

Dreaming of teamwork

MikesBikes is still a fresh wound in my mind and an issue that is flip-turning continuously in my thoughts. I would have loved to say that doing well in the Glo-Bus simulation for International Business last year set me apart in some way, but I was beaten down more than a few pegs as I tried to muddle my way through the game. After six hours in front of my shining beacon of laptop light I was close to tears. The simulation was causing me unforeseen levels of frustration and feelings of inferiority.

As time drew on, I began the inevitable reflection on what the reasons for my unprecedented failure were. My mind primarily danced with the mildly illogical "I am just terrible at this kind of thing." "Peter is right; I'm just not cut out for this course." These parted, making way for a less emotional reaction "I'm not approaching my strategy to the game play logically" "I have barely been playing the game just reading the whole, giant help menu." Eventually creeping from the shadows as the hour of CV submission drew nigh my mind and I arrived at "I simply haven't given it enough time and I am stressed out by my time limit which is causing me to both approach it illogically and not give the simulation the time it deserves".

The emotional suggestions were more or less scribbled off the list immediately as I assured myself that I have succeeded at this form of testing before in Glo-Bus and am absolutely convinced that I have enough brain-power and drive to do well. Practice really does make perfect, as the old saying goes, and I tentatively concluded that I was giving myself limited time which led to a cascade of illogical approaches to playing each rollover (it had degenerated to hopeless button mashing for a time there) alongside stressed out, hurried decisions as my shareholder value crept ever further from \$25. So there I had it: I had just been reading the help menu, making decisions in an unfocused manner and started making real decisions in earnest, much too late.

So, I turned away from my frustration and internal battles and sought out some help. Just as joining a small discussion group for other commerce papers had helped, I decided to seek out a helpful team situation. As Katzenbach and Smith (1992) and Oakley, Felder, Brent and Elhajj (2004) both asserted, tasks are more successful when carried out in a true team situation rather than by one individual. I met a lovely classmate who commiserated with me (even though we couldn't help each other much with our sad SHVs). I also recruited the help from some of the best problem solvers I know to talk me through their own suggested approaches to manipulating a program like this. I put the last hours I had left to full on SHV Beast-mode within my makeshift team and I managed to churn out an acceptable SHV. I like to think that Nentl and Zietlow (2008) would be proud of the class's progression into higher learning stages: analysing our company performance, synthesising this new information and evaluating those little fragments into our own ability to win against a computer program.

With this small MikesBikes success, I realised that I was really looking forward to tackling the simulation with a great team by my side; we could drink strawberry milkshakes, stay up late and paint each other's toenails whilst simultaneously controlling the virtual world of bike manufacture! I'm getting off track here, but I've glimpsed the beautiful world of successful team work and support from other's for this type of course and I can't wait to begin.

Hope you have/had a great weekend :)

REFERENCES

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