

A Reminder of the Importance of Reflection

This week Mike's Bikes has once again trumped me and left me dumbfounded, frustrated and annoyed. I find myself thinking I have just begun to really understand how this game works in relation to our strategy, but then only to have everything completely flipped upside down once again. In the previous roll-over my team was doing pretty well and I thought we had developed a strategy to help propel us forward. I honestly thought we had a really good shot this week at raising our share price. However, on roll-over nothing went to plan. So I found myself in a problematic situation where I see no obvious inclination as to what caused our team to stagnate this week. I am struggling as to why my decisions along with the others didn't move us forward as well as I expected.

From the last roll-over I found my team had a lot of extra cash to use and I think this was an asset to help move from the middle of the pack to the front of the pack. Perhaps this thinking was where I started to go wrong right from the beginning. Had I spent too much or the wrong proportion on advertising and branding? Or had I not distributed our bike to enough stores? This was answered by the HS2 train debate where a combined approach amongst the community of active campaigning, knowledge sharing and community learning forced the UK government to rethink decisions about the HS2 train plan (Synnott, 2013). This rethinking by government failed to move the HS2 plan towards double-loop learning where (Synnott, 2013) states "we need to get far enough above the fray to see the key patterns". I think my team needed to look beyond the obvious patterns of our strategy and rather analyse and challenge deeper underlying assumptions. I found each person carried out their roles really well this week but it was the final collaboration that I felt didn't come together. My team met on the first two class days and then decided to implement decisions separately. I found factors of our power in each department (Marketing, CEO, Operations, R&D, HR, CFO) had clouded the end collaboration and perhaps this is why we were stagnant this week.

Understanding this issue further I found there were several options I could use to try and understand why Mike's Bikes never turns out the way I think it might. Firstly, my team should look at a form of reflection each week that debates and collaborates. My team does reflect each week but if something is not understood I find there is no real effort to attempt to find out the deeper real reason why something happened. Secondly, I think we can continue on the way my team is but learn to be more understanding of the reasons people have made a decision. I often find team mates make decisions but I perhaps won't know the reason why, so I struggle to relate my marketing spending to other departments spending. Finally, maybe I could just leave everything as is because maybe after all it's a game and I can never truly tell what is going to happen with regard to other teams decisions.

From Mike's Bikes I am discovering nothing is ever certain and you always need to be wary and critical of every final decision made. In business nothing is ever certain, and I am starting to realise that maybe this game is trying to teach us the true realities of business. Next week my team needs to reflect at the beginning of the week, perhaps in the same way (Daudelin, 1996) suggests of articulating the problem, analysis of the problem, formulation of tentative theories and an action plan. On Wednesday I think working on our own departments is wise but on Thursday instead of putting in our decisions individually I think it is better to collaborate and debate decisions so they work interchangeably. I also think there needs to be caution not to go 'all out' and spend all the extra cash but develop a smart strategy to follow. I really hope in the next coming weeks I can better collaborate my decisions with other team members but also remember the importance of reflecting on my decisions.

References:

Daudelin, M. W. (1996). [Learning from experience through reflection](#). *Organizational Dynamics*, 24(3), 36—48

Synnott, M. (2013). [Reflection and double loop learning: The case of HS2](#). *Teaching Public Administration*, 31(1), 124--134. doi:10.1177/0144739413479950