

## ENSE 405

### Activity #1: Being a Technology Steward

Name: Kelly Holtzman  
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Project: Community and learning-oriented meal planning application

#### Instructions

It is sometimes helpful to reflect on a software engineering activity before diving into it. This document helps to collect your thoughts regarding what ideas, processes, people, technology, other assorted *things* that you think need consideration, or that have value to guiding your work before embarking on your journey. Fill this document out before selecting one (or more) of the UN Sustainable Goals

About you as a technology steward	
Personally	Your notes:
Why are you doing this? What do you expect?	<p>I am doing this because it has come to my attention that current meal planning apps are not community-oriented, or even user-oriented in some cases. Consider the following example:</p> <p>“Jo wants to make a meal plan for the next month because she has opted into the Whole 30 Diet. The diet requires that she eat particular foods with particular portions. She has a Whole 30 Diet cookbook with recipes and ingredients. To manually plan her meal schedule, she has to cross reference between the cookbook, her fridge, and her normal schedule of work and play. Additionally, Jo lives far away from the closest grocery. Her concerns include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What meals are good (tasty)? How nutritious are they?</li> <li>2. What ingredients does she need across the recipes she’s chosen?</li> <li>3. How long do these ingredients last and can she use them in the next recipe?</li> <li>4. What local produce/produce she’s grown herself can be used in the recipes?</li> <li>5. What do other people on the Whole 30 Diet recommend for/against?</li> <li>6. Does her closet grocery even have the food she needs for her recipes?”</li> </ol> <p>Planning against all of these items is very time consuming; it involves some random chance: if her closest grocery doesn’t have the food, what are the chances the next will? How much driving/work does she need to do in order to eat? If she wants to know how other people are faring on the diet, she would have to use the internet to research on her own - the cookbook wouldn’t provide reviews or preferences - and there could only be a few people posting reviews; and the reviews posted may not be informative (i.e. “It was good, kids loved it”). People are unlikely to be motivated enough to be this serious about meal planning.</p> <p>Meal planning can be intensive, and if you want to be considerate of the factors involved (like not driving everywhere for what you need, supporting local producers) you need to expend time and effort to find the right sources that</p>

	<p>help you make informed decisions.</p> <p>Today's market for meal planning applications offer a variety of features that make the manual work of meal planning easier, but do not offer methods of teaching about the concerns of meal planning, such as why we should support local producers; it is expected the user finds this information their own way and there is no incentive to do so.</p> <p>Available meal planning applications are single-person-focused, and in relation to the previous point: there is no motivation to consider how planning for one involves other people, whether it be those producers, handlers or when one wants the advice of other people in the same situation.</p> <p>I expect that my exploration of learning and community in an application that one would not expect would invite constructive criticism of current practices and self-reflection when it comes to something as deceptively simple as meal planning (with focus).</p>
What is your background (e.g., technology or community) and how does this affect your biases?	<p>My community background is that of an observer, I do not lead or participate much in meal planning or sustainable practices; I am able to sympathize with persons involved in such matters. I have family members currently involved in meal planning with the same situation as my example above, and often hear about their frustrations. In a sense, I am in a good position to not be biased about how learning sustainable practices and meal planning should be done; but I am biased to provide a solution that helps with my family's frustrations.</p> <p>I have no technical background in providing a meal planning solution - I have a basic to intermediate understanding of application development and good software design practices that can assist me in discovering a good solution. I am unbiased as to what platform the solution should be delivered, but am limited by time to develop the solution. Thus, my platform should be something I can quickly start building viable features with.</p>
How much energy and time do you have for stewarding?	<p>My energy and time for stewarding depends on my motivation to work on the project; I expect to be more motivated after I have broken down the complexities of organizing research into actionable items, and at that time I will have an achievable/concrete goal that I can do efficiently.</p> <p>I'll dedicate time towards breaking down work at least once a week, if not more depending on my needs for the week; I'll likely be able to complete some work the same day.</p>
How will you learn what you need to know?	<p>I am able to ask family members and friends with interests in meal planning what their frustrations and wants are. These persons are also willing to participate and work with me on developing a better solution to the work and concerns. I can possibly obtain additional information by investigating social media routes (no guarantee).</p> <p>As for technological solutions, the software forum community, my university, and student friends are my best resources.</p>
Who can provide support to you personally?	<p>I am able to receive feedback on opinionative work such as GUI prototypes, features, and overall solution from family and friends who could possibly use</p>

	my application. I am able to receive more in-depth or technological feedback from my university (my professor, upon request/suggestion).
<b>In your community</b>	Your notes:
What is your relationship to the community?	I am not a member of the community; yet I can understand their technological/environmental/personal frustrations because I can envision myself having them if I were in their situation and planning my meals. Additionally, there is nothing stopping me from planning how I get my food in a more sensitive manner. This project could incite change in my own actions.
What is your relationship to community leaders?	I have had no interaction with any meal-planning-influential persons (persons who shape the way we plan meals). There is a wide variety of persons with personal opinions on what food should be eaten, where it should be from, etc.
What ways do you have to understand the community activities/practice?	I am able to ask family and friends about their experiences, and I am able to research online forums for discussion. Online forums will be my best source for researching a variety of activities while my immediate circle will be my best source for sympathizing with activities.
What or who gives you the legitimacy to play this role?	I am not a leader or participant in meal planning, nor am I a champion of learning about sustainable practices. I am someone who wants to incorporate practices into their life that support sustainability; I believe I am in a position that I can sympathize with such concerns and use my technical ability to provide a solution for those without the ability to do so.
Who else is interested and could help you by offering resources?	At this time no person has contacted me with interest in my project.
<b>About the work of stewarding</b>	
Check the principles that are particularly relevant to you	Why are they relevant? What do these mean to you?
<b>✓ Vision before technology</b> Do you need to understand the vision of/for your community's success before you dive into the technology solution?	I do need to understand the vision first; I enjoy a workflow such that I learn the "big picture" before I learn about the components that make it. Knowing the big picture gives me a sense of confidence that I know the boundaries of my work. Vision before technology means to me that we should understand what/why we're doing something before we can approach how we should do it.
<b>✓ Keep it simple</b> Do you value the simplest solution for your community at this point in time? Is that "good enough?"	A simple solution is a good start, because it introduces a sort of <a href="#">bike-shedding</a> effect (in a good sense) that encourages people with no experience with the complexities of the best solution to have an opinion on a building solution - which should then influence what the best solution will be. The simplest solution is good enough if the general consensus is that it is also the best solution.
<b>✓ Let it evolve</b> Do you value helping the community have a sense of its own evolution? Think of technology, not as a system, but as an integral part of the evolution of your community	This is an extension of the above points.



<p>✓ <b>Use the knowledge around you</b></p> <p>Do you value who you can learn with and from?</p>	<p>I do value most all opinions and experience, more particularly if I can understand how it applies to the situation I am working with.</p> <p>Learning with the community should help to envision what the best solution is and identify pain points.</p>
<p>✓ <b>Always back it up</b></p> <p>Do you value having a backup plan (for data, information, and knowledge?)</p>	<p>Yes, I value having a backup plan; a plan is good for general project management (reducing delays in work) and in keeping up motivation (lower motivation if I am waiting a long time for some blocking response). No single source of information should override other related sources.</p>