribute. Addressing such issues promptly and escalating matters for disciplinary actions when necessary is crucial for maintaining a productive team dynamic. In the workplace, this skill can be applied to foster teamwork, resolve conflicts, and ensure that everyone contributes to the overall success of a project. Effectively managing team dynamics is essential for achieving project goals and meeting deadlines.

- **Communication Skills:**

  One of the significant challenges I faced during the WIL activity was presenting project findings. Overcoming the fear of public speaking and improving my ability to articulate complex concepts was a direct result of the presentation requirements. This experience not only enhanced my confidence but also deepened my understanding of the subject matter, as effective presentation necessitates a thorough grasp of the material. These communication skills are transferable to the workplace, where clear and concise communication is essential for conveying ideas, leading meetings, and presenting findings to clients or team members.

  In conclusion, the practical, interpersonal, and communication skills acquired during the WIL activity have equipped me with a diverse set of competencies crucial for success in the workplace. The technical expertise gained, along with the ability to navigate team dynamics and communicate effectively, positions me to contribute positively to future projects and collaborate efficiently with colleagues in a professional setting.

5. Role in the team:

1) Role and Contribution:

- **Leadership Role in Design**: I took on a leadership role regarding the physical design aspects of the project, ensuring that the infrastructure layout was optimal for the hospital's workflow and space constraints. I provided guidance on where key components, like the server room, access points, and cabling, should be placed to support both functionality and aesthetics.

- **Collaborative Approach**: While I led in design, I also actively followed technical guidance from the IT and network specialists, merging my spatial insights with their technical expertise. This collaborative approach ensured that the final layout met both architectural and technical standards.

2) Level of Contribution:

- **Proactive Contribution**: I aimed to do as much as, if not more than, others by consistently offering insights on how architectural decisions could support the IT infrastructure. I developed detailed diagrams and floor plans that visually communicated our layout, which helped other team members understand the spatial context and troubleshoot any design issues early.

- **Detail-Oriented Work**: Given the need for precision in a healthcare environment, I focused on ensuring every detail was accounted for, from secure cable routing to room placements that wouldn't interfere with patient care.

3) Group Dynamics and Personal Reflection:

- **Positive Experience**: Being in the group allowed me to learn from other disciplines and see how IT infrastructure can be adapted into complex environments like healthcare. I found the experience rewarding, as it broadened my understanding of how technical and architectural work can converge in impactful ways.

- **Growth Through Challenge**: Working with various specialists was occasionally challenging, as each brought their unique perspective and requirements. However, I appreciated the collaborative dynamic, which encouraged creative problem-solving and attention to both technical and spatial details.

4) Conflict Resolution:

- **Open Communication**: When conflicts arose—often due to differing views on space utilization versus technical requirements—I advocated for open discussions to understand each viewpoint. For example, if the IT team needed additional space for cooling servers, I explored options like vented server cabinets or alternative placements to balance both technical and design needs.

- **Compromise and Adaptation**: I learned to be adaptable, sometimes compromising on design preferences to ensure technical requirements were met without sacrificing functionality. I approached conflicts with a mindset of compromise and a focus on the project's success rather than individual preferences.

5) Lessons Learned as a Team Member:

- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration**: I gained valuable experience working with IT and engineering teams, learning how to align architectural perspectives with technical and operational needs. I realized that a holistic view—incorporating multiple expert insights—is essential in complex projects like hospital infrastructure.

- **Value of Communication and Flexibility**: I learned that flexibility and proactive communication are crucial to resolving conflicts and aligning team goals. Being part of this group reinforced the importance of open dialogue and the willingness to adapt to others' expertise to create a well-rounded final product.

- **Commitment to Common Goals**: Working within this group highlighted the importance of focusing on common objectives—such as functionality, efficiency, and patient care—and showed me that a successful project often requires setting aside personal preferences for the greater goal.

In summary, my role as an Architectural Designer was both collaborative and leadership-oriented, and it taught me how to integrate architectural design into a technical environment effectively. Working within a multidisciplinary team in a complex healthcare setting not only strengthened my design skills but also deepened my understanding of team dynamics and the importance of adaptability and shared goals.

6. Time management and planning:

- **Meeting Deadlines:**
  In the course of the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activity, our team encountered the challenge of managing time effectively to meet project deadlines. Although we made concerted efforts to complete tasks on time, it was not without its difficulties. The nature of the project presented complexities that required careful consideration and planning.

- **Time Pressures and Reflection:**
  Towards the project's conclusion, there was a sense of urgency, and certain aspects were indeed rushed. Reflecting on this, it became apparent that our team could have benefited from more efficient time management. While we did finish within the allotted timeframe, acknowledging the room for improvement was essential. This realization prompted an understanding that refining time management skills is imperative to avoid similar challenges in future work environments.

- **Planning Strategies:**
  Our team adopted a strategy of task assignment with specific deadlines. Each team member took responsibility for particular aspects of the project. However, it is noteworthy that our planning was more task-oriented than a comprehensive project timeline. We relied on individual task completion and subsequent integration, rather than collaboratively working on the same components simultaneously.

- **Collaborative Approach for Improved Efficiency:**
  In hindsight, a more collaborative approach, where team members work concurrently on shared tasks, could have enhanced productivity and efficiency. This would have minimized the rush at the end and allowed for smoother integration of individual contributions. Future projects could benefit from a more iterative and collaborative workflow, fostering better communication and coordination among team members.

- **Areas for Improvement:**
  While the project was completed successfully, acknowledging areas for improvement is crucial. A more structured and comprehensive project plan, including regular check-ins and collaborative work sessions, could be implemented to ensure a more seamless integration of tasks. Learning from this experience, future endeavors will involve a more proactive approach to time management and planning.

- **Positive Aspects of Time Management:**
  Despite the challenges, certain positive aspects of our time management and planning emerged. The team displayed resilience and adaptability, adjusting strategies when necessary to meet the project's demands. Additionally, the experience provided insights into the importance of setting realistic deadlines and the need for periodic reviews of the project's progress.

In conclusion, the WIL activity highlighted the significance of effective time management and planning in achieving project goals. The reflections on our approach have informed valuable lessons that will undoubtedly contribute to a more streamlined and efficient workflow in future professional endeavors.

7. Technology, Presentation, and Information Utilization:

- **Information Sources:**
  The information required for the WIL project was primarily derived from a combination of existing knowledge gained from relevant modules and theoretical concepts from various courses. Previous modules, such as network architecture, equipped us with the necessary skills for creating the network diagram and simulation. Modules like Help Desk provided insights into presentation requirements, while theoretical courses such as Systems Analysis and Design and Management Information Systems guided us through the project's lifecycle.

- **Technology Utilization:**
  The project demanded a diverse range of technologies to fulfill its requirements. Microsoft Visio was employed for network design, Microsoft Excel for inventory-related tasks, and Microsoft Word for documentation. The presentation segment was crafted using Microsoft PowerPoint, while Microsoft Visual Studio Code was utilized to develop the intranet site for the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Additionally, Microsoft Azure cloud services played a pivotal role in configuring the virtual machines for the simulation section.

- **Evaluation of Technology Usage:**
  The technologies were generally well-utilized, effectively fulfilling their respective roles in the project. Microsoft Visio facilitated the creation of a detailed and visually appealing network diagram, while Microsoft Azure provided a reliable platform for configuring virtual machines. Microsoft Visual Studio Code enabled the development of a functional intranet site. However, there is always room for improvement in terms of optimizing workflows, exploring additional features, and ensuring seamless integration between different tools.

- **Alternative Technologies:**
  While the chosen technologies were suitable for the project, alternative tools and platforms could have been considered. For instance, other diagramming tools might offer different features or a more intuitive interface than Microsoft Visio. Open-source alternatives for coding, such as Visual Studio Code, could also be explored to provide flexibility and cost-effectiveness. It is crucial to assess the specific requirements of each task and select technologies that align best with those needs.

- **Lessons Learned for Future Projects:**
  For future projects, a more proactive approach to technology selection and integration could be adopted. This involves a thorough evaluation of available tools, considering both mainstream and emerging technologies. Additionally, fostering collaboration among team members to ensure everyone is proficient in the selected technologies can enhance overall project efficiency. Regular updates on technological advancements should be integrated into project planning to stay abreast of the latest tools and methodologies.

- **Continuous Improvement:**
  To enhance future projects, maintaining a balance between familiarity with existing technologies and a willingness to explore new ones is crucial. Regularly seeking feedback on the effectiveness of chosen technologies and being open to adapting strategies based on project requirements will contribute to continuous improvement.

In conclusion, the successful completion of the WIL project was attributed to the strategic use of technology and information. The experience provides valuable insights into optimizing technology usage, considering alternatives, and continuously seeking ways to enhance efficiency in future endeavors.

8. Reflective Analysis of Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

a) Strengths:

- **Network Diagrams:**
  One of the notable strengths of my contribution to the WIL project was the creation of comprehensive and well-executed network diagrams. The diagrams effectively communicated the intricate details of the network architecture, showcasing a clear understanding of the technical aspects involved.

- **Presentation Skills:**
  Despite being a new concept, my presentation skills received positive feedback. The delivery was clear, and the content was well-structured, allowing the audience to grasp complex technical concepts. This accomplishment was affirmed by the favorable marks received for this component.

b) Areas for Improvement (Weaknesses):

- **Limited Presentation Experience:**
  While the presentation was generally well-received, a weakness lies in my limited experience in presenting complex technical information. Acknowledging this, I recognize that there is room for improvement in terms of confidence and articulation when facing more challenging questions or presenting to larger audiences.

c) Self-Assessment and Feedback:

- **Feedback and Marks:**
  The assessment of strengths and weaknesses is based on the feedback received and the marks attained for the specific components mentioned. Positive feedback and high marks for network diagrams and the simulation section provide tangible evidence of proficiency in these areas.

- **Limited Presentation Experience:**
  The recognition of limited presentation experience stems from personal reflection and feedback received during the project evaluation. While the initial attempt was commendable, there is an awareness that further experience and refinement in presentation skills would yield even better results.

d) Strategies for Improvement:

- **Presentation Skills Enhancement:**
  To address the identified weakness in presentation skills, a proactive approach will be taken. Engaging in opportunities to present to larger audiences, including scenarios with sophisticated questioning and strict measures, will be pursued. This deliberate exposure aims to enhance confidence, improve articulation, and foster adaptability in addressing diverse audiences.

- **Investment in Project Knowledge:**
  To better respond to questions about administered projects, a commitment to invest more deeply in project knowledge is crucial. This involves a thorough understanding of all project aspects, anticipating potential questions, and being well-prepared to provide comprehensive answers.

e) Future Considerations:

- **Continuous Learning:**
  The WIL experience serves as a foundation for continuous learning and improvement. Recognizing both strengths and areas for development provides a roadmap for future endeavors. Embracing a mindset of continuous improvement ensures ongoing professional growth.

In conclusion, the reflective analysis of strengths and areas for improvement in the WIL activity highlights the need for a proactive approach to skill development. Leveraging strengths while actively addressing weaknesses contributes to a more well-rounded professional skill set, laying the groundwork for success in future projects and presentations.

9. Relationship with WIL Coordinator/Mentor:

1) What Part of This Relationship Worked Well and What Did Not?

a) What Worked Well:

- **Support and Engagement Over Time**: Although the relationship began with some uncertainty due to the WIL coordinator's seemingly distant approach, it grew significantly in strength as the program progressed. The coordinator's role in resolving group conflicts was particularly impactful, showing their commitment to supporting students and creating a positive learning environment.

- **Availability and Approachability**: As the relationship developed, the coordinator's availability for questions and clarification was a major asset. They made themselves accessible to students, which fostered an environment of openness and trust. This approachability contributed greatly to building a sense of support and collaboration, especially in areas where students needed more guidance.

- **Mutual Respect**: The coordinator treated all students equally, which created an inclusive, respectful atmosphere. This equality strengthened the learning environment by making each group member feel valued and comfortable seeking guidance. This mutual respect laid the foundation for an effective relationship based on trust and openness.

b) What Did Not Work Well:

- **Initial Uncertainty**: At the beginning of the WIL activity, the coordinator's seemingly distant and nonchalant attitude created initial uncertainty about their engagement level. This made it difficult to know what level of support could be expected and how to approach them with questions. As a result, students may have hesitated to reach out for help initially, which could have slowed the early stages of learning.

2) How Could You Have Made the Relationship Better or Stronger?

- **Proactive Engagement from the Start**: If I had taken the initiative to approach the coordinator earlier in the WIL activity, it might have helped clarify expectations and establish a connection sooner. Asking for an early meeting to discuss goals, expectations, and available support might have alleviated initial uncertainties and paved the way for a smoother start.

- **Consistent Feedback**: Providing more frequent feedback to the coordinator about how their support was impacting our learning could have further strengthened our relationship. This might have allowed them to adapt their approach based on our needs or provide additional resources when challenges arose.

- **Clarifying Expectations Early On**: An open conversation at the outset to clarify what kind of support and guidance we could expect might have eased uncertainties and made the relationship stronger from the beginning. This could have helped both the coordinator and the students better understand each other's roles and how to collaborate most effectively.

- **Initiating Group Check-Ins**: Organizing regular group check-ins with the coordinator throughout the WIL activity could have facilitated continuous improvement in the relationship. These sessions could provide opportunities to address any questions, clarify assignments, and receive ongoing feedback on progress, strengthening rapport and reinforcing the coordinator's supportive role.

Conclusion

While initial challenges in establishing rapport with the WIL coordinator posed minor hurdles, the relationship ultimately became one of mutual respect, open communication, and collaborative growth. Reflecting on this experience, I recognize the value of proactive communication and early engagement, which I aim to carry forward in future professional relationships.

10. Impact:

- **Proactive Contribution:**
  My proactive approach within the group played a pivotal role in ensuring that we were well-prepared to address queries effectively. This proactive stance facilitated a smoother workflow and enhanced our collective ability to provide comprehensive answers where needed.

- **Technical Contributions:**
  Drawing on my pre-existing knowledge of networking, I took on various technical responsibilities within the group. This not only expedited the completion of numerous technical activities but also enriched the overall quality of our project. The technical proficiency I brought to the team significantly benefited our collective efforts.

- **Potential for Greater Impact:**
  While the impact was substantial, the primary area for potential improvement lies in time management. Despite the positive contributions made, the project could have had an even more significant impact with more effective time management strategies. Optimizing workflow timelines and task allocation could have resulted in a more streamlined and efficient project execution.

11. Conclusion:

In summary, the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activity provided a valuable learning experience, revealing both strengths and areas for improvement. The proactive approach and technical contributions within the group showcased my commitment to the project's success. The positive relationship with the WIL coordinator and the willingness to address challenges directly contributed to a supportive learning environment. The impact was already substantial, with the only notable improvement opportunity lying in the realm of time management. Moving forward, the insights gained from this experience will undoubtedly shape future endeavors, fostering continuous learning and growth in both technical and interpersonal skills.

12. Curriculum Vitae (CV/LinkedIn):

https://www.linkedin.com/in/rofhiwa-montjane-ab8a1b239?utm_source=share&utm_campaign=share_via&utm_content=profile&utm_medium=ios_app

13. GitHub:

11 November 2024

STUDENT SIGNATURE **DATE**