Week Ten Reflection Journal

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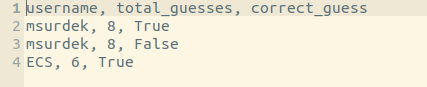
IT 697: Python Experiential Learning Activity

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The final week of this experiential learning activity consisted of developing a guessing game program, participating in the discussion thread, and compiling my certificate of completion as the experience draws to an end. My biggest challenge this week was traveling to Vermont on Wednesday for my cousin’s wedding. I was only able to dedicate time for my python activities on three separate days, but I was able to get everything done to the best of my abilities and am satisfied with my experience this week and now for the course as a whole.

On Monday evening, I got my week going by attempting to create a guessing game program as described in the module nine overview. I was only planning on getting started with the program, but it came together faster and better and I expected. I was even able to have my sister give it a try. She guessed the correct number on her sixth try, as shown in this guessing\_game\_results.txt file.



After her attempt, she and I had a conversation. I told her that this program was the most sophisticated code I have ever written and she mentioned that she does not have a mindset and thought process conducive to programming. What we hashed out is that she likes, and maybe even needs, to work in a linear fashion, where there is something specific to do first, second, and so on. I had not previously considered it, but programming is not a linear process whatsoever. When I started working on the guessing game, I wrote target = random.randrange(-100, 100, 1), even though I knew that this would not be the top line in my final program. The programming process is more of an inside out unfolding than a step by step system. I wrote this first line, which I could then utilize to build the guessing game around. One recurring theme from my experiential learning activities is that the best way for me to get something done is just to start doing something. Doing something, anything at all, brings you to new moment that you are either prepared to handle or able to ask questions and find out how. Doing something is the only way to overcome the feelings of being paralyzed and unable to even begin. In programming, the something that needs to be done is not always apparent. However, experiences like this course and the guessing game program in particular have shown me how to reframe a problem or to find a new perspective where the first step is clear and obvious. And then every following step, in whatever direction or complexity, reveals itself.

**Record of Project/Work Ideas and Their Current Status**

* Guessing game program
  + Completed in week 10
* Learn Python The Hard Way
  + 18/53 Python exercises
  + 15/15 Command Line Crash Course exercises
* Visualization with real data set in python
  + Completed 2/2 Pluralsight courses on data visualization
  + Read & followed code of Python for Data Visualization Ch 8
  + Chose a topic/dataset
  + Created 4 subplots that show comparison I plan to demonstrate
  + Formatted subplots and overall plot into final visualization

References

McKinney, William-Wes. 2012. Python for Data Analysis. *O’Reilly*.

Miller, Bradley and Ranum, David. 2017. Introduction to Scripting. *Jones & Bartlett Learning.*

Shaw, Zed A. 2014. Learn Python the Hard Way. *Addison-Wesley*.