Industry Review

Industry Review of Jane MacMaster (Week 7) and Dr Wendy Russell (Week 8)

Introduction

During this semester, the course Professional Practice 1 provides us with many industry related lecture sessions presented by professionals from universities and industries. This review makes a critical evaluation of negotiation skills in the following two industry lectures:

1. *Negotiating and Justifying Decisions*, Jane McMaster (), (Week), and

2. *Negotiation Skills*, Wendy Russell (), (Week).

Summary

Both lectures emphasize on the importance of the good negotiating skills as a professional tackling real world problems. MacMaster (2019) breaks negotiating decisions into two parts consisted of compelling communication and sustained dialogue, of which negotiating is one of the key elments in complex problem solving, strategy and design. Russell (2019) analyses negotiation skills in the context of good communications, which leads to benefits in effective information flow, collaborative decision making and long-lasting relationships. These two lectures concentrate on the significant role of negotiation skills in dealing with real world problems when working professionally as engineers or computer scientists.

Critical Review of Letures

Negotiations are discussions aimed at reaching an agreement between two or more people or parties, which call for professional skills including critical designing and thinking, efficient dialogues, active reflexivity and reasonable strategies for settling disagreements. As students of CECS at ANU, we ought to apply these skills in a proactive way to build up our knowledge and enrich our skillsets towards becoming true professionals in the fields of engineering and computer science.

Negotiations usually take place when there exist not only the conflicts between different entities but also the needs and willness to settle down problems to achive compromises and maximize mutual interests. As is stated by Fisher et al[], everyone negotiates and people reach most decisions through negotiation in almost every field of our society such as business, government or the family. Based on the research by Spangle et al[], negotiations occur in different contexts varying from interpersonal, consumer to organizational, community and even international. For example, Jansen[] argues that with the increasing globalization, intercultural communication and intercultural negotiation in particular will be on every engineer's agenda and that requires

the training for the development of such competence. Kochan et al mentions that negotiations entail forming new agreements and exchanges between parties through interactions of people, which implies the core parts of negotiation exist in the indentification of interests and the necessity of compromises during the process. McMaster highlights two crucial aspects in regards to negotiating decisions, namely compelling (persuasive) communications and sustained dialogue. Compelling communications appeal to both people's rational and emotional side so that people feel involved and get enthusiastic at the proposal you put forward. Furthermore, credibility helps build the trust during the process of negotiation. Besides, sustained dialogue is of high significance in addressing the concerns of the stakeholders in the long run, and it connects each party concerned to maximize mutual benefits as well. Russell, on the other hand, treats negotiations in the context of communications. A good communications brings benefits of smooth information flow, collaborative and informed decisions and strong relationships amongst stakeholders and teammembers, thus laying a solid foundation for successful negotiations in the future.

As future professionals in computer sicence, we endeavour to achive our goals by meeting the demands of our clients, during which negotiation skills are essential. ACS mentions in *Code of Professional Conduct* that "any conflicts should be resolved in favour of the public interest" which means "the public interest takes precedence over personal, private and sectional interests". Therefore, when negotiating is in process, every party involved should bear the primacy of the public interest in mind. On the path of becoming experts in computer science, it is of great importance that we realize the cooperations and teamwork are two vital factors that contribute to the long term development in the computing industry. By working together as experts, communication and negotiation are indispensable steps to reach the final goal. Russell specifies several facilitative approaches when it comes to use negotiation skills in communication. For instance, by using facilitative technique and design as well as paying attention to both process and content, we ensure the active participation of each party to keep the negotiation going forward. Additionally, suspending judgement and thinking for the group are two simple yet valuable suggestions to include everybody's perspectives during the communication. Through applying these skills in our professional practice of negotiation, we are most likely to find the optimized solution to satisfy the mutual interests with minimum compromises.

One aspect missing from McMaster's lecture (2019) is how we, as engineers and computer scientists, develop the concrete approaches to achieving practical communications in the process of negotiation. Russell takes up this point of view and concentrates most of her attention on strategies to facilitate good communications during negotiations. According to Russell, collaborative coversations through dialogue and deliberation play a key part in negotiation skills. Russell points out that reasoning, listening, reflection and difference are four leading aspects to consider in terms of bringing forward a satisfactory negotiation proposal for each party involved. In particular, she reveals to us the significance in working with disagreement. In working together through the "groan zone", participants get deeper understandings of each other, as well as a clearer and more collaborative picture of the common grounds than ever before.

Conclusion

Courses such as Professional Practices prepare us fully for entering the professional workplaces with necessary and valuable experiences. The knowledge and skills in communications conveyed by competent experts and professors will assist us in tackling difficult situations. The negotiation skills serve as a guideline for solving conflicts and finding optimized agreements among different parties. The courses in the program of Master of Computing which are accredited by the Australian Computing Socitey (ACS), truly lay solid foundations for personal and professional growths, and the program equips us with fundamental competencies for future careers in a postive way.

References