Personal Reflection

When I first read about Global Enterprise Experience (GEE) on my email, it instantly had grabbed my interest with its title so I decided to check its website. Though I wanted to register immediately, I had to consider if I could juggle between my internship and the GEE report. Fortunately, I registered after some of the past participants’ stories had inspired me that lead me to be a part of Team 149 which created a meaningful yet sustainable business concept that would benefit our proposed societal group and potentially the world if it were to be implemented.

Once the list of teams was announced on May 2\textsuperscript{nd}, our team started rolling. After greetings were exchanged in the team through a number of emails, we had to decide on a communication platform. The team agreed to use WeChat in order to accommodate Cassie who is in China. However, another member just found that they could not download WeChat. Then I was a little bit anxious as we have not started any quality discussion two days into the competition due to the communication platform issue thus, I emailed our leader, Hwalani to suggest her on using Whatsapp as the team’s main communication platform, and I agreed to act as liaison to Cassie (Cassie was fine with it). My proposed action was supported by Hwalani, and it was well received by the other teammates after I added them to a Whatsapp group I created. The first issue was solved!

After that, we started on to idea generation where I and four other members contributed their ideas for our report, and interestingly the first idea chosen was unanimously agreed in the team. This was a great start because everyone was on the same page and seemingly motivated at that time. The next step was where things started to progress at an obvious slow pace. Hwalani divided sections in the report among members and set the due date for the first draft which needed each member to upload their specified parts in DropBox, a platform we used to share and upload files. However, the draft was delayed due to missing contributions by some team members even though Hwalani and I have reminded them in our Whatsapp group. Thinking there might be problems faced by the members, I privately texted and offered them help if necessary. It turned out one member needed guidance while was still unaware of the due date; I kept to my words by helping the former through specific steps and examples and reminded the latter. When we are reaching the end of the second week, our first draft was just complete. However, it is not as ideal as I have expected to see; most details were vague while some were unnecessary. I was really shocked that I wanted to comment (not blame) on their work in order to help them know how could they improve their parts but I held it in because based on my past experiences, my feedback at that time would have more likely to result in discouragement as well as lower team morale and productivity which have been totally opposite of the purpose of my comments. Instead, I praised and told them to keep up their good work in an attempt to keep them motivated rather than less productivity; this was also to avoid conflict or dissatisfaction forming in the team.

Moving on, I created an online survey in an attempt to do market research on our potential market where main targeted respondents were Moroccan since our proposed business is to launch in Morocco. This idea was greatly praised by Hwalani and other members, and we proceeded to spread it. A few days went by when I decided to inform the team that I will not be including the data in our report due to lack of responses. However, here I was satisfied even though the result is not included as long as I have put an effort into a potentially useful idea.

In terms of communication, most of the time I tried to text as much as I can in the group to keep the group consistently engaged. I usually keep my words unambiguous and made sure it’s understandable and polite to everyone in the team. Time zone was not an obstacle but I would check online to avoid texting any member during their midnight hours which might have been disturbing for them. Also, although there are team members who do less than others, I tend to make myself think that they might be facing unexpected difficulties, therefore, I do not criticize or blame them.

On 16\textsuperscript{th} May 2019, I volunteered to design our report when Hwalani asked for a designer and an editor for the whole report. I actually wanted to main both tasks, but then I decided to only volunteer for the designing task because editing is a skill mentioned in the majority of other members’ bio that they could contribute for this competition, and I wanted to give them opportunity to contribute as much as possible for them to show their commitment. I then proceeded on designing the report, but the editing task was still not taken up by anyone. Just before I try to volunteer for editing as well, I have to applaud the leader for the idea of asking each member to further summarize and improve their contributed sections and that it will be checked; it would be efficient and here I learned how to move on to spreading a task that seems daunting for a single person to handle. However, the idea did not affect everyone as only three members including myself edited our own parts before the due date set by leader approaches. It was disappointing to see the level of participation shown by some of the members but it was no time to be complaining or forcing them to do their given work because there was no work done even though they are repeatedly reminded. Moreover, I can sense the leader’s uneasiness through her texts in the group; to maintain group unity I tried to reassure her by asking her to trust our other teammates. Her worries were then alleviated but time was flowing by quickly.

When there are a few days left before the submission deadline, I quickly left behind my frustration that I was feeling before and I figure I should take the initiative to edit the whole report because only 1/4 of the report is clear and seems fitting to be in a business proposal while ¾ was less than the standard expected, and it also sits at 9 pages; so I edited and designed the whole report after Hwalani was in favor of my offer and effort after asking her for permission to let me handle the rest because I believe she, the leader, has the rights to decide the direction of the report and I would have respected her decision if she had decided otherwise. After that, I spent most of my time doing intensive editing, proofreading and designing. Among the notable things that I have done in that
time included summarizing the report into 6 pages inclusive of only comprehensive, clear and concise information, designed the report to look attractive from, created SWOT analysis and Financial Statements, added contents (information) that I thought was necessary for a business proposal as well as spending eight hours on 19th May to finish up the report. The following quote had motivated me to push forward amidst my internship and peer-lead others in this competition regardless of their level of participation, “Leadership is not position or a title; it’s action and example,” by Cory Booker.

Finally, once I have completed the report, we were back on track and have some time left to spare! I showed it to Hwalani followed by the team to ask for feedback, and I still welcomed any suggestion as well. The team was fascinated by the final version of the report and no change was made but I actually wanted to see more enthusiasm in their work rather just complimenting my work. Nonetheless, I was proud of my achievements during this competition; GEE is a very unique opportunity for me to test, improve and increase and improve my skills such polishing my communication skills, multi-tasking, being committed despite of problems and etc., experience working in a global virtual team and at the same time contribute to the world by proposing a social-oriented business idea. Through GEE, I also gained other valuable insights among which are 1) Be mindful of others’ circumstances regardless of their contribution. 2) Offer assistance to others that might need help because they might too shy to ask. 3) Leadership is can be developed through practice and experience. All in all, thank you GEE for this unforgettable experience!