

Experience in learning FIT1055

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FIT1055 IT Professional Practice and Ethics

Introduction

After 12 weeks of learning the unit FIT1055 with the assistance of the friendly tutorial teachers and lecturers, I have realized that a good and professional computer scientist can not only produce codes that can provide the expected 'output' from an 'input', but also able to present themselves and their work to the public. Therefore, this reflection report is written to reflect upon myself and everything that I learnt throughout this unit. Gibbs Reflective Cycle (GRC) model is the model that I will refer to write this reflective report as GRC encourages me to reflect on my thinking throughout this unit and also helps me reflect on group assignments (Gibbs, 1998). This reflection report will include how learning this unit has changed my perspectives and enhanced my skills to boost productivity particularly on how ethical decisions are made.



Gibb's Reflective Cycle model

Description

Assignment 1 experience in research investigation

We were to complete the assignment 1 report individually using an intelligent research cycle regarding an ethical issue of our choosing. I limited myself to finishing report writing within a day, where no other work will delay my progress to complete the report. A habit of mine is to do research while writing the report. Despite the fact that this method is highly effective for me, doing research while writing the report could result in me missing certain points for the report. I started this assignment early and completed the first version within a day but spent a few more days editing it to correct my grammar and irregular sentence structure, as well as ensuring my report met all the requirements of the rubric. Overall, I was satisfied with the result of my assignment 1 report.

Assignment 2 experience in working as a group

Assignment 2 was a group work so I and 6 other people from the same tutorial group formed a group together under the name No Comment. Everyone was unfamiliar with each other, so an ice-breaking session and a personality test was done to familiarize ourselves with each other. During the assignment, group meetings were held online through the Zoom online meeting platform, and everyone was added to a Google Drive folder where work can be tracked, recorded and accessed by everyone in the group. Additionally, everyone in the group was added to a Whatsapp group to ease communication between groupmates. Once the topic was chosen, roles were assigned to each member, with their personalities taken into consideration when roles were assigned. Throughout the whole process, we have followed the Ethical Reasoning Framework (ERF) strictly step by step to finally have a solution to solve the ethical issue of the chosen topic. Incidents like members having seen my messages but not replying happened but were quickly rectified after I had pointed it out to them during a meeting. We collectively agreed on who was responsible for the writing of report sections in our final meeting with a deadline set after 3 days so the group's proofreader had enough time to check the report to ensure it fulfilled the rubric requirements. Every group member had different writing styles and different levels of proficiency in the English language, which resulted in the proofreader making significant edits to the report. Despite that, we managed to submit the report one day earlier than the due date.

During A2b where we are supposed to present our process, solution and prototype, we split the part we were responsible to present by the work that was done by each member so each member is more familiar with their parts of the presentation which we believe will further enhance and improve our presentation. This is also because that since the part was done by each of us then each of us should be familiar with the parts hence we could smoothly present the slides prepared. Every member participated in the presentation slide making. Working again with the same members for A2b results in the work being done smoothly with little to none dispute happening between the members. Before the official presentation in class, we did meet up to have a mock presentation to help every member to improve their presentation skills which I believe was extremely helpful to every member.

Assignment 2 experience in learning to think critically and making ethical decisions

Throughout the whole process of Assignment 2, the group leader has done his role well and regularly prompted responses and discussions from the group members. The discussed points were recorded by the group's recorder, but this method was ineffective as some discussed points were omitted from the meeting minutes. To remedy this, a mind-mapping online platform, MindMeister, was used to list out the ideas and their reasoning so no points would be missed. If the idea or points were determined to be feasible as a potential solution, further thinking and analysis were done, and the mind map was continued from the said point or idea with online resources and our own personal arguments. Before ending each meeting, the leader would summarize the points to allow members to have better clarification on the ideas discussed.

The first step of ERF, problem identification, was the problem statement of the topic done in Assignment 1. Through refining research, members could gain a better understanding of the topic chosen while researching further on how each stakeholder of the topic was implicated negatively and what the topic has violated in the form of policy, moral, and cultural values. Next, members related the problem identified to the ACM Code of Ethics, which allowed us to know how the topic has violated the ethics of the computing profession and brought harm instead of benefit to society. Ethical theories like virtue ethics, deontology, and utilitarianism were used as guiding principles to help us conduct further critical thinking in regard to our chosen topic and how it affects society. With that, a general solution was thought of, but the solution required further ideation to be a legitimate solution. Hence, through the ideation step of the ERF, members contributed to the features of the solution, which improved the solution, whereby it now could rectify a few of the breached ACM Code of Ethics. After ideation came deliberation, where the work design flow was made to show how the human aspect was included in the loop, which adheres to the ACM Code of Ethics and, for our specific topic, adheres to the International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The solution to our topic was now finalized, and the report was divided into sections for each member to write. The result of refining research, problem identification, guiding principles, ideation, and deliberation was recorded in a separate Google Document saved under the shared folder so every member could access the information anytime they wanted. There was no conflict or disagreement that was aroused throughout the whole process of ERF, everything was done according to plan. The problem was mainly at the report writing process.

Feelings

Feelings from Assignment 1

I didn't think much of it when Assignment 1 was released as report writing wasn't something new nor uncommon to me, but I was happy that it was an individual work. In my previous experiences with report writing, doing it as a group can be chaotic and unorganized as everyone has different fluency of the language and writing style, which can cause confusion for the reader of the report. The whole process of report writing was smooth sailing, and I was comfortable during then, which undoubtedly increased my efficiency in report writing.

Feelings from Assignment 2

During the team forming process, I was quite happy and satisfied with my group mates as they had presented themselves to be trustworthy and reliable. However, when I sent messages in Whatsapp, a communication application, I realized they were not who they presented themselves to be and rarely replied to my messages, and sometimes, they even left me on read. In moments like this, I was quite frustrated and felt a bit angry. During our second meeting, I pointed this flaw out, and the reason they gave was that they were very busy with their assignments and apologized to me. I admit, I felt quite guilty then, but then I realized, we have the same assignments and the group leader had underloaded with 3 units so it's not an acceptable excuse, so I was very disappointed in my group mates. When the reasoning was given in the meeting, none of their cameras and microphones were switched on, so I couldn't gauge how they were feeling during the situation, which affected my opinions on their sincerity. Because of that, the majority of the group members voted to push back the assignment so they could focus more on their other units, which caused the work distribution to be lightened. The next meeting was scheduled to be quite late, which caused the next few tasks and report writing to be very hectic and chaotic. I didn't like it, but I had to follow the majority voting stance.

When actual work was done for the assignment, the process was smooth, and if there were any concerns or doubts, we would always find the lecturer and tutorial teacher for help. I was quite happy with the progress made; hence, during the actual report writing, I was very motivated to write and complete it. When my group mates reached out for help, I was also very happy to help them as when they each finished their parts, it would mean one step closer to the completion of the report. Looking back from now as I write this reflection report, I feel pleased and content that all of our blood, sweat, and tears were not put to waste to complete the assignment report.

Evaluation

Evaluation of Assignment 1

One aspect that I realized during the process of completing Assignment 1 is that I came to enjoy individual report writing as I don't have to cater to anyone else's opinions, and just follow my own opinions to complete the report writing, because I have full control of the direction, progress, and process of how the assignment is to be completed (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021a). Working individually also allows me to work at my own pace, which increases my efficiency as it is easier for me to concentrate. Hence, when the assignment was submitted, I had a sense of completion and satisfaction that ultimately belonged to me.

Evaluation of Assignment 2

The things that went well for Assignments 2a and 2b were that everyone in the group produced quality work that met the deadline agreed upon by everyone. On top of that, after the rough start of the assignment, every member improved and gave some form of reply to each message within the Whatsapp group chat.

Although many things went well throughout the assignment, some also didn't go so well. One happened during the group meetings where members refused to switch on the camera, and two members of the group didn't speak at all during the meeting and preferred the meeting chat instead. Zigurs and Qureshi (2001) states that when groups are to work together virtually through an online platform, it's difficult to gauge members' reactions and if they were fully present during the meetings. It was argued that some members in group projects do often encourage others to speak more and take over (Beebe and Masterson, 2003) so these members themselves would not need to contribute a huge amount to gain the same reward as those that did (Levi, 2016).

Another one would be during the report writing, every member's writing style varied, and their fluency with the English language also differed. Hence, as the proofreader of my group, I made numerous edits and also rewrote some parts of the report so that our group's work fulfilled the assignment specification and marking rubric. The time management of the group was also poor, but surprisingly, because of all the unyielding efforts of the group, we pulled through and completed and submitted the assignment report on time.

Analysis

Analysis of Assignment 1

From Assignment 1, I have learnt the skill to use an intelligent research cycle to conduct research through an online platform. From this skill, I learnt how to identify reliable sources and have honed the skill of paraphrasing during the actual report writing process. Paraphrasing skills allowed me to expand my vocabulary (Bowman, 2019) as I would have to think critically and deeply on how I could appropriately express and get my meaning across to the reader without just purely copying from the sources I have found online through the Internet. I am also required to read the sources or articles found online multiple times (Bowman, 2019) to understand them before I paraphrase which allows me to pursue topics as well as knowledge out of my course and apply problem solving skills to solve these topics that are surrounded by ethical issues.

Analysis of Assignment 2

From both parts of Assignment 2, I have acknowledged the importance of having good social relations with group members as having a close relationship with group members allows an improvement in group's morale and communication (Beebe and Masterson, 2003) which in the case of Assignment 2a, would allow the report writing process to go a bit more smoothly. In a professional setting, having good relationships with group members will grant a positive effect on the outcome of the group project (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021b) assigned by the higher-ups. Ice-breaking sessions and personality tests done during the group forming process helps for group members to get to know each other, especially in a group like mine where no one was familiar with each other. Ice-breaking sessions and personality tests allow members to get a brief insight of each other which in a professional setting, allows group members to know every members' individual styles which allow them to find ways to develop and improve relationships (Hartnett, 2022) between group members. With the personality test results, a group could also roughly know about the roles each member should be assigned to and

also the working dynamic of the group before any work regarding group projects was done. With the ice-breaking sessions and personality tests results, I could say that every member of the group was eventually friends with each other by the end of the assignment. Before the last part of the assignment, which is the presentation, was done, we were even comfortable to have an unofficial face-to-face meeting to discuss how the presentation will be done.

In Assignment 2a, ERF was a process my group followed to produce a proposed solution for the ethical issue that surrounds the topic of our choosing. ERF allows my group to conduct in-depth critical thinking skills to identify key problems, raise principal arguments with supporting points and evidence to finally make ethical solutions with distinct features to solve the ethical issues surrounding the chosen topic. Through ERF, members have shared their own opinions, knowledge, research and ideas clearly through mind-maps and chatting which allowed everyone to understand the main point easily. In professional settings, ERF allows companies and their developers to ensure their choices made will uphold and reflect upon its ethics which in result, provide reassurance to consumers that their products or services will provide good ethical services and benefit the society in which if it does not, consumers are allowed to hold the said company and its developers responsible.

Conclusion

From the assignments I've completed in FIT1055, I have learnt that time management and personalities are especially important within a group when it comes to completing an assignment or task. Through the personality test done before the division of roles in groups, members were assigned roles that fit their personalities which greatly assisted in the completion of their work. With the personality test result of each member, I can understand how they would most probably behave and complete their work which greatly helped me with my methods of communication with different members. Time management could be done better within my group so we wouldn't have had to rush all the work to meet the deadline, and I could have more time to check the quality of the report. As I was writing the report, I discovered that some members weren't able to adequately explain and present their points, so I had to rewrite their section and explain to the member why I had to do so. Hence, I learned that I would need to have members question the decisions and discussion results made so that they could have a better understanding on how and why the decisions and results were made.

Action Plan

When I am required to work in a group in the future, I would clearly state the expectation and aims in regard to the assignments and have everyone present their personality test results to see how work could be divided throughout the assignment. If the assignment requires online meetings, I will ensure that everyone is to switch on their cameras and microphones at all times so members could gauge each other to see if everyone is giving their attention to the issue or assignment. Ice-breaking sessions are also a must-have if everyone within the group is not familiar with each other. In regards to time management, I would put forward the decision on planning how the assignment flow will go, the group member that is responsible for each specific section of the assignment, and a deadline where every

member is expected to complete their assigned work. If any unexpected situation or problem arises that will hinder the progression of the assignment, I will encourage my group mates to seek help without hesitation or to ask in the communication platform of the group so every member can participate in the discussion of the problem. If meetings are held, I will encourage my groupmates to speak up to clarify anything if they have any confusion. If this action plan is followed, I believe that any of my future assignments that require me to work in a group will allow me to achieve the best possible results.

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