

Learning Portfolio (2021/22)

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Introduction

This document comprises two reflective sections an **individual reflection** and a **group project reflection**. This module has focused on problem solving but also on our education in general, I learnt how to work in a group and solve problems behind a deadline. I felt the focus of this module on both our time in college and outside in the workplace and in this way I felt driven to apply myself as much as possible. In general I am excited to bring what I have learnt from this module and apply it to next semester modules, as well as work in general down the line. Reflection is key to self improvement and the following will hopefully demonstrate this.

Individual Reflection Section

chosen topics of discussion: Decision Making, Problem Solving

1. Reflection on my Decision Making

Early on in the semester my group and I were assigned a decision making task. In the task we had to decide on the most appropriate method of communication , this would be achieved using a decision making grid. The decision making grid we used is **table 1.0**. It was a formality for me at the time, as I had already ignorantly made my mind up before starting the grid. In this way along with my group I felt I put little effort into assigning the proper weightings and scores and we were biased towards what we had priorly decided on.

Table 1.0

Factors	Accessibility	Efficiency	Frequency	Popularity	Total
Weight	5	4	3	2	
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Instagram	20	20	15	10	65
Skype	10	12	0	2	14
Discord	15	20	6	6	47
Email	25	4	9	6	44

I do however feel in general I have improved in my decision making and I now see a grid like the above as a useful tool in making a decision. I will now describe what I should continue, stop and start in regards to my decision making upto this point.

Continue

using decision making grids: I applied this tool specifically in another assignment, the screencast project. My group members and I had collaborated two problems, of which we needed to choose one of that we would solve. I did out a decision making grid, which allowed me to slow down and rationalise what was most important. I felt I had a more unequivocal idea of what was the right choice.

Stop

letting time pressure skew my sense of reasoning: Although under no time constraints I am able to use a grid like before. In exam situations I find my thoughts jumbled and unclear. I noticed this in some of the problem solving quizzes and I think it is a combination of stress and sense of urgency that brings me to this irrational state. I need to remember to stay calm and not rush solutions.

Start

journaling thoughts: I need to start appending to a journal daily. This would allow me to manage my thoughts and better learn from any mistakes I may have made during the day. Good decision making is a combination of using past experience and assessing evidence[1] and a journal would allow me to introspectively learn and gain experience.

2. Reflection on my Problem Solving

A couple weeks into this module we were assigned our first group problem solving task. There were two problems to be solved, employing the problem solving strategies we were becoming familiar with. I personally fell into pit holes for one of the problems and lacked enough testing of our solution for the other. In general I

have improved and will reflect on what I should continue, stop and start in the following.

Continue

practicing in-action reflection: In group quizzes following the task above I felt I did well in adapting to situations and keeping the group on track. This allowed me to fail quick and efficiently attack the problems.

Stop

jumping right in: I think it is an effect of bad habits and laziness that I still do this. For example in web design I employed a trial and error method which led to ugly and purely functional code. I need steps that I can fall back on and re-anchor from.

Start

testing solutions more carefully: Specifically in programming we have a tool called *einstein*, fig 1.0. This is useful but tells you if your correct or not. In this way it doesn't endorse proper testing and when it came to problems solved in, for example, the end of semester individual problem solving quizzes I often had a lack of confidence in solutions and didn't have the experience to verify them with proper testing.

alt text

Group Project Reflection

chosen topics of discussion: Group Work

references: https://loop.dcu.ie/pluginfile.php/3942758/mod_resource/content/8/CA172PS_420DecisionMaking_v05_6up.pdf <https://ca116.computing.dcu.ie/>