Sheffield
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Assignment Cover Sheet

Student Registration Number	:	1	6	0	1	6	0	3	2	7
Module Code:	:	MGT 389								
Assignment Number	:	1								
Word Count	:	(enter your total word count) 1453								

Declarations: Please Enter an "X" to make one or both declarations

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Question
Identify your best Project Management Skills and justify these by giving examples of why you believe these to be strengths

Negotiating:
In project management negotiating occurs constantly as communication is always needed otherwise there is no group work happening at all. In Engineering You're Hired we are put into groups consisting of different engineering expertise and cultures. Both of these variances increases issues with communicating effectively. Communications are most notably modelled by (1) and in this the elements are broken down to show what causes communication errors. With these variances in expertise and culture the message can be corrupt from the start by using too technical language in the encoding, it is generally accepted that the medium in this case it verbal. The cultural differences/ language barriers creates an issue with the receiver stage as the encoding can be decoded badly or even not at all. On top of this there are large cultural differences in terms of non-verbal communications such as body language and facial expressions with large differences between English and Chinese which can make information appear different or even come across as rude(1). To counteract this I pay close attention to the clarity of message encoded making sure that it cant be understood (perceived) differently even with different non verbal communication. This makes sure the message gets across clearly removing the issue of error during communication. Negotiation is an incredibly important strength to have due to the large effect it has but also the constant occurrence where this skill is needed.

Leadership
When working as a team it is important to have a leader given Belbins team roles. In GEC when I decided to take leader I took into consideration the studies of Lippitt and White (3) which shows three styles of leadership (Autocratic, Democratic, Laissez-faire) each with advantages and disadvantages. Given the circumstances a democratic leadership was by far the most useful given the variance of knowledge. Given the very specific tasks to be done I acted as a task-oriented leader to make sure everything was done on time. This leadership style worked perfectly to bring the groups ideas together and keeping the teams friendship up helping the Tuckman forming stage. Being a strong leader is a useful strength to have in order to keep control of a team and knowing how to get work done while managing a team.

Target words 450	Actual words 381

Question
Analyse and evaluate your contribution when you have worked as part of a team – examples must be given

When working as part of a team during the Sheffield Industrial Project Scheme on top of the actual engineering side, I started to notice and think more about the Tuckman stages and saw each section as described. While working as a team I noticed a lack of communication and work done by individuals which I believe is based on a lack of initial team forming, this could have been due to the cultural differences in the group. To counteract this I tried to pull the group together for making any decisions and get everybody's input by asking them personally how they felt about the issue forcing them to get involved. Getting them more involved with the group started to get them more caring about the teamwork as they felt socially obliged counteracting the previous social loafing/silo working. If this situation were to occur again it may be useful to have a longer forming stage if there are many cultural differences and language barriers as stated by Tuckman and later researched by R. Brown (R. Brown, Group Processes, Chapters 1 and 2)teams that have formed for longer and worked together more the better they perform when actually working. After forming the next issue in the group was norming, due to the huge international differences between each of us out norms were very different from when to turn up (some thought it normal to appear 15 minutes late every meeting) to how to go about designing as many of the students were Chinese and only knew how to rote learn making it hard for them to see the whole picture of out design project. Instead of letting this norming turn into storming as this would make the impact of little forming worse I shifted the group directly into re-norming where we talked about punctuality and which sections of the project rote-learners could be more suited towards and let them do that section of the job.

Target words 450	Actual words 324

Question
Evaluate your success/failure of influencing or motivating your team members to contribute in a team

Once again in our Ships group there was a large issue with motivation as different people had different reasons to be motivated and some just seemed like they weren't at all. I knew there was an issue with team motivation from the beginning as I had been going to tutorial with the group since the start of University and realised I would have to motivate the team to continue working. To motivate my team I looked into Maslow's theory to figure out what is motivating the team and why it isn't working effectively to repair the teams faulty working. Maslow's heiracy (Physical needs, Security, Social Needs, Ego Needs, Self Actualisation) shows the way in which people are motivated, People will always fight for Physical needs as long as they are not already met but are willing to do less work for self actualisation as it's not as important. In my case working well in the group is motivated by security as as high mark gets a high grade meaning easier to get a secure well paid job in the future. The other students in the group were brought up completely different to me and have very different views of motivation (McClelland). These students weren't motivated by grades (Security) as they already had this due to their financial state making them already secure. This means the only way to motivate the students it through social/Ego needs and with the language barrier created due to the lack of English spoken it was hard to satisfy these as they didn't see me as a friend of which they gained social needs. To counter this I tried to befriend them more and more by helping with work and sitting to chat (could even be seen as an extension of forming) but there was little to no effect on the groups motivation. Looking back I believe their motivation could be pressure from parents to get a degree but maybe not given the lack of effort put into work. For next group work find out how people are motivated could be very useful to find out early to have the ability to pressure them to do work as needed avoiding this silo working and social loafing of the group.

Target words 450	Actual words 373

Question
How have you previously dealt with conflict within team members and what was the outcome

During EYH there was a large difference in opinion to what our system should be designed around with the Chinese students wanting to design the system for china and the rest wanting to design it for the US. This intra-group conflict meant the group couldn't work together effectively to continue on with work. Due to the small size of the group it would be best that the conflict didn't exist for long as this can cause long lasting communication damage. This conflict makes the team work worse together as it acts as anti-forming and breaks the group up instead of bringing them together making participants struggle to communicate effectively. This conflict was definitely caused by international cultural differences as these Chinese students preferred to work entirely by themselves and simply copy, paste and dictate pre-written work and never apply the theory to the particular situation which meant answers would always be general and vague not topic specific creating a issue of communication between the group which would stress out and annoy certain members. This stress may have caused the large absenteeism of the group leading to extremely low productivity compared to the group norm. As of these cultural differences causing issues it is important to resolve the issue in their mind rather than change their norms as that can take years. As the conflict was based off a rote learning issue I decided to find articles that proved that the US would be a better market but also easier to find data and results due to the lack of government statistics released in china. In the end the majority won and we designed the product for the US by persuading the others with the examples. The fact that all participants were male meant the group conformance is much lower than a mixed group (Smith and Bond data) which may cause a stronger solution but also means people are more likely to speak out and cause conflict (Abilene Paradox). Despite the group being less than 8 people (Belbin roles) the cultural differences caused very strong and apparent sub groups to be formed. Unfortunately fixing the issue of the decision didn't fix these cultural differences meaning conflict continued to arise and have to be resolved each occurrence.

Target words 450	Actual words 375

References (please list the text and reading used for this assignment)

1-Morris, P. (1994). *The management of projects*. London: T. Telford.

2-Schramm, W. (2018). The Process and Effects of Mass Communication. pp.3-26.

3-Lippitt, R. and Jennings, H. (1943). Leadership and Isolation. *Sociometry*, 6(4), p.450.

4-Schooler, C. and Hofstede, G. (1983). Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values. *Contemporary Sociology*, 12(2), p.167.