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CVWO Final Submission Write-up

When I first applied for CVWO last year, I was wondering if I had made the right decision. I have always wanted to learn web development, but this self enrichment process is never taught in class, so the only way would be to explore on my own. After watching through tutorials, and tried to start my own, I often ran out of ideas, and after finding reasons for myself, I gave up every time. I knew I need something to monitor me, with deadlines, like a proper module. Hence, I applied to CVWO.

Throughout the whole 3 months, I faced countless obstacles along the way. First, the learning curve of React is quite steep for someone who got no prior experience in JavaScript (I took CS1010S, in Python), and it gets more difficult when exposed to libraries like components, rendering methods. Then after implementing the back bone, there comes the front end. I spent countless nights figuring out the CSS overriding mechanism, and it took me more than 2 hours to center an element, or layout the background image. After dealing with the frontend and backend, I was 2 days left before the deadline. The deployment to Heroku turns out not as easy as it seems, because I was shocked when I realized that my front end CSS is not working in Heroku, except for the HTML. It is more complex because there are countless ways found on StackOverflow to include Rails assets, such as modifying the production.rb, converting the .css file to .scss, or even updating the GemFile. Besides, the background image path is also relatively different when running on the local machine and on Heroku, which is not very intuitive. At the deployment phase alone, my search history shows that I searched for more than 400 times to render the frontend and the background image.

As a takeaway, the trivial things learned in CVWO can be summarized into the learning different programming languages. In a short 2 months, I picked up Ruby on Rails, React, JavaScript, HTML, CSS, BootStrap, Git commands, and the deployment process to Heroku. More importantly, I learned how to learn. There is no better way to learn than getting our hands dirty. Although obstacles may be in the way and bugs always exist, we should always look for ways to hunt for it, pinpoint it, and solve it. I learned that taking a break once in a while from difficulties helps us to come back with a clean state of mind, and can see the root of the problem with more clarity. I learned that to overcome one's failure, one must learn to accept it, and the process of getting back onto the right track often stimulates one's learning to the max. I learned time management, stress management, and the ability to juggle between priorities and responsibilities. Finally, I learned that the joy and satisfaction upon a product's creation always outweights the woe, and giving up is never an option.

User manual
1. Users can create task by giving it a name, a description, a deadline in terms of day, month and year, and a tag indicating the importance of a task / how important the task is.
2. Users can view all the task in the current queue that has to be done, in sorted order from most recent to last recent.
3. Users can choose to edit their task, and delete them if the task has been completed.
4. Users can search their task according the level of importance, and the shown filtered task is displayed in sorted order, from most recent to last recent.

-Yap Dian Hao