**PROJECT POSTMORTEM SUBMISSION**

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| **STUDENT NAME** | Alixander Roden |
| **PROJECT NAME** | Group 17 - Let's Joust / Tap Dat |
| What do you think went well on the project? | The project initially started off well, we came up with a good design for a game and a project management plan which was going to ensure that we met the required deadlines. Everyone in the group was willing to work together and ensure that work was completed. After a few weeks however, this was found out not to be the case. We were originally supposed to be a group of 4, however 1 person had intercalated and we were actually a group of 3. The other team members stopped turning up to meetings / submitting work or answering emails. I escalated this to the lecturers and a meeting was held where it was decided that myself and Ryan would continue the group project by ourselves. We were now down to 2 people, we then spent the next few weeks redesigning the game as it became evident from our presentations that the game was unsuitable and didn't fit the brief. We identified changes we could make and came up with a prototype. Ryan however suddenly was unable to attend meetings, didn't attend the presentations and after weeks of me chasing him for work, suddenly had intercalated without informing me. The team was now down to 1 person, and a meeting was held again with the lecturers. I was then placed with Jack, and we had to then start again with the project. Jack was initially willing to work on the game, and had come up with an idea which met what the brief requested. He already had assets from his previous group and it was then up to me to take these assets and make a game. For the next few weeks there was a lot of participation on JIRA and GitHub and a game was produced ready for presentation. The game produced was quite basic, however it was a completed working game despite the hurdles.  The project therefore was successful in some ways because despite their being lots of problems there was still evidence of work being produced as part of a team, and evidence of project management. |
| What do you think needed improvement on the project? | A lot of areas needed improvement on this project, mostly regarding individual contribution to the project. My first group was not really interested in the project and despite it being evident that they were unable to work as a team it was still encouraged that we continued. Team members were not turning up to meetings and not participating in presentations. The main problem with the initial group was the lack of them uploading to JIRA or Github or emailing. One member of the initial group refused to use e-mail and instead preferred to communicate via discord or facebook. The problem with this is that there was then no evidence for his work. The team consisted of two designers and one programmer. The designers were not really taking part in their role. Most of the game ideas ended up coming from myself and a lot of the assets had to be created by me. If I was sent assets to work with they were unsuitable, the wrong format or copied from the internet. It was a struggle to get the other members to upload their work to GitHub, I had to show them multiple times how to use GitHub, however they still preferred to email me their work and have me submit it. This was not what they were asked to do. A key improvement would have been that the designers were shown how to use github and told that all submissions had to be via github. The same problem occurred with JIRA, I had JIRA set up and tasks were being put on it, however the designers wouldn't update JIRA and I often had to move their tasks to completed for them. As a result of this I stopped using JIRA as much, or uploading to github. The main problem with this is then we had no evidence for work actually being done.  The point of the designers in the project was to provide the programmers with the game idea and assets so that the programmers can create the game. In the initial group this didn't happen, I was having to create mockups for the game, create assets and consider design aspects. We had no feedback gained from the target market in the form of questionnaires, the game idea wasn't actually checked to see if it met the brief, and there was not really a design plan to go on. I came up with ways of how the programming side of things could go ahead, however I don't have much design knowledge so this was a problem. The improvement here would have been for the designers to spend the first few weeks actually designing the game and ensure the game design matches what they have been taught. They decided that the game should take on a 90s "retro futuristic" style game, however as mentioned by Dave in the initial presentation this wasn't a style that they were familiar with. There was also confusion because despite the game begin "retro" the music the game was going to feature was recent. I should have realized this and continued the design planning of the game before commencing development.  In the second project this also occurred. In my first meeting with Jack I asked him if he had any ideas for what we could create, and he gave me a game to create which was based on his old group's project. This had a similar idea to what most groups were creating and therefore it would match the brief. I then asked if he could create some mockups for this and the response was that he "couldn't draw". In this project and the previous project, designers kept telling me that they were unable to draw, this led to me having to create the mockups. The first mockup I produced however didn't match what he wanted, and I asked him to explain it again. He provided me with some assets from his previous group and showed me how the game was to be created. I then did another mockup and created a prototype based on this. However, after he provided me with these assets there was not much more contribution. All of the contributions were him either using his previous assets or finding ones from the internet. An improvement would have been to recreate these assets, as the assets produced were in my opinion very basic, and not really following a defined design style.  The game we was creating was based on the idea of knights attacking other knights in order to defend a castle. At some point these knights obtained the ability to use magic spells, this wasn't really explained by Jack. I asked him to provide me with player characters and these were to be represented in the form of Wizard hats (as apparently we were viewing the characters from overhead). The game was originally called "A Knights Tale", however this was also the name of his previous' groups game. I then asked him to come up with a new name, which was "Let's Joust". We now had a game where wizard knights cast spells at each other, that had the name of "Let's Joust" but featured no jousting. This didn't really make any sense and showed poor design. I however at this point needed to create a game to show that I had produced something, and decided to go for it. I asked him to provide assets for the various spells that the game would have. He provided me with 3 icons from his previous game, and said that the abilities were to be "attack", "spell" and "parry". There was now only 1 spell, despite the concept of the game having multiple spells for the knights to cast.  Once I had a prototype that was ready to present, I gave Jack the task of getting people to play the game and provide feedback. He didn't do this and said that he didn't have anyone to ask. The main problem with the project was I assigned people tasks and they decided not to do them or come up with alternative tasks for themselves which were not suitable.   After a week or so of good work, I had asked Jack to attend some meetings in order to work on the game. For some of these meetings he was unable to attend and suddenly the next day or a few hours later sent multiple emails asking where I was. I hadn't rescheduled a meeting so there was problems with time management / scheduling.   I had produced a presentation ready for the 2nd to last presentation, with slides and a video of the game. I had asked Jack to produce slides for this presentation however I never received these. On the day of the presentation I was slightly late, and unable to enter the room. I had messaged Jack to tell me when the group had finished presenting and then I would enter the room, he never messaged me back and after 30mins or so I decided to leave. I had assumed Jack would present, as he hadn't produced a presentation and I had told him there was one to present and where he could find it. He opted to not present. I didn't hear much from him for the next week, and we needed to iterate the game for the final presentation. I asked him if he had any ideas on how we could improve the game however he didn't give me any. The only thing I could do was improve the coding of the game. When it came to the final presentation, I had asked him to produce slides explaining the design of the game, how to play it .etc. The night of the presentation he told me he was working on the slides and they were ready for me to add to the slides I had created in the morning. The slides I received were extremely basic and consisted of 1 or 2 sentences, these weren't really suitable to present. Not long before the presentation was due to start, he emailed to say that he was "far too ill" to be able to present. This is despite me seeing him the previous day, and expecting him to attend. I then decided to not present either. It can be seen that the main problem with both group projects was therefore lack of engagement and communication. Lack of engagement from designers and myself in project management aspects led to a failure of the project. The game produced did not accurately show my programming capabilities, and we didn't present the project often and we didn't have chance to iterate the project. The overall area of improvement for the project would have been that my management style of being quite laid back and being confident that group members would actually do work was a bad idea, and I should have assumed that people weren't interested and not give people tasks that were important to people who weren't going to contribute. |
| What do you think of your own contribution to the project? | I feel that I did the best of my abilities in terms of project management. I was the only 2nd year in the group and didn't attend this university last year so was already at a disadvantage compared to other groups. This became evident in the first presentation when all the other groups had completely different information in their slides compared to ours. I also didn't really take the project management side of things seriously at the beginning, however after a while I realized what was required of me and ensured that I kept emailing, JIRA updated and GitHub was used.  Despite being a programmer, I was required to create a lot of my own assets for the games, these were of a good standard in my opinion for programmer art.  My attendance at tutorials/presentations was poor, and I should have improved this. This therefore showed a lack of engagement on my part, despite participating in the project.  I think my initial time management was poor, I wasn't making sure the group was actually completing tasks on time according to JIRA.  My programming experience wasn't used to it's full capacity. The game we were going to create was complex, and would have required use of maths/physics knowledge for the music algorithms, and would have been a much more engaging game than what was actually created. The game actually produced was a very simple game in Unity, which didn't require much programming effort to produce. It however is a complete game, works as intended and works on a mobile device. |
| **OVERVIEW** |  |
| **Thinking about the project you have worked on this year, what are the important lessons that you will take away from the experience for your next group project?** | If the team I am working with is unwilling to work as a team then I should flag this straight away with lecturers and escalate the team, I should also ensure that I send regular emails (at least 1 every 2 days) checking on the progress of tasks/the group and immediately ask why if tasks are not completed.  I should attend presentations even if the rest of the group is not attending, or even if we have nothing to present. If someone says they are suddenly ill or unable to attend a meeting for whatever reason, I should question this and reschedule the meeting. I should continue to work on the project even if other members are not willing to, as if I have shown lots of contribution then this is better than just sitting aside and letting the project fail. I should have not let sprints last for more than one week, tasks were not being completed so I let the sprints continue running. This was bad practice and didn't follow Agile.  The people I was working with didn't like the idea of working together in the form of a "jam", so it was decided we would each work on our individual tasks and then submit them each week. This was a bad idea because then people just didn't complete their tasks or saw that others weren't and therefore didn't do their tasks. I should have said that they had to work in this way, as we could then ensure that the tasks were completed in the jam, time would have been managed better and it would have quickly shown which group members didn't want to do tasks. |