

During the initial phases of the capstone project, I assumed the role of a technical lead, responsible for guiding a diverse team consisting of members with varying language backgrounds and different levels of familiarity with the chosen tech stack. This experience has provided me with valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with leading a multicultural team in an IT project.

The experience of leading a team comprising members with diverse language backgrounds was indeed challenging. Effective communication played a pivotal role in our collaboration, and it became apparent that the language barrier hindered smooth understanding of my instructions and explanations. Additionally, since the tech stack was novel to most team members, grasping the concepts and executing tasks proved to be a slower process. Only one member had prior experience in frontend development, which further intensified the challenge.

Selecting the appropriate tech stack and imparting a comprehensive overview was another intricate task. Ensuring that everyone comprehended the rationale behind our technological choices demanded patience and a clear communication strategy. It was discouraging to witness the slow progress due to the initial learning curve, compounded by the complexities of explaining intricate technical aspects.

The team's responsiveness to learning new topics and its engagement with the project also emerged as points of concern. In the initial three weeks, I expected members to make progress in their assigned topics, yet some failed to demonstrate substantial advancements. This lack of interaction and initiative might be attributed to the steep learning curve imposed by the new tech stack and the team's other commitments. The language barrier compounded this issue as well, making it challenging for me to communicate the significance of their contributions and the need for timely progress updates.

To address these challenges, our team adopted several strategies. We used translation apps to bridge the communication gap and resorted to simpler terms during discussions to facilitate better understanding. I consciously moderated my speaking pace during discussions to ensure that all team members could follow the conversation. I incorporated multiple questions to confirm understanding, and I found it effective to reiterate and rephrase key points. Visual aids such as illustrations and diagrams were also utilized to facilitate clearer communication. These measures seemed to enhance communication and foster engagement. However, for the future, I recognize the need to proactively establish a more inclusive environment that encourages questions and clarifications, especially considering the complexities of the tech stack and the diversity of team members' backgrounds.

Reflecting on this experience, I've learned the significance of adaptability and patience in managing a multicultural team. Going forward, I will refine my communication strategies, aiming to ensure that every team member comprehends the goals and processes clearly. Additionally, I will encourage regular check-ins and emphasize the importance of shared learning experiences, motivating team members to actively seek assistance when needed. My future actions will involve more comprehensive planning, integrating visual aids for clearer explanations of the tech stack, encouraging preliminary concept review before discussions, and placing emphasis on documenting acquired knowledge. These measures aim to address challenges while enhancing cohesion and productivity in multicultural IT project teams.