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Tutorial Group 8

CS2101 Phase A Reflection

Two years ago, after my enrolment into the university, I was invited for a scholarship interview. Back then, I was not very certain of what my interests are particularly of, hence do not gain much insight into the courses I applied for. After the interview, I was rejected. I was puzzled, and has always questioned my rejection ever since, until I took CS2101 then I realized how severe my mistakes were in the interview.

The lack of research was one of the major reasons that I failed in that interview. I did not conduct an exhaustive on the university itself, let alone the courses I applied for. As an international student from Malaysia, I replied that my option of studying in Singapore is due to the close distance from home. After learning CS2101, I learned that to be able to succeed in interviews, exhaustive research has to be done to show complete understanding of the entity we are applying for.

Next, the concept of low and high context culture played a key role in the interview. The interviewer is a Western, but I was not aware of the importance between the difference in our cultures. After taking CS2101, I learned that Western countries have a low context culture background, which means they rely on explicit wordings and non-verbal cues to convey their thoughts. I recalled that most of my responses consists of a simple “yes” or “no”, which I assumed that the interviewer will infer the rationale of my response, but I now understand that I should answer with elaborations which follow a specific “subject-elaboration-example” structure rather than making false assumptions.

Besides, the lack of confidence throughout the interview resulted in my failure. Apart from smiling to the interviewer, I was nervous, anxious, stuttering all the time, and failed to find the correct words to express my thoughts. After learning effective communication, I learned postures that exhibit confidence like steeple hands, lean forwards to show interest, thank the interviewer frequently before answering questions, and speak loud and slow enough.

Finally, my lack of enthusiasm also devoted to the failure in that interview. During the final phase where the interviewer requests questions or clarifications, I eagerly wanted to leave the scene therefore I gave him a firm no. CS2101 taught me that I should instead prepare several questions beforehand to show interest or request clarifications to show that I am listening and interested. Now after I reflected on my actions, I should indeed ask questions such as “are there any examples of scholars giving back to the society?” to show that I am interested in contributing back to the community I am living in.

After taking CS2101, I learned from my past communicating results, and realized the importance of effective communication. As we will get exposed to more individuals and the society as we grow, I am sure the skills learned in CS2101 will benefit me in a long run.