Inattention to results

During one of our discussions, my team and I was planning what tasks that should be taken care of. While discussing this, we came across a problem where one individual seemed unsatisfied that they weren’t getting any tasks yet. However, we already planned that there would be more tasks after the unit tests were written for our code. Some people in our team had to wait until one task was done before we could assign them the task of writing some of the code. However, this team member expressed that he felt like we wasted their time by bringing them into this discussion at all if we weren’t going to give them any tasks. This perspective of the project only made them focus on themselves instead of thinking about the direction the project is headed and the tasks that need to be completed later. Furthermore, this team member wasn’t thinking about the results through the process we developed to complete the project, but only thought how they weren’t contributing anything at the specific time. Due to the length of that task, we couldn’t split up the work amongst more than two people. I’m sure that in the future, I might come across this same problem again. I might come across situations where some members in my team have the chance to be more productive than others at certain phases of the project. Even if everyone does contribute by the end, some people may feel that they personally didn’t contribute enough even after reviewing the successful final product.

I’m planning the to just talk to this team member face to face to ask them their opinions on the project. I will make sure to listen carefully to their opinions and provide a solution if I can. I’ll try to find tasks in the project that all team members can be working on. This could be reviewing previous documentation or code to assess for any issues. With this action, I will be able to let this team member contribute to the efforts of the project. I will also explain to them that sometimes we must wait until some tasks are done before other phases of the project can start. In other words, some tasks can’t be started until other tasks are completed.

Reflection:

Sometimes, I feel as if I haven’t contributed as much as I could have even after finishing the tasks that I agreed to finish before finishing a project. I feel that some short-term projects don’t leave enough work for everyone to do. However, clearly defining who does what and creating a schedule might satisfy most team members. On some short projects, it might be beneficial to let two people to take the same task. When I did this in the past we discussed whether we were going to work on the task together or complete the tasks separately. When we did finish the tasks separately, we reviewed the code each of wrote and combined our differences together. This lead to both of us contributing to the task with neither of us feeling like we wasted our time. Combining work like this might be a good idea.

Avoidance of accountability

I’ve noticed some things that were different in this group than my last group. One of these things is our inability to follow our set goals as a team. We’ve decided on someone in our group as a leader. After every meeting this team member announced what tasks need to be completed before the next meeting. The progress on these tasks haven’t been completely satisfactory. We aren’t taking affirmative action as a team to make sure everyone on the team has access to the svn repository, can use svn, and knows what to and not to post on our repository. When no one, including me, is holding the team members that are a little behind accountable, we don’t make any progress. In the beginning of our project we decided that we should research on the topics we’ll be working on for this project. These topics were bluej and checkstyle. It seems that there were two people in our group that didn’t do this task, but we moved on anyway. Not holding these team members responsible may mean that they may not contribute to the rest of the project and finish other more important tasks that were assigned to them. This problem needs to be addressed. The whole team needs to commit to the plans we are setting each sprint or we may have more trouble finishing this project along the way.

I plan on making a log and keeping track of tasks that were completed by the group members. On each meeting, I will ensure that all team members have done the tasks that they agreed to do last meeting. This process keeps an organized log that can be used to see who may be falling behind and who’s working with the group. I will also address the issue with svn. I will talk to my team to set rules on what to and not to post onto the trunk in our svn repository. This will keep our repository organized and easier to maintain.

Reflection:

Most of the people in my group are working with tools that are unfamiliar to them. This can lead to some setbacks, but leaving these team members behind and moving on isn’t an option. We, as a team, need to make sure everyone is on the same page and everyone is committed to the project. It seems like a difficult and time-consuming task to take care of all these problems before addressing what the team needs to be doing before the next meeting. Such meetings do seem useful though. However, some team members may fix the problem of other team members not contributing or following set standards by fixing the issue for them instead of talking to them. This could lead to problems too. I feel that the team member may continue to make the same mistakes or not contribute at all.