PERSONAL REFLECTION

When looking back at the project, the first thing it tried to do once the group chat for our group was created, was to build a feeling of safety. To achieve this there should be minimal hierarchy. And everyone should be able to speak their mind. Part of this was doing this myself, often saying what I think on a matter and explaining why I feel that way.

But the main thing for me in creating safety in the team was to create trust, which is something that is difficult to achieve in such a short amount of time. Therefore, we as a team tried to start building it immediately and a part of this is like mentioned above people being able to speak their minds and once this happens, I did not categorize some of the ideas as bad. Since this will make the person that came up with it uncomfortable and can prevent them bringing up ideas later on. I usually do criticize the ideas of others right from the get go, not doing so now I feel helped a lot, especially in the brainstorming process.

Since the team members are not able to speak to each other in person and the result of the project may be more important to some that to others, a comment about how one should improve his/her work and how its his/her responsibility to do so may not be as effective in a virtual team. Because of the other person no feeling he’s affecting or hurting the others or simply cares less about it because he/she has never met the group members. In order to minimize this, by asking questions about why the work was late and mentioning things about how I and others need the work to continue theirs. Which I something I do not normally do in group projects. I must however admit that the technique I attempted was not that successful.

Something else I applied, in the videocalls, was summarizing what the others were saying and asking questions about it. I feel it helped me and the other team members to understand what that person was saying or trying to say. Furthermore, I believe it shows the person you are asking the questions to interested in what they have to say, and this may result in confidence on their part to continue to speak their mind. This was something I had never tried before, but now I have tried it I will implement it in order projects and life in general, it helped me create a clear picture of what everyone was saying, and helped with memorizing who said what and why, because I was listening more actively. I could have implemented it more in the regular group chat, if I had done that it might have led to some deeper insights in the ideas of others, which in the end could have led to a better result.

Furthermore, I found that it was necessary to involve everyone in the conversation. Since not everyone immediately shared their opinion on the matters discussed in the meeting. I tried to achieve this by constantly asking my team member’s opinions on the different ideas after which, the person truly felt the need to answer instead of assuming the question was for someone else. Resulting in a more active discussion with everyone voicing their opinion, instead of only a few people having the discussion. Despite the fact that I did lead to discussions, it was not very effective and started to really work once time started running out, so it is difficult to say how big the influence of this technique was in having discussions.
And finally, I found the way in which we picked who was going to do what an example of how I tried to accommodate things. Almost everyone in the group wanted or was keen on doing the marketing or market research for the project, with only one person looking to do the economics behind the financing part. I myself initially also wanted to focus on market research and competitor analysis. However, when I found that for the others this was more important than to me, I met their wishes and decided to do the financing part of the project. In this particular situation I sacrificed my own wishes for the wishes of the other group members, which I something I often find hard to do.

By preserving their wishes, I feel a long discussion with most likely the same outcome (since it was less important to me to do the market research than it was to others) was avoided. If we were to compete on this matter like in the previous example this would probably have dented the relationship or made me look unreasonable.

All and all I think that the techniques I implemented or tried to implement helped the group and me. I should however have tried harder to truly make these ideas part of the group process during the entire duration of the project. I often tried on technique after the other. Using them all at the same time would have led to a far better result.