

Ethics document



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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Retrospectives	4
Mathijs Jansen.....	4
Situation	4
Task	4
Action	4
Result	4
Reflection	5
Jurgen Kalkers.....	5
Automating work processes	5
Privacy violation	6
Remco van Swaemen	6
Situation.....	6
Task	6
Action	6
Result	6
Reflection	7
Teun van Brakel	7
Wesley Arends.....	7
Conclusion.....	8

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Introduction

Within semester 3 we have the learning outcome: *'You recognize and take into account cultural differences between project stakeholders and ethical aspects in software development.'* With this learning outcome we learn about what cultural differences are, what ethical aspects are and how we can take these into consideration for our software solution. To learn more about this learning outcome we followed a workshop given by our teacher. Furthermore, we took a personality test and discussed the outcomes within the group. After that we did a game including cards with different cultural questions or dilemmas. This gave us insight into the norms and values of other cultures. Lastly, we had a discussion within our group to discuss the ethical aspects that we can come across during our software project. Afterwards, we all wrote a retrospective looking back at the conversations we had and what we learned. Each individual retrospective is listed here below. After the individual retrospectives, we talked about our retrospectives and wrote a conclusion based on what we learned and what our experiences were.

Retrospectives

Mathijs Jansen

Situation

This semester we have the learning outcome: *'You recognize and take into account cultural differences between project stakeholders and ethical aspects in software development.'* Within this learning outcome, we the students, have to look at what cultural differences are, what ethical aspects are and how these are related to our project. To learn more about this subject me and my group planned a meeting to discuss this topic.

Task

The goal of this meeting was to learn more about ethical aspects and cultural differences. I wanted to learn how I should approach differences in societal lifestyles across the world. Furthermore, I wanted to discuss the ethical aspects of our software solution and see how those aspects could change the outcome of our product.

Action

First, we all took a personality test. This test gave us insight on what sort of person we are, how we look at things and how we take action. We did not use the test results as the complete truth about who were, but we used to test results to discuss certain personality traits. Furthermore, we played a game about cultural differences and how we as professionals could best act on those differences. This gave us insight on how other cultures do things, expect things and see things. Lastly, we discussed what sort of ethical questions might rise up when we are going to implement our software solution.

Result

After we all took the personality test, we discussed our results within the group and compared them against what others thought of each other. I myself scored very high on the introvert scale for example, something that others might not have expected from me. On the other hand, I had results

that came over just like my teammates expected. The results of my teammates were more or less equal to my expectations of them.

In addition to the personality test, we also played a game about cultural differences and how we should act on these cultural differences. This game consisted of a bunch of cards. On these cards are given either a question or a scenario. Questions could be for example 'Do Greek people rather call or have face-to-face conversations. With these cards we learned a lot about norms and values of other countries and how we should act on them.

Lastly, we discussed the ethical questions that came up when implementing our project, a robot that will serve people food. The first thing that came to mind was how ethical it was to replace actual people with robots. My thought was that it might not be such a good idea to replace people with robots, since it would mean that they would lose their job. If every restaurant would implement robots then a lot of people wouldn't have a job anymore. One of my classmates countered this thought with saying that for each job that will be replaced, another job will be created. For instance, the maintenance of the robot. But then again, a restaurant would only need to hire one maintenance guy instead of maybe 10 or more waiters. After this we discussed how ethical it would be to put a camera on top of the robot, which was an initial design made by the embedded software group. We discussed this and, in this discussing, we concluded that we wouldn't like having a camera on top of the robot because it would violate our privacy, furthermore we thought about where the videotapes would be stored, how long they would be stored etc. We concluded that if the video's would only be stored on premise and for a short period of time that we wouldn't consider that as a problem. However, if the videos would be stored or shared with some big company for longer periods of time that we would definitely not want that.

Reflection

I think that the discussions about ethical aspects and cultural differences went very well within our group. We gave each other turns to speak and respected the norms and values of others. During these discussions I learned a lot about how cultures and personalities differ between people and countries. How I can better approach people with different norms and values or cultures and what I should do I dilemma's such as given in the game we played. Furthermore, when we discussed some ethical aspects of our software solution, I learned that we should always consider the ethical aspects of our project as a whole instead of only looking at the specific part I need to make. We looked at the project in a broader aspect and found out that there are some concerns that we should look into while working on this project.

Jurgen Kalkers

To get started we have played a game about ethical and cultural aspects. Several of these were scenario's or multiply choice questions where we discussed what we will choose or feel about the action that can happen in a certain situations. This game helped us to see the cultural difference when it comes to business outside our home country.

Later on in our discussion about the project of the horeca robot we have talked about different aspects that arises. So we came up to 2 different aspects that deserves attention.

Automating work processes

Some processes that can be automated may upset some people, because it has the possibility of taking jobs away.

This is mostly an aspect that elderly people find hard to accept because they have a years of experience in a career that is been done by some way. A lot of those people don't like changes even though it makes their jobs easier.

Younger people are more able to accept these changes, because they like the advantages for example: time saving. It also gives the opportunity to new jobs that use these automated processes.

My view as a young student, I really like where the technology is going. Because of the study I have selected I know that I will be part of the development for automating processes, where I know that a lot can be simplified for people to get their job easily and flawlessly done.

Therefore I don't find it something that needs slowing down. It may lose some jobs but it mainly creates new ones where you don't need to work as hard as before.

Privacy violation

The robot is going to have some components that are needed to transport itself to its objective. This can include sensors and camera's.

Camera's create a source of disturbance for some people, because it can violate someone's privacy. This because with social media that uses a lot of pictures and videos, it is clear for everybody that a camera can upload material to these social media platforms.

Knowing that the horeca robot doesn't have a camera it is for me no problem that this can be put in use. But if a different robot must use a camera by the clients requirements it is important to realize it is something that can create problems about the privacy of the customers.

I think that a camera can be put in use as well, but it must apply to the privacy rules that are well-thought out.

Remco van Swaemen

Situation

With the group members we discussed the ethical regarding the horeca robot. When the robot takes the work of the waiters. And when the robot has a camera with it where everything is recorded.

Task

My task within the discussion is to state my opinion on how I think about these two ethical problems. With this I want to give the other team members an image which they can take along in the discussion. Possibly changing their minds or finding a middle ground.

Action

During the discussion, I first listened about how others think about the ethical dilemma. This allows me to see the difference between what the group thinks about it and how I think about it. Then I shared my opinions about it and show the differences how I think about it myself.

To make sure everyone understands my insight I have argued it in different ways. I have done this so there is less ambiguity, and everyone has the same idea what I mean with my ethical opinions.

Result

After several group members had given their opinions, I gave mine. These opinions were far apart because I don't mind if the work will be replaced by robots. Because new jobs will become available again for these people. Because the opinions are far apart there was not really a switch of opinion,

But I could understand what the other side is saying. We also talked about cameras on a robot. Here we were all reasonably agreed, and I went along with the opinion that it doesn't work well with the privacy rules in the Netherlands. However, my opinion has changed that it does not have to be a taboo and it depends on how the camera is used on the robot.

Reflection

I thought it went well during the discussion. I was able to state my own opinion calmly and include other people's opinions in my thoughts. What I learned is that quietly listening to others is the most important thing, even though your opinion does not change easily. You will take it into consideration in the future.

Teun van Brakel

During the semester we had different outcomes we must demonstrate. To demonstrate the outcome about cultural differences and ethics we planned a conversation with the group. In this conversation we talked about different ethical and cultural points. The goal of this conversation was to recognize and take into account different points of view on ethical and cultural dilemma. My role in this conversation was to give an opinion on different topics and discuss my point of view with others to get a better understanding.

To achieve these goals, we first did a personality test. The results of the tests were discussed together with the group. I personally thought that every result was right because you could easily find examples for it in the group dynamic. After the personality test, we did a game with different cards. On these cards were different situations of ethical and cultural moments and we discussed how we would react in these situations. The last thing we did to achieve the goal is that we came up with two topics: privacy violation and automating the work processes. With every topic I took a moment to share my opinion with the rest of the group. For example, I think that the potential camera on the robot is a privacy violation when the images are shared with the company and made public. Some other members of the group thought however that it wasn't a privacy violation and it should be included into the robot because we already use it inside the camera on the doors.

The conversation helped me to get an understanding of the opinions of my group members and think about the topic in different ways. Also, it helped me to put myself into the different points of view and improve my opinion about the topic. For example, with the privacy violation the opinions differed a lot. In this conversation I learned that it was easy to make a fast conclusion. While when you waited for some seconds to observe the question you could get to a conclusion that is much better. Besides, you could place yourself more into the opinion of the other group members. So next time I want to first observe the question for a longer time before I answer the question. This will not only help me with questions but in lots of different situations.

Wesley Arends

During the group conversation about ethical aspects, I and the other group members had some different opinions about the Horeca robot; there was another moment during this conversation where you were free to choose an ethical topic to ask an opinion about; finally, there is a moment where we spoke about our own personality test outcomes.

My role during this conversation was as a team member who wanted to convey my opinion about the service robots and the ethical aspects, which is that the elderly or others could fear robots. My question, not related to the Horeca robot, during the ethical aspects PowerPoint: "What do you think about countries that see The Netherlands as the country of weed and clogs?" where I wanted to figure out my team's opinions. Finally, during the individual personality test, where I wanted the opinions on my test from the team members. I expected this opinion/question to be taken seriously and well thought about.

During the conversation I asked a moment for me to jump in, this is to make sure everyone was finished speaking. When talking about a topic, it is important to listen and then speak, so everyone gets a turn.

This worked because I was calm and did not hasten my opinion. It also worked because I had thought out this problem/question beforehand. The last point is that I did not interrupt their conversations and listened.

I learned that through a well thought out question, people will listen to your opinion seriously. I was very satisfied with the result. Next time, however, I do want to make sure I observe other people's opinions more thoroughly, so I can figure out how they came to their conclusion. Observation is important in a lot of situations and can certainly be used.

Conclusion

The goal of this document was to learn more about taking different cultures into account and recognize differences. To learn more about this we first did a workshop with our teachers. Afterwards we did a card game with our group and discussed about the results. After we all wrote our retrospectives that we made after the discussion, we read each other's work to see if there were some unclear parts. We then discussed these parts and asked some questions about how they looked at the course of the conversation. These questions helped us to even get a better understanding of what their opinions are. Besides after the card game and discussion about the topics we all learned how to first observe the situation and then get to an opinion about it. Because in the end all of this will help us in making more culture friendly and ethical products.