Reflection on Collaboration

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I have been working with Jake Perkins for three weeks on this project. So with the mid-point being passed and the final approaching rapidly, what has been my experiences so far?

***What have you enjoyed most?***

The main thing I have truly enjoyed is working with Jake. He has stayed focused and accomplishes his work ahead of time. He is constantly providing great suggestions and feedback to each weeks’ assignment. I have learned as much from him about how to effectively collaborate as I have doing each week lessons.

As for collaboration, I have learned about Bower’s four competencies: Operational, Interactional, Managerial, and Design (Bower, 2011). I have learned how to use most of these competencies and to have the knowledge of where to use them in future collaboration. I have seen the progression in working with Jake how we managed through the operational, interactional, and some of the managerial competencies. We started with email, leaving messages, small discussions, etc. We then moved to gmail and wikispaces, where we actually started interacting in real time. We worked together providing suggestions and feedback on the topics. We posted sites and allowed the other to have time to read the materials and then came back together to discuss it. We have used the managerial by working together on how to work inside the wiki, using each other strengths and guiding each other to make a successful and manageable wiki site. We currently are working in the design competency.

I also learned about the seven processes to improve collaboration. I learned that these are dependent on many factors, so I must learn about my group before trying to randomly throw out a strategy (Brindley, Walti, & Blaschke, 2009). Using this information from week two, and what we learned from Hall, in press, in week three, of how Communication, Structure, Group Composition, and Grounding interact with the seven strategies, I believe I have a better understanding of how to merge these to help a group successfully establish a meaningful (relevant) group that has elaborative (constructive) feedback to grow the group to success (Hall, in press).

***What have you enjoyed least?***

Time. What I mean by this, is trying to be considerate of Jake’s time, as well as my families time. I am fully aware that I have a commitment to the class, but I also have to balance that with the other people involved. Week days sometimes are a challenge for people working weird hours, sometimes during the week just do not work, so then we have weekends. Here again is a challenge, me living outside of a city, Saturday is our normal day to go shopping. Having to drive over an hour, we usually just make a day out of it, so time may be limited. Having a partner that goes to church and has activities that surround the church, limits Sunday. Again, keeping in mind that each of us are trying to be considerate of each other’s activities, it is still something I enjoy the least.

***What is the one thing that is most important for your group to accomplish in order to complete the project?***

This is truly a hard question for me. I think we are doing fine in the collaboration area, I have been assigned a wonderful partner for this assignment. To be successful, I truly believe, at least I have accomplished the most important thing, the fact we are bringing the need for people to be aware of the unemployment rate of our returning Veterans, and the ability to possibly help them by showing a way to increase their skills and experience as they relate to writing a resume. How to take time and think about responding to a question in an interview. That is the most important part to me. I have already shared some of the materials Jake and I have found with many of Veteran friends and friends that have kids returning and getting out of the military. So again, I think we accomplished the most important thing.

As for the assignment piece, I think we will need some time this week to pull all the parts together, to have a little more face-to-face time for discussions. I think we are doing well, and hope we have a great presentation for next week.

***References:***

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