



# BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Reflection Part C (1400 words)

Word count: 1346



In this report I shall be reflecting on Semester one for both individual and team development in; learning, skills, participation, and contribution. The report will be based upon the six-week project on the YMCA sustainable development goals. Reflection is an efficient way to look back and understand the positives and negatives of the project alongside, the effect it will have on me personally going into the future. Gillett's, Hammond's and Martala's (2009) research validates the idea of life skills such as, critical thinking or problem solving being essential part of development in preparation of the working world. Finally, to allow structure and reasoning, I will be using the Gibbs reflective cycle (1988) tool with each point made.

As a team we were presented with the task of exploring and identifying the three strongest sustainable development goals for the YMCA in the Newcastle city area. The first two weeks were used to gain a grasp and understanding of the task at hand, as shown clearly by [REDACTED], our team scribe team minutes as shown in appendix 1\*. This was created to provide evidence for attendance and defining structure and organisation and role clarification to completing the project successfully and in a timely manner. This proved crucial in having an organised structure within the team working environment due to time constraints we had. But also, to have management effectiveness as a way of increasing and allowing team members to work faster (Phadermrod, B., Crowder, R. M., & Wills, G. B. 2019). Personally, I found the exercise quite daunting but eventually I found this strategy so useful by having a clear understanding of both the task and what individually was expected of me as a team member. This was partially a success because in theory according to Colman, Patera and Hebbar (2019) the method of delegation increases morale and productivity which are important factors for a successful team. Furthermore, at the time we felt this was the fairest approach to maintain a fair division of workload.

The outcome of using both plan with research and delegation methods was essential for the success of the project because it gave structure and allowed every team member to have a clear understanding of what was expected of them. If you look closely onto appendix 1 and 2\* you can see clear deadlines set for each task. Although this may have created pressure it enabled team members and I to improve time management as well as, learning how to deal with pressure both highly likely to deal with on later stages of our lives. Through the development of these key skills, I can put evidence on my CV as research shows that recruiters look such skills to allows companies to gain a competitive advantage (Noe et all. 2017.) In addition to time management, responsibility is another skill developed during this time period which can relate to being trustworthy for potential employers.

To conclude, looking back into the initial stages of this project despite research validating our decision to use meeting minutes, there is also research into individuals working in isolation as opposed to working in teams as we did. A case study for small Unmanned Aerial Systems exposes weaknesses in delegating tasks (Lee, A. C., Dahan, M., Weinart, A. J., & Amin, S. 2018). One clear disadvantage portrayed was people having different styles and ability's which, created inconsistency's in work. To overcome the identified weakness, when presented with a similar task we would still take advantage of the high productivity but, assign one person to keep work in the same style. This allows for instance the target audience understand all information presentation and not have any anomalies.

Overall the planning and research was a success nonetheless, I struggled dearly with dealing with pressure with the addition of strict deadlines. Stress in a workplace setting according to Vagg, Speilberger & Charles (1998) can cause serious health problems including high blood pressure and mental health issues. This must be avoided in order to keep good health both mentally and physically. I used Thompsons (1994) theory to deal with stress by managing my time effectively being one of my main weaknesses. Going forward I intend to manage my time better to plan my days out by allocating and using my time more effectively. I will practice this skill over the exam period and with good time management can be a crucial skill many business employers are looking for in the modern day.

In the middle of the project the most critical event took place which ensured victory for completing our task. At the start of the 8<sup>th</sup> seminar we had been given the short task as teams participate in a team review to check on progress of the projects. Many benefits were acquired for our team as it allowed us to assess the performance collectively as a group. Analysing appendix 3\* displayed many similarities such as, open and trusting environment going hand in hand with being able to express opinions. Having a safe environment pertains to the trust within the project team which, according to theory increases performance levels accompanied with satisfaction (Taillieu, T., Costa, A. C., & Roe, R. A. 2001). This can also validate earlier statements about delegation as trust means people are able to rely on each other to complete tasks.

On the other hand, team review highlighted many challenges for the team as it highlighted some of failures including fair participation, communication outside of meetings and attendance. This greatly reduced the morale of the team due to people feeling either unfairly worked or disappointed in their actions. Personally, due to my poor attendance in early stages of the project, caused me to feel isolated from the team decreasing the cohesion. Despite the team meeting enhancing learning and listening skills both very prevalent in the working world, as a team we decided to create an action plan to tackle this problem of attendance by adding a consequence. The incentive to motivate team members was 'if not present for three consecutive sessions will be kicked from the team'. Straight away a huge improvement was seen for attendance and participation. This was due to using Locke's (1968) task motivation and theory whereby having specific goals or consequences causes people to produce a higher level of performance output.

Looking back onto the project it is clear to see the many skills acquired over the six-week period which, almost all can be used in workplace or further study scenarios. The skill of reviewing has many benefits one including developing communication skills through talking and evaluating performance with peers (Bannister, F., & Janssen, M. 2019). Communication is essential to becoming a successful businessman because, research by Ahmad (2016) states that having adequate communication allows you to be able to promote and market a product or service. Another skill learnt over this time period was the opposite of communication being listening in which, a case study on a Singapore insurance company where listening skills were important to interact with customers in conjunction to management of staff (Goby, V. P., & Lewis, J. H. 2000).

In spite of the many skills obtained or improved on this module it is clear the source of the problems created was my lack of confidence causing the poor attendance. Having confidence can bring myself many opportunities and advantages, one of them could be that confidence allows you to be able to easily put points across in team discussions. However more importantly research states that being more confident will increase likelihood of not only gaining business opportunities but for employers to hire staff (Boyd, I., & Blatt, J. M. 2012). In future to gain confidence I have read journals from Bishop-Clark, Courte and Howard (2006) in which their research shows one of the best ways to improve confidence is to do something that makes them uncomfortable. To do this I have signed myself up for society and sports clubs such as basketball to practice the skill of gaining connections. Putting myself into an uncomfortable social setting is bound to improve my confidence and communication skills.

**References** Good use of appropriate and for the most part up to date references, but not in APA format.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1\*

YMCA		Location: Business building
		Date: 19/11/19
		Time: 11.12
<b>Meeting Minutes Agenda</b>		
I. Created a draft plan for the presentation (what's going on each slide, colour scheme, who's researching each slide, what we will create presentation/voice over on)		
II. Went through research we had already done		
Action Items	Deadline	Outline
Condense research down to create presentation	19/11/19	Research YMCA Overview with facts and figures
Condense research down to create presentation	19/11/19	Explain SDGs YMCA try to meet in their operations and the ones that match their objectives – why we have chosen those SDGs
Condense research down to create presentation	19/11/19	Overview of how similar organizations meet their SDGs – brief examples
Condense research down to create presentation	19/11/19	Research techniques to embed the chosen SDGs
Condense research down to create presentation	10/11/19	Research measurement techniques YMCA can use to measure if SDGs are being met
Condense research down to create presentation	19/11/19	Research how to report the success of the chosen SDGs

### Appendix 2\*

Meeting Minutes		Agenda	
I. Submitted questions to YMCA			
II. Discussed research so far			
III. Continued research			
Action Items	Who?	Deadline	Outline
Put all research so far in google drive	All	15/11/19	-
Create a draft plan, including the team report and presentation plan	All	15/11/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What will be going on each slide</li> <li>What we will create presentation on</li> <li>Colour scheme</li> <li>How to do voice over</li> <li>When to complete tasks by</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3\*

Tasks		10 December 2019 12:15:19						
ID	Title	Priority	Status	% Complete	Assigned To	Start Date	Due Date	Completed Date
1	Explore SDG's and prioritise the three main goals for the YMCA	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	22/10/2019	08/11/2019	08/11/2019
2	Explore global best practice as to how other organisations have addressed the chosen SDG's	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	22/10/2019	08/11/2019	08/11/2019
3	Draft questions to ask YMCA and have them checked by Karla	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	08/11/2019	12/11/2019	12/11/2019
4	Suggest ways YMCA can measure, embed and report their SDG's	(2) Normal	In Progress	50%	[REDACTED]	08/11/2019	19/11/2019	
5	Start to design and plan the presentation	(2) Normal	In Progress	20%	[REDACTED]	12/11/2019	13/12/2019	
6	YMCA overview - stats and figures ready for presentation	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	15/11/2019	19/11/2019	19/11/2019
7	Explaining SDG's they try to meet in their operations and the ones that match their objectives	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	15/11/2019	19/11/2019	19/11/2019
8	Overview of how similar organisations meet their SDG's - examples	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	15/11/2019	19/11/2019	19/11/2019
9	Techniques to embed the chosen SDG's	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	15/11/2019	19/11/2019	19/11/2019
10	Measurement techniques	(2) Normal	Completed	100%	[REDACTED]	15/11/2019	19/11/2019	19/11/2019

### Appendix 4\*


GROUP PROCESS AND MONITORING PROGRESS

POSITIVE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NEGATIVE	Your score	Group score
1 Group goals are clearly defined											Goals unclear	10	7
2 Agreement is reached at most meetings											Disagreement a feature of most meetings	2	3
3 Tasks completed as agreed											Agreed tasks not completed	2	3
4 Everyone participates											Significant number not participating	5	4
5 We listen to each other											Listening skills weak	1	8
6 Open & trusting atmosphere											Distrust and defensiveness	2	9
7 Able to express opinions											No opportunity to express opinions	2	9
8 Opinions can be questioned without resentment											Opinions 'untouchable' and cannot be easily challenged	2	9
9 Respect shown for each other											No or little respect shown by of for other members	2	9
10 Consensus decisions											Authoritarian decisions	3	9
11 Leadership skills demonstrated											Drifting or dominating by individuals	4	8
12 People present on time or send apologies if unavailable											Unpunctuality a significant feature	4	8
13 Systematic approach to discussion											Lack of a systematic approach to tasks	4	8
14 Time used efficiently (& effectively)											Time wasted	2	7
15 Challenging, rewarding, enjoyable atmosphere											Flat, lifeless atmosphere	2	7
16 Group committed to task											Lack of commitment by significant number of group	2	7

**ACTION POINTS**

- Everyone to participate
- If you hit 2 scores in row without explanation (consequence leave group).

1-3 problem areas, need to find solution  
 4-6 Warning - potential problems; remedial action needed  
 7-10 Performing well in this area; monitor & maintain



**Y M C A  
P R O J E C T**

**Team Agreement**

- I.** Every member should be present in every group meeting
- II.** If a member is going to be absent, they must inform the rest of the team
- III.** Missing 3 meetings, without doing the necessary work/giving a valid reason, will result in the member leaving the group
- IV.** Everyone should participate in team meetings
- V.** Everyone is responsible for the success of the team
- VI.** Opinions can be questioned without resentment
- VII.** The atmosphere is always open and trusting
- VIII.** Tasks must be completed on time and as agreed

Name	Signed
