**Focus Group - Team 3**

**Interviewer**

Recording the discussion. My name is Orgescico, and I'm doing this Ph.D. at TD. This is my third year studying software engineering practices and lean startups. So the purpose is to have this discussion with you guys today and answer some questions regarding the course and how we can make efforts in the future to make improvements and how to how make things a little bit better perhaps. Can you take around and say what is your full name and what is your study background?

**Interviewee**-**01**

Yes, I can start my name is [--------] my direction is databases and search.

**Interviewee**-**02**

My name is [-------] and I study computer technology specializing in AI.

**Interviewee**-**03**

My name is [------] studying Computer Engineering, specializing in computer-like software design.

**Interviewee**-**04**

My name is [-------] I study data science, specializing in AI.

**Interviewee**-**05**

My name is [--------]. And I study computer science with a specialization in software.

**Interviewee**-**06**

My name is [--------]. I studied computer science with a specialization in AI.

**Interviewee**-05

That's everybody.

**Interviewer**

So [-----] can you tell me a bit? What is your project about then? And it's all computer engineers here, right here. So.

**Interviewee**-01

Our task is to make office communication better. So we're making a chatbot, which will make the communication between the front office and the back office better.

**Interviewer**

And what is the Chatbot about the communication better, in what context?

**Interviewee**-01

You can use the chatbot to when somebody has bought a bond, they can tell it to the bot and fill in the information. And the bot will say make this information into a task. So instead of like the situation is now that they send an email when they're, they have bought something. They don't have to do that. They will just like tell the bots and the bot will mock up tasks so that the back office people can do what they have to do to manage the bot.

**Interviewer**

And in this context, did you have to do the course? Or is it like something? What are the motivations for doing this course? Is it obligatory? Or is it like you can choose and?

**Interviewee**-01

Yeah, it's obligatory. So we have to take it, everybody.

**Interviewer**

Everybody. Yeah. It still if it wasn't obligatory, what could be the motivations for the course?

**Interviewee**-01

You can get like relevant experience in my project.

**Interviewee**-03

More of a real-life experience.

**Interviewer**

That's good. Anything else or just experience-wise?

**Interviewee**-02

I guess maybe getting contacts in the business, networking, and networking.

**Interviewee**-01

And learning new technologies that can be relevant for later work tests.

**Interviewee**-06

It's a lot more practical and most other new courses in my experience. That's you get more hands-on experience. So that's experience again.

**Interviewer**

This is your experience level. What kind of, let's say technical skills did you learn and what kind of technical challenges did you have during the project?

**Interviewee**-**01**

We learned more about like, Yeah, Azure and Microsoft apps.

**Interviewer**

Okay, technology-wise.

**Interviewee**-**01**

Yeah.

**Interviewer**

Anything else that you feel you have learned like coding skills or something else?

**Interviewee**-**02**

Like, for me, it was Bot creation. How to create a bot service.

**Interviewee**-**03**

Also, how the Microsoft environment functions, how it works, and how everything connects in Azure.

**Interviewee**-**06**

So I guess our project was more technology-heavy than very deep programming. So it was more to connect and use different technologies together rather than programming something from scratch. So more integration and getting things to work together, we still have to build some stuff, but it was more on the technology side than purely programming.

**Interviewer**

I see. How about soft skills, skills, like communication between each other communication with the customer? Did you learn anything about that? Since you're working as a team?

**Interviewee**-**06**

Yeah.

**Interviewer**

You all are software engineers so sometimes if you fight. So I'll be hearing that you don't fight. But

**Interviewee**-**03**

I think the general consensus of the group is that physical attendance in physical meetings is better than digital ones.

**Interviewer**

Okay.

**Interviewee**-**03**

Digital ones can be a supplement?

**Interviewer**

Yeah, that could be the case. Yeah, but how about the team itself? How do you feel that like the team that you have worked been working with your team members? Did you learn anything about how to discuss brainstorm, come to understanding, and so on? Communicate, send emails, and stuff like that. So was it something new for you? Or you already knew everything? Did you have any challenges with the customers or with yourselves?

**Interviewee**-**06**

I feel like the customer aspect is something new, at least. at that venue, I haven't had the experience with meeting a real customer until this course. Some of the soft skills and group dynamics stuff. I will read it here. For instance, in the software engineering course, there's also a lot of Scrum and stuff. But I guess here we learn more on additionally on the project management perspective, which is not that there hasn't been that much focus in other courses. So just project management is somewhat new.

**Interviewer**

So what did you learn about project management then? Since you jumped in jumped to this?

**Interviewee**-03

Planning takes time.

**Interviewer**

Yeah. Estimating times was it easy to do?

**Interviewee**-**03**

Sorry

**Interviewer**

Estimating times for tasks was it easy to do?

**Interviewee**-01

A little bit difficult? Because it depends so much. Like [------] said, or like, yeah, other variables. So it's kind of difficult.

**Interviewer** 9:04

But what more can you say about project management in general? Like, did you have any challenges with it? Like you're using what are you using Agile Scrum? Is anything else or just this scrum framework?

**Interviewee**-**06**

Scrum? We have used some XP.

**Interviewer**

What have you used from XP?

**Interviewee**-

Pair programming mainland? Yeah.

**Interviewer**

Okay.

**Interviewee**-06

And just the general sort of philosophy of extreme programming, I guess.

**Interviewer**

Yeah. That's the thing. Yeah, and how do you feel? Did you have any challenges in doing those things? Scrum and pair programming.

**Interviewee**-**03**

Breaking down user stories, and tasks into concrete tasks was a bit difficult.

**Interviewee**-**01**

Especially when you're not that familiar. You're with the technology again? Because you don't know like, you're not familiar with it. So you're not actually like, what are the tasks? Because we and we discovered that sometimes we made user tasks. The three of them, for example, our rule, like, if you do one thing, you fix all three together. So that also made it a little bit more difficult, I think, to also estimate.

**Interviewer**

On the spot, then how about this? This is a new kind of shifting, but what is the motivation that you might have to create a startup with the project that you are doing now? What could be some motivation?

**Interviewee**-**06**

To create the startup out of the project. I guess it would be very motivating if you felt like the product had a lot of potentials.

**Interviewer**

So you're gonna name it if the product was?

**Interviewee**-**06**

If the product had a lot of potentials, then it would obviously be motivated to make something out of it. I guess the way it stands now, it's it there could be some potential, and I guess the customer wants to explore that further, potentially. But it's not, it's not an obvious direction, at least.

**Interviewee**-**03**

And like, it's difficult to make it like a general solution. Since the internal routines of the different companies in the finance sector, varies a lot. You have to customize the solution for each customer.

**Interviewee**-**02**

I guess you could make a startup of like if the seller was about creating bots for companies, like in our case, we were supposed to make an about how we make communication. And I would help to standardize the communication in the Oslo platform to make such a thing. So yeah.

**Interviewer**

Let's say, say you had sort of different projects, and you are learning the same skills that you're learning now technical, technical skills and soft and project management. Would this startup idea be interesting for you, as a team? Because right now, it seems like a complex, you are developing something for it. But would it be like developing an interesting idea, like for a startup that you develop yourselves? Is that interesting at any level?

**Interviewee**-**03**

Personally for me, since you're so tied into Microsoft's environment, I don't see the appeal.

**Interviewer**

What do you mean by tied to Microsoft environment? I'm not sure if I understand.

**Interviewee-03**

This chatbot is a Microsoft.

**Interviewer**

I am not talking about the Chatbot. Now I'm saying that let's assume you don't have the Chatbot that's a project. You had the opportunity to do a different project.

**Interviewee**-06

It would be interesting for us to develop a startup project on our own or?

**Interviewer**

Yeah

**Interviewee-06**

Generally, generally,

**Interviewee-02**

Yeah. For me, maybe if the project was interesting, and I connected with it too. Yeah,

**Interviewee-06**

I guess it also depends on it will depend a lot on the group, I think, and also the products. Because I think it's I personally think it would be difficult to imagine being set together with a random group in a class and then expect that it would be motivated to develop a start-up after that, because I think there's there's, like can be a lot of variation in the group that you get.

**Interviewer**

This is one awkward question. I asked every group in case this was an interesting project and you make a startup, would you involve each other in the startup in the future? No present Yeah, I know. It's an awkward question. Just be honest with the answer. It's okay.

**Interviewee-06**

Yeah, I guess if I needed people possibly.

**Interviewee-03**

I can continue working with this group.

**Interviewee-06**

But I guess if we had to sort of in a startup, I guess they even survive, you have to be like really focused and work very hard, I think. So they have to work quite a lot harder than what we have had to work during this.

**Interviewee-03**

The product has to be appealing to all group members. So find a common ground.

**Interviewer**

And then we have this idea maybe, to introduce this sort of Bootcamp activity, innovation Bootcamp activity at the very beginning of the course, it can be Bootcamp or hackathon. But the idea is that you work closely with the customers for three days. And you get on board with technologies you get on board with the idea you're developing. And then you also explore brainstorming about this startup, potentials of the project and so on, or innovation potentials of the project? Would that be interesting? addition to the course, like three days, boot camp at the beginning, and you work closely very hard with the customers for three days intensively.

**Interviewee-03**

And then boot camp is tied to the actual project, like the actual task from the customer?

**Interviewer**

Yeah

**Interviewee-06**

We will still be there still be a task from the customer, or is it up to the customer and the team developer tasks together?

**Interviewe**r

I mean, it doesn't have to be like the customer tells you what to do. Exactly. Because sometimes in many cases, customers don't even know what they want. They know what they want, but they don't know how to explain it, they in terms of many details, and so on. And still, you have to do this loops, and iterate and understand, and so on. But also, there are times that the customer has a need, but doesn't know how to solve the need itself. And then that is the process of your innovation process within solving a problem for a certain customer. It just tells you the problem that he has and technology how to solve it, but you as a team, you come up with a solution. But you, of course, discuss and brainstorm and do all these innovation aspects of the projects, more and so on, what is your perception, just say it, honestly, maybe it's good as it is now. Like you get the requirements, and then you obey what the customer says. And it's that sort of master-slave approach you get, the customer tells you what to do, and you try to do the best ultimate.

**Interviewee-06**

I think it would be possibly useful. Nice, because in our case, we have gotten, it's a little bit like you said that the customer didn't know beforehand exactly what we could do with Microsoft universe. So we want to explore this case. So in that case, workshop type, innovation Bootcamp could be useful to better understand the customer problem. So we get a better grip on what they want.

**Interviewee-01**

Nothing good probably will start if you have this sort of Bootcamp. So you'll get like a good kick start. And yeah, lots of communication with the customer and the group.

**Interviewee-03**

I remember fell in took a couple of weeks before we really understood the task like understood what the customer wanted. So a boot camp would probably solve it. Speed up the understanding from our side. Yeah.

**Interviewer**

And maybe to bring more insights about startup activities as well. We don't know that but that can be Yeah, anything else you want to add or any questions for me because I've done with my questions. No, it was very easy interview. So anybody that hasn't spoken and feels that wants to add something. Let me see. Who's here Alexander [------], Ivan [----], Lee blonde and I missed one name.

**Interviewee-06**

[-------]

**Interviewer**

Can you say a bit more?

**Interviewer**

About what?

**Interviewer**

Abou everyone.

**Interviewee-04**

Okay I think it's about like, a lot of time is about administration, stuff like that. That's kind of very boring. And I don't feel like I learned very much and we'll need to spend a lot of time on the report I don't feel like I really learned from that it seems like just something to measure is really important.

**Interviewer**

The report is disturbing, the report is disturbing but thank you so much. I make the order for you guys now. 11:30 next Thursday, and please send me the source and own email now. So I can do that as well. The source preferences. I don't know what that was. Look at dressing or something. Okay.

**Interviewee-06**

Yeah, I can send some of the things. Yes. Thank you. Thanks.