Team HomeAide

Communications Strategy

Version 1.0

January 19, 2021

Project Sponsors: Kelly Roberts, PH. D and Jill Pleasant, MA

Team Faculty Mentor: Fabio Santos

Team members: Seth Borkovec, Ethan Donnelly, Courtney Richmond, Noah Baxter

I. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline policies and expectations involving team communication for the Spring 2021 semester of Capstone. This document will explain when the team will meet, and how often and for how long the meetings will last. In addition, it will describe the modes of communication and communication etiquette.

II. Strategy

The team will meet weekly over Discord as well as any other additional meetings that may be necessary. Discord will be the primary mode of communication between the team members unless another mode of communication is needed for a specific task. Emergency and urgent messages amongst team members will be sent through text messages. Formal communication between the team and clients or the team mentor will be conducted over email. As of now, the team lead will be the primary contact with the clients and team mentor.

A. Meetings

1. Agenda and Structure:

    a. 10 minutes before the meeting starts: Unofficial "water cooler time." This part of the meeting is not required and exists as a designated time for team members to discuss non-project related topics.

    b. Start of meeting up to 5 minutes: Appreciations and comments. This allows team members to give recognition for the efforts of other team members to the entire team.

    c. 2 minutes: Overview of topics and upcoming tasks. This gives the team members an idea of what will be discussed for that meeting.

    d. Up to 12 minutes: Each team member takes 4 minutes to summarize their individual tasks and field questions from other members.

    e. Discussion of the meeting topics including assigning tasks.

    f. Final 10 minutes: Discussing upcoming tasks for the following week(s).

2. Meeting Times

    a. The primary weekly team meeting will occur on Fridays between 2:20PM and 4:50PM with a backup meeting reserved on Sundays at 6:45PM to 8:45PM.

b. The maximum time allotted for the weekly meetings is 2.5 hours for the primary meetings, and 2 hours for the backup meetings.

c. Notification to cancel a primary meeting must be done before Tuesday at 11:59PM.

   i. If the primary meeting is not canceled by this Tuesday deadline, members are not required to reserve time for the backup meeting.

d. Any notification to change a primary meeting to the backup time for a non-excused absence must be cleared by the entire team before the Tuesday deadline.

e. Any request to extend the meeting time must be cleared by the entire team before the Tuesday deadline.

3. Expectations

a. Team members are expected to be in the meeting no later than the designated meeting start time.

b. If a member wishes to leave a meeting early, they must get approval from a majority of the team (at least 2 other members).

c. If a meeting is still ongoing past the scheduled ending time, members are not required to stay and may leave.

4. Protocols

a. **Meeting Minutes:** The recorder will create detailed minutes for each team meeting. The minutes will include the time each meeting took place, the team members present and detailed notes about the topics discussed. All meeting minutes will be saved and uploaded to Google Drive so that all team members may review them at any time.

b. **Decision-Making Process:** Discussions will be freely allowed with appropriate respect for each team member. In the event of a conflict all parties on differing sides will be given a chance to explain their reasoning and the team as a whole will vote on a decision with the side receiving a majority winning the vote. In the event neither side receives the majority vote the team will seek guidance from the team mentor.

c. **Attendance:** Each team member is expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings on time. In the event that a team member is unable to attend a meeting, they are expected to notify the rest of the team, providing a valid reason as to why they cannot attend or will be late. The absent team member is responsible for looking over the meeting minutes as well as asking the team for any additional

information discussed. Each team member is allowed three excused absences from team meetings.

    i.   **Valid Reasons:** The team has decided that valid reasons for missing a regularly scheduled meeting include a family emergency, a personal emergency and impromptu work-related conflicts.

        Other circumstances can be considered valid if one week notice was given and the majority of the team agrees to excuse the team member.

   ii.   **Excused Absences:** Defined as an absence for which the reason is listed in the valid reasons above. In this case, the reason may be given after the fact and still be excused. When the excuse is not an emergency, the team member is expected to upload a document to the team Google Drive summarizing their tasks, updates, and contributions for the upcoming meeting.

  iii.   **Unexcused Absences:** Defined as an absence which does not have a valid reason as defined above. Upon the first offence the team will engage in a verbal discussion outline potential solutions to the problem. In the event of a second offence the absent team member will be issued a written offence that will be documented on the team's Google Drive. Any further offences will result in the team seeking intervention from our mentor.

  iv.   **Absence Notification:** To notify the team about an absence or to request an excused absence, the team member will contact the entire team on Discord for non-emergencies and on text messaging for emergencies or urgent matters.

        In the event that a team member may be absent, they must abide by the Tuesday deadline mentioned above in order to cancel a primary meeting, or reschedule to the backup meeting.

d. **Meeting Extension Notification:** In the event that a team member would like to extend a scheduled meeting time past its normal ending time, they must send a request that has to be approved before the Tuesday deadline mentioned above.

e. **On-demand Meetings:** There may be times when a team member would wish to meet with the other members for assistance in completing a task. To schedule an on-demand meeting, the requesting team member will send a poll using http://whenisgood.net to find a meeting time that works for the other members. The requesting member will then select a time that works best accounting for the poll responses. Those who intend to attend the on-demand meeting must RSVP at least 24 hours before the meeting. Those who have RSVP'd are then required to attend and must follow the regular team meeting attendance policies listed above. As on-demand meetings occur on a case by case basis and will vary

depending on the context of the task, the allotted time for these meetings will be determined when the meeting is scheduled.

B. Communications

1. Description

    a. The primary mode of communication between team members will be conducted over Discord.

    b. Working hours are defined as Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00AM and 8:00PM.

    c. The maximum expected response time is 10 hours from a message sent during work hours, and 16 hours outside of working hours.

    d. Formal communication with the team and clients, mentor, or other team will be conducted over email. The expected response time for formal communication follows the same expectations as communication over Discord.

    e. Emergency or urgent communication amongst the team can be conducted over text messages. The expected response time for emergency communication follows the same expectations as communication over Discord.

2. Expectations

    a. Members are expected to respond to messages over Discord if the message:

        i. Contains an @everyone tag.

        ii. A tag that specifies a member.

    b. At minimum, a reaction to the message is expected for acknowledgement.

    c. For formal communication, the entire team will be copied in the email. Only the team lead is expected to respond to formal communications.

3. Protocols

    a. If a member does not respond within the maximum response time, that member may receive a series of reprimands in the order as follows:

        i. Three verbal warnings with the entire team present.

        ii. An official written document is issued for further infractions.

        iii. The team mentor will be notified if the problem continues.