



**EXTRA-CURRICULAR EXPERIENTIAL
LEARNING
(ExCEL)
UKQE3001**

**SELF REFLECTION 2
SWJB 2019**

NAME: THERESA KHO CHIA HUI

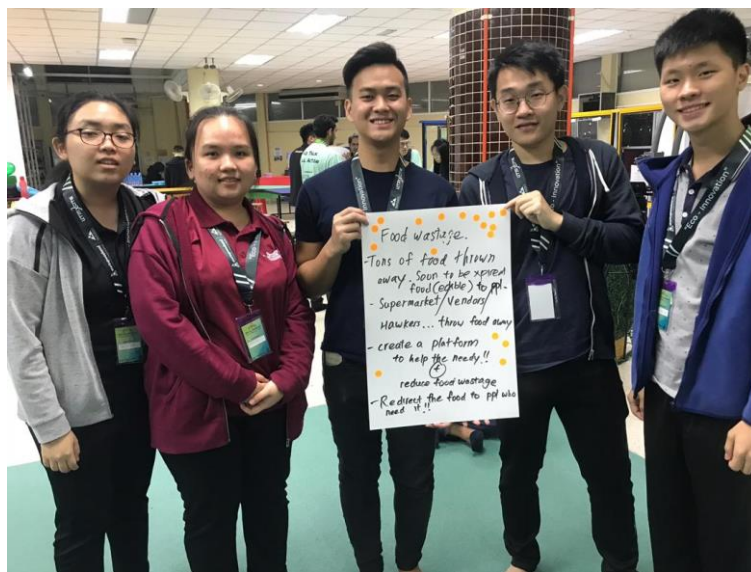
MATRIC NO: A18CS0265

SECTION: 02

LECTURER: DR. NURWINA AKMAL BINTI ANUAR

STARTUP WEEKEND JOHOR BAHRU @ UTM 2019: ECO-INNOVATION

I joined a startup competition from 15th November 2019 to 17th November 2019. The competition was mainly organized by Ministry of Education Malaysia in collaboration with Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre (MaGIC), START Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). The competition was held at block S01 in Kolej Tuanku Chancellor at UTM. The theme of the competition was “Eco-Innovation”. In simple words, Eco-Innovation consists all form of innovation activities which can contribute to sustainable development of the world. The duration of the competition was three days and I need to propose a unique business idea regarding ecology during the period of time. My team consists of 5 members including Kennard, Yin Jian, Yap, Kah Hoo and me. Our team was led by Kennard.



Picture 1

Picture 1 shows our group photo.

On the first day of the event, I went to the registration counter and reported my attendance. The event was started at 8pm. Before the competition started, the organizer prepared an ice-breaking session for all of the participants. All the participants need to mix around in order to complete the required task. We managed to know each other through the session. The event was officially started.

During the event, we figured out different business plan through the brainstorming session. Our first plan was rearing earthworms which eat the rotten food. This plan can reduce the food waste as the earthworms can digest the rotten food and they can be treated as an organic substance for the chicken. However, we decided to give up this project after the discussion because we thought that hygiene issues would occur if we insist to rear the earthworms which eat the rotten food.



Picture 2

Picture 2 shows the situation during the brainstorming session.

After we gave up the first idea, our mind was stuck. Some of the groups who already have their ideas in mind were ready to back to their respective hostel and had a rest. This scenario created mental pressure for all of us and made us stress. We tried our best searching the information through the Internet and finally we reached a consensus, which was developing an online e-commerce application. After we had the rough idea, we decided to go back to our hostel and had a good rest as we needed to use the remaining days to further polished our idea.

We did a lot of research about our plan and we found out that our plan was workable. Our project name was Feborn which stands for “Food to be Reborn”. We planned to do an online e-commerce application that provide a platform where the users can buy or sell soon-to-expire goods. This platform can actually reduce the wastage of quality food as some of us

might willing to purchase the soon-to-expire goods with lower prices. However, our team need to think of the possible hidden issues and we need to solve it if we proceed our plan.

Fortunately, the organizers prepared a mentoring session for all the participants. They invited some of the experts in different field as mentors and gave some advices for each team. If we had some issues regarding our idea, we could seek for an advice from these mentors. This is like when we studied in secondary school, if we faced some problems in our studies, we can seek for the advice from our teacher in order to solve our problems. We did some amendments to our business plan based on the suggestions gave by those mentors.



Picture 3

Picture 3 shows the mentoring session.

After the lunch, the organizers prepared us a marketing validating training. They briefed us about the way to do the market validation. The organizers taught us some techniques when preparing the question to our respondents. They suggested us to send a google form to the public and know more about the market needs. If our business plan did not manage to get enough market needs, we need to change our idea that fulfil their needs.

From the results that we obtained through the google form, we found out that most of the students willing to buy the non-perishable items which is soon-to-expired. This means that our plan is workable! Five of us cooperated with each other to complete the tasks. Some of us in-charged in doing the research while some of us in-charged in doing the market validation.

If we faced some disagreements in doing the decisions, we would try our best to look for an idea that is acceptable for all us.

After the market validation teaching, the organizers prepared pitch deck teaching session for all participants. Pitch deck is a presentation which can help the potential investors to understand more about a business idea. We needed to make sure that the content of our pitch was complete and precise. Thus, all the participants, including our group were very worried for the real pitching session during the competition as the situation during the event was unpredictable due to the QnA session.

In order to make sure that the judges could fully understand our business plan, we prepared a few slides for them. Besides preparing the presentation, we also prepared a prototype of our online platform. Our group members worked with each other in order to complete all the task in a given time. At that time, I realised that doing a prototype is not an easy task as you need to make sure the functions in the prototype should be completed. Fortunately, our team managed to complete all the task in given time as we always cooperate with each other.

On the last day of the event, the final pitching session would start at 3pm. During the final pitching session, the situation of the event was on the edge. Everyone was nervous as we could not predict what would happen during the session. Finally, it's our turn. Kennard tried his best and pitched the ideas. At first, everything went smooth. However, we did not manage to answer one of the questions from the judge. We felt a little disappointed as we did not manage to answer it on time. We already had the mind-set that we could not win in this competition as the other groups performed well too! After our presentation, our mental stress started to reduce slowly as everything was over.

Two hours later, award ceremony was started. I felt blessed as our team was one of the winner in this event. The other winner team members are my classmates and their idea was about reducing paper wastage. The judges mentioned that our idea was unique and this was the main reason why we won the competition. The prizes that we got was a sum of entrepreneurship development grant and RM200 cash prize. I felt very happy at the moment as we won this event even though that was the first time we joined the competition.



Picture 4

Picture 4 shows the photo take we took during the award ceremony.

Enterprising skill is a very important element that we should have. We are able to identify the gaps in the market and also can spot the unexploited chances in the market when we have the skill. This can make our awareness to be commercialized and make our thinking to be more creative and innovative. After I joined this competition, I learned the way to identify the market size, proposed a unique business plan and many more! Actually, this can motivate me to step into business site even though I am a Computer Science student as I believe a quote from Jack Ma, who is the co-founder of Alibaba Group, which is *“If you have different mindset, you will have a different outcome”*.

According to Bret Morrison, an American actor stated that *“Of all the life skills available to us, communication is perhaps the most empowering”*. In today’s world, I believe

that good communication skills are crucial in order to deliver and understand the information accurately. I gained communication skills through this competition. During the brainstorming session, I need to communicate with my teammates in order to explain with them about my own idea. Our team also needed to explain our business plan to the mentors. This also make my communication skills better. This proves that communication skill is really crucial in our daily lives and we should not be overlooked this skill.

Furthermore, I also learn to cooperate with others during the competition. Each of us in the team plays different role. If we do not separate jobs according to our strength, we cannot complete the task in time. Teamwork provides a great improvement of productivity and efficiency. This is because it reduces the pressure on individuals as the workloads are being shared. Teamwork also motivates unity in a team. A teamwork environment provides an atmosphere which fosters loyalty and friendship. I really appreciate the help offered by my teammates. Without them, we might not able to win the competition as Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motor Company stated that *“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success”*.

In conclusion, I really learned a lot during the competition. Those advices that we get from the mentors are beneficial to us as those mentors are experienced in doing the business as they are the one who runs a successful business and know the way to take an idea and finally turn it into the business. Furthermore, the skills that I learned really can help me in the future. I hoped that I had the chance to join the competition again.



Picture 5

Picture 5 shows the group photo that we took at the end of the event.