Enterprise Management for Computer Scientists

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MCEL30031

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Individual Reflective Report

Introduction

At the beginning of the third year, I was thinking about having some external courses which will help me gain some skills besides the technical ones from my programme. This course came out when I was searching and made me thinking about the skills achieved in the second year when the Essential Enterprise course(Chemistry.manchester.ac.uk. (2017)) helped me to analyse a product from a company. The Enterprise for Computer scientists gave me hope that besides knowing how to examine companies products, I will be able to investigate enterprises as well based on some concepts used today. At first, I felt uncertain because of the lack of knowledge in the business field, but then I realised that there is no hard thing just concepts that can be applied to every company, turning uncertain into curiosity.

Most of the time I learn from multiple sources at the same time. For example, when I tend not to understand a specific concept the best thing to do is to have the lecture notes on one side, an internet resource with the same concept on the other. The case studies were beneficial since we were applying the concepts to real examples.

Case Study: "PESTEL"

The first case study made me nervous at the beginning since I had never had a case study before and besides that, it was just the second week. One of my benefits when talking about the external environment is the fact that last year the course mentioned above taught us what is it and beside that we had a small project in groups to apply it on one of the natural and healthy drinks such as Innocent, but we choose to do Savse(Savse Smoothies. (2017)) instead. From that memory I remember how we scanned the parts of the product and the company, determining the factors that influence it and how would it potentially grow or fall in the healthy drinks market. At first, I felt confidential about the topic but also in my mind I was thinking about the fact that this is more advanced course than the one from last year so I should pay attention and learn the new things that come across with PESTEL.

When we were doing the case study, at first I read the BBC paper(Anon, (2017)) provided, and then I tried to find answers by browsing different web sources. I felt a bit lost at the beginning because I was never involved or part of an online poker platform or anything that means gambling. It was pretty tricky, and my answers were not the great, but I was able to cover most of the questions. The main idea was that after searching and trying to find solutions and information about the poker game online(Officialpokerrankings.com. (2017)), I learned something new about it, like statistics and its value mostly in the UK. Even though I did not have excellent answers to the questions, I felt good because I did something and learned something new that day, so by the end of the case study everything was ok.

One of the most important parts of doing environmental scanning is that this will reveal the threats and the opportunities for that business(SHRM. (2017)). After the scanning is done and the key points are extracted, the company will change their strategies and plans whenever is needed so that it will keep their floating point. The online poker companies represent an excellent example of this concept. They need to check the competition and plan on what would make one or another better, but in the meantime to have a threat decrease when reviewing the PESTEL factors. The main idea is to take all the elements and try to find a middle point that will make them different and better from others.

The PESTEL is a handy concept that can help every company at whatever level. Even if there is a new project that will enter in a particular market, the members of it would be able to see their position in that market, the external factors and the regulations that apply to that specific market or category of products or services(Academy, P. (2017)). In a future career example, I think that even if I will start a project of my own or would be part of a startup or also of a big company, at a certain point, I will be exposed to this kind of scanning. After all, this course and those case studies are useful skill gainers precisely over the past year course which made me realise that the PESTEL concept is familiar to me.

After finishing the case study session, I realised that even if a concept is familiar we should never think that we know enough or we are so good at it because the only way to be good at something is to practice it. I felt confident when seeing this concept and then when it came to doing the case study I felt lost a bit, and I realised that is not that simple. My problem, in general, is that I mostly think or at least try to have a simple view of the things at the beginning and then everything jumps to hard, so I realised they are not that easy as I initially thought.

To remedy the situation of the questions that were left unanswered, I paid attention to other people information and their ideas so that all my questions will be answered by the end of the class. I felt happy that even if not everything was perfect and finished, I did the right thing to complete my paper with ideas that everybody shared.

Case Study: "Adding Value"

After doing my first case study, the second one was not hard at all, and I found it to be simple since digging for information was the only problem. The truth is that I started to do the assignment in the class and I was on my own without a pair and could not complete it by the end; two questions were half finished out of the five in total. The problem was not maybe the lack of partners but the fact that I did not feel quite confident in making the marketing mix. After the time was up and everybody talked about the questions, it was much clear what some of the marketing mix parts were, in Innocent case.

The second case study made me understand not just how all the concepts learned so far can be applied in the process of analysing a company but with the fact that a business or organisation has essential things such as the value that has to be incorporated(Innocent, (2017)). The value of business also defines it and make its customers, products and employees different from the others which will assure the long run of the company. Most of the companies will have values that are not that different from each other as the main idea. For example, the Innocent brand wants to be natural to the clients by giving their best and have a product which is the same as their name, innocent. This idea will make the customer believe in the company which is each company's primary goal, to achieve a higher number of customers. To support their innocence, there are things like charity which, the same, other companies are doing so that the customers will have the idea that other people are helped when they buy a particular product or any product from that group. I believe that it is essential to have these values attached to companies which are a right way of seeking customers but on the other hand, I think that in essence a business as its definition is having as the primary goal to produce money no matter what. Maybe this idea might be harsh, but it is the truth by the end of the day.

In the meantime of solving the questions, I realised that the source of information is significant in this process since there are many reports about companies. Some of them which are not officials tell the reader information that is very different from the truth or different from most of the sources say. Innocent for example was explaining their story in a much simpler way with less information than you can find on the internet so, sometimes it might be hard to reach the correct information that has enough quality details as it should have. I think that each case study so far is trying to make us understand the fact that it is hard to have a quality report about a specific company because there are so many resources nowadays that it is vital to check all the information that they provide you with.

In a future career, these skills can be constructive for any project that involves the creation of a product. The main idea is to know where is your product situated compared with other companies products which are in the same category. The most important part of it is that these concepts will help by reducing the overwhelming amount of information about a product or company and separating one from each other in a marketing mix way, where everything is bright and has its label.

For future use, the best thing to do in my case would be to practice and get better. By using and applying these concepts several numbers of times, I can learn where to seek for help and resources, where and which sources are trustable and that is how the companies which are analysing would get faster and better over time. Since we have more case studies, I do believe that by the end of the course I will be much better at it than I am now or I was in the first case study.

Conclusion

After all the most essential part of the assignment and the most critical element in the learning and solving process is to pay attention to details, to practice what I learn so that it would be easier next time and to be prepared as much as I can so that next time I will be able to complete the answers to the questions in the given time with quality information that is genuine.

At the beginning of the course I felt a little uncertain about what is going on, but after these case studies, this feeling turned into confidence. It is useful to apply what you learn and from now on at least I know that paying attention to details and keep on doing what you learn will be helpful in career and life. I am currently able to see that these concepts are beneficial and are not just theory but frameworks that will help a company to have a resume of its opportunities and possible threats which is a great thing for choosing a path for the long run.

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Appendix

Week 1
Today is the first time I attended the course lecture when we were starting to understand what is it all about, what is the structure and what are the assignments in detail of the course unit. The lecturer is a friendly and open person willing to help us and made the slides easy to understand which is a plus. After the introduction, we started the environment scanning topic which made me realise that I got into something familiar since I once learned this issue last year. I felt confident about it and started to have an optimistic approach to this course unit. After having this topic, we did Porter's Five Forces which was something new. The course made me feel very interested and had me learning about how to apply these concepts.

Week 2
This week we have the case study. Before coming to the lecture, I have read what is all about and felt a little nervous since I never did something like this. In the time we were given, I tried to do all the question but could not finish them. To keep on track, I took notes from what others were talking about. I found out that paying attention is a big thing which is helpful for everyone. The case study made me realise that is very important to apply what we learn.

Week 3
The marketing mix this week was fascinating especially when talking about the 4P's. It is a useful concept so that someone who wants to analyse a brand and its product can very merely categorise the price, the product, the place and the promotion of that specific brand giving, in the end, a little resume or an idea of what a company is and has in the market. I found it to be exciting and a bit familiar since I have learned this concept in high school at an entrepreneurship course.

Week 4
Today we are making the competitive strategies such as SWOT analysis and Porter's Generic Strategies which is something new to me and the lecturer made the slides in a way that would make the learning simple to us. I liked the fact that there were enough examples of each concept. Today I learned and enjoyed what happened in the meantime of the course. I found fascinating the value chain and the idea of how a product is delivered to the customer, the stages that a company needs to go through for this thing to happen.

Week 5
This week we have another case study which I hope to be able to finish in the given time. I am familiar with the Innocent brand, and I know some details about it. Beside this, I have read the materials from the course, so now I am searching in doing the answers. The SWOT analysis made me realise that is not that simple to do for any company since Innocent is not a huge company and there are not that much statistics about it on the web, just some stories and ideas about the brand. After the case study is done, I finished by answering the questions I did not know how to respond, by paying attention to what others said.

Week 6
This week I am doing the reflective report which is a challenge of revising the ideas and feelings I have experienced these past weeks. I am trying to explain as accurate as I can what are essential parts this course taught me so far.