SURE 2019 Reflective Diary Template

At the end of each week of your project, write a short paragraph reflecting on how that week of the project has gone. You may wish to frame it using the following questions:

1. What has gone well this week?

2. What could have gone better this week?

3. How will the answers above shape how I approach next week?

After your final week and by 5pm Friday 23 August 2019, you should submit this document via the SURE MOLE site.

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| Week 1  This week I discovered a flaw in my project proposal and managed to identify why I had the wrong idea about what I can accomplish. I was excited to discover that a small substitution was enough to get me on the right track. Having researched several papers relating to weighted abduction I was surprised to learn that what I used to regard as unachievable in the topic has been recently addressed (several implementations of weighted abductions have been proposed) and that I can continue to work on it.  I need to know more about the probabilistic framework for weighted abduction. I’m challenged by the difficulty of this framework which I am willing to implement. Currently my plan for the project is to implement the framework (which remains stated as an open task in research). Prior to that I wish to compare it to another framework – ILP inspired – proposed in another paper and used for the metaphor interpretation system originally (whose implementation is the primary goal of this project).  I need to remember that the difficulty of implementing weighted abduction might render it impossible to accomplish the primary goal of the project. At the moment the best way to think about this issue is that the implementation of the framework itself is a publishable accomplishment (given that it hadn’t been done).  This week I managed to work efficiently, although some problems with consistency have been encountered. Some days I achieved much less than I had planned because of various distractions (I decided to work from home). Next week I wish to work more consistently. I will wake up at a regular time and go to the library to work for a few hours non-stop. |
| Week 2   1. What has gone well this week?   At the beginning of this week my supervisor and I had an end-of-W1-start-of-W2 meeting where we summarised W1 (with the help of my reflective diary), established where we are in terms of progress and figured out three next steps. Those were then implemented by me. I started to use a diary constantly where I not only report on my progress but also think in writing; this, I figured, helps me think clearly and go forward faster. I noticed how I apply my insight gained during dissertation worked in this project (e.g. while creating test data which was one of the tasks for this week).  Because of my absence on Thursday and Friday we’ve decided to append those two days to the project duration; therefore Week 2 ends on Wednesday 26/6/19.   1. What could have gone better?   Despite already noticing it in Week 1 and paying attention to it, my consistency of work still needs improving. Although I manage to get done what I need to, the progress is noticeably not linear (some days I achieve 10 times more than other). The main issue here is that I get easily distracted by background noise and other matters that need addressing, and since this project is all individual work, I tend to feel like I can put it aside for a minute and take care of something else.  I have also noticed that in fright of some next steps I sometimes wander off and do ‘extra-curricular’ research in the area, despite that I’m aware I will not be able to deliver anything related to it. The issue here is probably confusion as to how to approach such a big step as ‘implementation’, ‘test case formulation’ etc.   1. Consistent reporting to my supervisor keeps me motivated and keeps the record clear; I should keep doing this.   Problems with consistency could be addressed by setting up a daily schedule of work; short, 2-3-hour periods should be best for productivity; if that’s not enough then could try a Pomodoro tracker.  To aid the lack of courage at starting with big steps, try to break up every big step into many small steps. Then make a plan and keep logging the progress. |
| Week 3   1. What has gone well this week?   This week was a breakthrough as I begun to keep a Progress document where I wrote down everything I’ve done and thought of, and it noticeably improved my thinking process and made me progress quicker. I started thinking more critically about my ideas and keeping notes about the decision processes. I became more consistent with my work.   1. What could have gone better this week?   At the end of the week I focused for too long on one issue that it then turned out was not really necessary to be solved anyway. This made me lose time as well as motivation because I thought I could not progress without it.   1. How will the answers above shape how I approach next week?   I will do my best to analyse tasks thoroughly before trying to solve them – solving unnecessary things will only slow me down. I will keep writing everything down in my Progress document and read back whenever I need to remind myself of something I’d have done earlier. |
| Week 4   1. What has gone well this week?   I started working on my implementation and despite my fright about getting to it I just sat down and started writing. It turned out that with my previous experience from dissertation I am actually much more productive and efficient when it comes to implementing this type of stuff in Python. I kept going back and forth between my ideas and abstract constructions on paper and the code to lose as little time as possible – I find that ‘pseudocoding’ ideas improves my thinking and gives shape to what otherwise is an abstraction in my mind. I improved my consistency from last week.   1. What could have gone better this week?   The workload turned out to be a lot (the implementation couldn’t have been finished in week 4). Generally this week went okay and nothing particular went wrong. I was writing less in my Progress document because there is less content to write in it when one is focused on implementation.   1. How will the answers above shape how I approach next week?   Something ought to be done about the workload – I am worried that I may not be able to finish the project in time. The way I go about implementing is okay though and I wish to keep doing it like this. |
| Week 5   1. What has gone well this week?   I managed to finish my implementation and wrap up what I’ve done so far. I caught up with all the tasks I hadn’t finished earlier (test cases for the AODAG) and finished them. I worked hard to get the project back on track.   1. What could have gone better this week?   Mostly due to stress related to my PhD application I got very little done in comparison with last week – which is still a lot, but could have been more.  3. How will the answers above shape how I approach next week? |
| Week 6 |