



UTM
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

UHMT1012-45 Graduate Success Attributes

Session 2020/2021

Group Project

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Since we received this assignment on 17 December 2020, we have created a Whatsapp group to aid in discussion among each other. On 24 December 2020, we have organised our first meeting in the Whatsapp group. After a series of discussion, we have agreed on interviewing an entrepreneur, Mr Chang, from MEDU BOOKS SDN BHD. We have conducted the interview through email. There are a few questions we have prepared earlier that been asked in the email.

Description of Business

For the first question, we have asked the entrepreneur to describe his business. We were informed that the entrepreneur is from MEDU BOOKS SDN BHD. MEDU BOOKS SDN BHD is a company that distribute or supply various types of educational books from lower secondary to higher education.

The company supplies these books by different publishers such as Pearson, Oxford, Mc-Graw Hill and another publisher. Books by different publishers would provide plenty of choices for their customers which may be choosy when buying educational books. In the company, there are variety of representatives in charge in different publishers. This may help in increasing the efficiency of the company to handle the distribution of each publisher. The entrepreneur also mentioned that he is the representative who focused mainly on Oxford publisher.

Target Group

For the second question, we have asked the entrepreneur about his target group. The answer given by the entrepreneur are students all around Malaysia. This is reasonable as the company mainly focuses on distributing and supplying educational books, which are mostly needed by students. This shows that the entrepreneur noticed that there are huge demands of educational books among students in Malaysia.

The entrepreneur also mentioned that the target group is mainly focusing on students from Penang and Selangor. This is because there are more students in these two states. More number of students means that there are a more demand for educational books. It is also because the transportation in these states is convenient, which is easier for the distribution of educational books. Thus, we can conclude that the entrepreneur is equipped with the quality of opportunity orientation. Opportunity orientation is the ability to seek for opportunities in any circumstances, which is an important quality to be an successful entrepreneur.

Business History

For the third question, we have asked the entrepreneur to describe his business history. In his answer, we know that MEDU BOOKS SDN BHD was founded in 2007 by the entrepreneur and three of his partners. A year before, four of them were one of the staffs from Intel Kulim.

Although four of them are having a stable job, yet they found out that there are great opportunities in education sector and they agreed that education is one of the most profitable and stable sectors in Malaysia. Hence, they resigned from their previous company and started up their own company, MEDU BOOKS SDN BHD.

This shows that the entrepreneur is equipped with quality of moderate risk taker. This is because the entrepreneur has analysed and calculated the risk before involve in the education sector. Any high-risk choices will be avoided in any decision making to become a successful entrepreneur.

The entrepreneur also mentioned that MEDU BOOKS SDN BHD has developed into a company that supplies books to universities in every states. The entrepreneur even success to expand his business to international level as he also supplies books to Singapore. This achievement displays the commitment and dedication of every representatives of MEDU BOOKS SDN BHD in providing the best service to their clients in every deal. Commitment will help entrepreneurs to overcome business-threatening mistakes and obstacles. Entrepreneurs commitment to their ideas and ventures they spawn determine how successful those ventures ultimately become.

It is also very important for an entrepreneur to have a wide vision and never satisfy with current situation by expanding their business. If entrepreneurs know what they want to achieve, they will have a vision or concept of what their firm can be. Vision develops over time as entrepreneurs begin to realize what the firm is and what it can become.

Business Strategies

The next question we ask about his business strategies. The entrepreneur tells us that their business strategies are cross-selling books from different publishers. This strategy is known as diversified investment.

This planning will help the entrepreneur in minimising risk of loss. When one of the selling items did not perform as good as in their expectation in a period, other item may perform better over that same period. This will be reducing the potential losses of the investment portfolio from concentrating all your capital under one type of investment. sometimes investments do not always perform as expected, by diversifying you are not merely relying upon one source for income.

Other than that, they also tend to give the most innovative product or service to the customer. For examples, they adapt to the market in this COVID-19 pandemic season by supplying eBooks to the students. This provides more flexibility for the business flow and providing more choice for the customer using the B2B system. Although the service is not verbal, there is no face-to-face communication between service provider and customer, but this can be solved by providing online service when the customer facing a difficulty on their service. The benefit of providing an online service is that the customer can access and enjoy the service in any place any time with a highly secured of their privacy.

For the next question, we ask him about how do you market your business, and which tactics is the most successful one. The answer given by the entrepreneur is reach out to prospect or customers because face-to-face has always been the most successful one such as exhibitions at the past. Unfortunately, due to pandemic COVID-19 they have no choice but to change their marketing strategy to another one which is publishing targeted advertise via online platform.

Before this pandemic, there is no social distancing that restrict our movement. Therefore, he carries out face-to-face method that able to help and provide their service to their customer by verbal communication. This method is very effective as it is able to solve the problem their customer faced on the spot. This method is also very useful and commonly applied by other entrepreneur when carrying out their business. During the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the service industry has been affected largely as they require real time face-to-face action. Hence, that is no doubt that his business also being affected. He has no choice but to implement new ways to overcome this situation and he found out that online advertising is a new way. Without

hesitation, he starts to practice online marketing and deliver their goods via postage to their customers. He also publishes some advertising ads in online platform such as Facebook and Shopee. Although it is very thought when they first implement this method but as he starts master the technique, he found out that this is much more profitable and can increase the income. Online business allow customer from other state to purchase their goods.

Through our finding, we found out that in order to be an entrepreneur, flexibility is one of the most important keys to be successful. We need to adapt and change business tactics according to the society and current trend. This will ensure the strategy can be implemented well to cope with current situation and convenience to other people. This can enhance our creativity when tackling any problems and prevent facing financial issues.

The next question we ask about how does he plan on growing his business. He says, in the year of 2012, he and his team have expanded business made from business to business only to business to business and to customers by going online. By going online, he and his team were successfully invited to Shopee International Platform. With the help of Shopee International Platform, now his company is considered as an International company. After that, in order to grow his business, by this year 2021 he and his team plan to explore and expanded their company to the Islamic education by finding a new Islamic partner.

Challenges in Business

We also ask what challenges they been facing in their business. The entrepreneur replies that the problem they are faced during the business growing was cash flow and financial management. As they are still growing their business, the cash flow and financial management is always a challenge for our business. It is important for us to stock up to make sure we give immediate supply.

In his word, to the customers, the education sector is always a seasonal business, so they must stock up before the school reopen season in order to keep up with the market. This requires a good plan of the season. So, they have to have a good planning on how much stock they needed at that period of time. In his opinion, a good project management will guide them to a good direction. A good project management will consider the big picture and sets realistic and achievable goals, budgets, and timelines.

In a condition of lacking a very careful management, a project can quickly get out of plan before it starts. A good project manager should have a wide network connection with other people. This will convenient them to set a realistic goals, budget, and timelines. With the great communicates with other stakeholder, they will be having more understanding about the strategic and business objectives. The project manager should also do research to make an outline of a project plan. This process involves cost estimation, resource management, and risk assessment.

Moving on to the next question, did you experience failures? If so, what did you learn from them? The answer given by the entrepreneur is he believe that there must be failures in every company especially for start-ups. What he has learnt from these failures is that it's important to have the mindset to never give up and everything will turn good after that.

Through his answer, we can find out that failure is a must that will experience by every entrepreneur as everything in our life will not proceed smoothly without a hitch. Everyone must have gone through failure in our life but most importantly we must not easily give up. We would like to share a quote written by Thomas A. Edison which bring large impact to our life, "I have not failed, I've just found 10000 ways that won't work.". There is nothing bad to experience failure but we need to have courage to accept and stand up against it as failure is the path to success. Persistence is the key factor in determining success. Success does not come easily in our live, we need to contribute huge amount of hard work and dedication in order to

peruse it. Therefore, we need to believe in ourself when facing any problem under any circumstances because we need to embrace the process of failure as it will leads to success.

We also ask him about what are the mistakes that he wished he could have avoided. He said, one of the mistakes that he and his partners regretted the most is to start up their own publisher without knowing the competition of others publishers. As he and his partners are still fresh in this field, they are totally get beaten up and does not fit well in the market. In the end, he and his partners original business model led to failure result. He also shared about the experience that he learned from his failure. He said it is important for you to understand your own strength and weaknesses.

Knowing own strength and weaknesses is very important before opening a new business. This is because by strength, it means that what advantages does your organization have, what do you do better than anyone else, what is your unique selling point and what do people in your market see you as strength. By knowing own strength, we could get more opportunities for the business to grow rapidly. Next, about the weaknesses, weaknesses are equal to what should avoid, what can we do to improve and what factors lose the sales. By knowing all these, the business only could face any problems that coming through.

Strength and Weaknesses

The next question we ask is about strength and weaknesses of his company. In his word, his company was good at competitive advantage of several item on its market value. As they are selling the same books from the same publisher as our competitors, it is important for us to have our own competitive advantage. It is very important for them to know what their goals are and capitalizing on our strengths. Their competitive advantage is that they are dealers from different. This will help them in comparing different item in various prices and its market value. They can easily tell what the customer is searching for and provide the best decision in their budget. States and focuses on different publisher. This accelerates our business expansion and our source of supply very fluid and diverse.

The weakness of their business is that it is a high-cost manufacturing business with a fairly low profit margin compared to other business. This means that he would not getting a large amount of profit at a short period of time. They needed some patient and plan for a long period of time. Hence for them, a good blueprint is very helpful for their business growing. This will help them to clarify the objective of the project. A common mistake that a team will make when it comes to planning a blueprint is a muddled project objective. The unclear focus and objective can lead to many unexpected incidents like missed deadlines, overspending, and scope creep.

The next question that we ask is what kind of culture exists in your company and how do you establish it. The entrepreneur replied us that their company promotes the concept integrity-first to every staff member. He often reminds them during regular team events and annual banquet. To promote this culture, he makes himself the role model by constantly practising it wherever in the company.

Integrity is a very important characteristic in becoming a successful entrepreneur. There are three types of integrity which is internal integrity, external integrity and image integrity according to Dan Coughlin. Internal integrity is the deepest degree of your honesty. It is about being able to do the right decision even without receiving any complement from other people. For the second one is external integrity which is what you are showing to people around you. You have a strong outward integrity because your actions are aligned with your feelings. The third one is image integrity which is the illustration of your integrity by other individuals. Integrity is very important that it will produce a positive workplace which is comfortable to every staff member. With honesty, people will show respect and loyalty to you and your worker will also willing to work hard. On the other hand, customer will also be willing to deal with trustworthy company and willingly to promote your company to other people. Thus, producing a good business cycle and good reputation.

Appendix

Meeting Minutes

No.	Group Members	Time Arrival with Signature	Time Finish with Signature	Group Meeting Agenda			Other Remarks e.g potential problems/ difficulties/limitations	
				Date: 24/12/2020		Who took the notes? Name: Goo Ye Jui		Who is leading the discussion? Name: Lee Ming Qi
				Time: 0915 – 0940		No.		Agenda Items What are the things discussed at the meeting?
1	Lee Ming Qi	0914	0941	1	Brainstorm possible entrepreneurs	Lee Ming Qi Singthai Srisoi Tan Yong Sheng Chong Kai Zhe Goo Ye Jui	Do research about possible entrepreneur	The meeting run smoothly and ended on time.
2	Singthai Srisoi	0914	0941	2	Give opinions about each entrepreneur	Lee Ming Qi Singthai Srisoi Tan Yong Sheng Chong Kai Zhe Goo Ye Jui	Analyze each entrepreneur	
3	Tan Yong Sheng	0914	0941	3	Vote for the entrepreneur to be interviewed	Lee Ming Qi Singthai Srisoi Tan Yong Sheng Chong Kai Zhe Goo Ye Jui	Vote in Whatsapp	
4	Chong Kai Zhe	0915	0941	4				
5	Goo Ye Jui	0914	0941	5				

Meeting Minute 1

No.	Group Members	Time Arrival with Signature	Time Finish with Signature	Group Meeting Agenda			Other Remarks e.g potential problems/ difficulties/limitations	
				Date: 6/1/2021		Who took the notes? Name: Lee Ming Qi		Who is leading the discussion? Name: Tan Yong Sheng
				Time: 0920–0945		No.		Agenda Items What are the things discussed at the meeting?
1	Lee Ming Qi	0920	0945	1	Discuss about the question we want to ask the entrepreneur	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Brain storming and searching online for the question	Everyone arrive on time and we have our discussion done very effectively.
2	Goo Ye Jui	0920	0945	2	Decide the which question is more suitable and more interesting to be ask	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Give opinion and vote for the question	
3	Tan Yong Sheng	0920	0945	3	Write email to the entrepreneur	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Writing an formal email to the entrepreneur	
4	Singthai Srisoi	0920	0945	4				
5	Chong Kai Zhe	0920	0945	5				

Meeting Minute 2

No.	Group Members	Time Arrival with Signature	Time Finish with Signature	Group Meeting Agenda			Other Remarks e.g potential problems/ difficulties/limitations	
				Date: 7/1/2021 Time: 1124 - 1140		Who took the notes? Name: Lee Ming Qi		Who is leading the discussion? Name: Tan Yong Sheng
				No.	Agenda Items What are the things discussed at the meeting?	Who is talking/giving ideas?		What action needs to be taken? What do we need to bring?
1	Lee Ming Qi	1124	1140	1	Discuss about how to write the report	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Refer the instruction given by lecturer	Everyone arrive on time and we have our discussion done very effectively.
2	Goo Ye Jui	1124	1140	2	Arrange the question according to the title	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Give opinion and vote for each question for which part	
3	Tan Yong Sheng	1124	1140	3	Analyse our data obtain from entrepreneur	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Study the information answered by entrepreneur	
4	Singthai Srisoi	1124	1140	4				
5	Chong Kai Zhe	1124	1140	5				

Meeting Minute 3

No.	Group Members	Time Arrival with Signature	Time Finish with Signature	Group Meeting Agenda			Other Remarks e.g potential problems/ difficulties/limitations	
				Date: 8/1/2021 Time: 0900 - 0950		Who took the notes? Name: Chong Kai Zhe		Who is leading the discussion? Name: Goo Ye Jui
				No.	Agenda Items What are the things discussed at the meeting?	Who is talking/giving ideas?		What action needs to be taken? What do we need to bring?
1	Lee Ming Qi	0900	0950	1	Distribute the part of the report writing for each members	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Refer to the instruction given by the lecturer	Some of us have internet difficulties but we able to cope it by discussing it in minimal meeting time.
2	Goo Ye Jui	0900	0950	2	List out the difficulties that will be faced by each members for report writing	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Share out the problem existed from your side	
3	Tan Yong Sheng	0900	0950	3	Provide solution for each members to solve their problems	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Gives opinion/help to other group members	
4	Singthai Srisoi	0900	0950	4				
5	Chong Kai Zhe	0900	0950	5				

Meeting Minute 4

No.	Group Members	Time Arrival with Signature	Time Finish with Signature	Group Meeting Agenda			Other Remarks e.g potential problems/ difficulties/limitations	
				Date: 13/1/2021 Time: 0910-0925		Who took the notes? Name: Goo Ye Jui		Who is leading the discussion? Name: Lee Ming Qi
				No.	Agenda Items What are the things discussed at the meeting?	Who is talking/giving ideas?		What action needs to be taken? What do we need to bring?
1	Lee Ming Qi	0910	0925	1	Discuss how to distribute the presentation	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Divide the presentation into 5 parts	Everyone arrived on time and we have our distribution done very effectively.
2	Goo Ye Jui	0910	0925	2	Distribution of task for presentation	Lee Ming Qi Goo Ye Jui Tan Yong Sheng Singthai Srisoi Chong Kai Zhe	Choose the part for presentation	
3	Tan Yong Sheng	0910	0925	3				
4	Singthai Srisoi	0910	0925	4				
5	Chong Kai Zhe	0910	0923	5				

Meeting Minute 5

Whatsapp Discussion

First Meeting (24/12/2020)

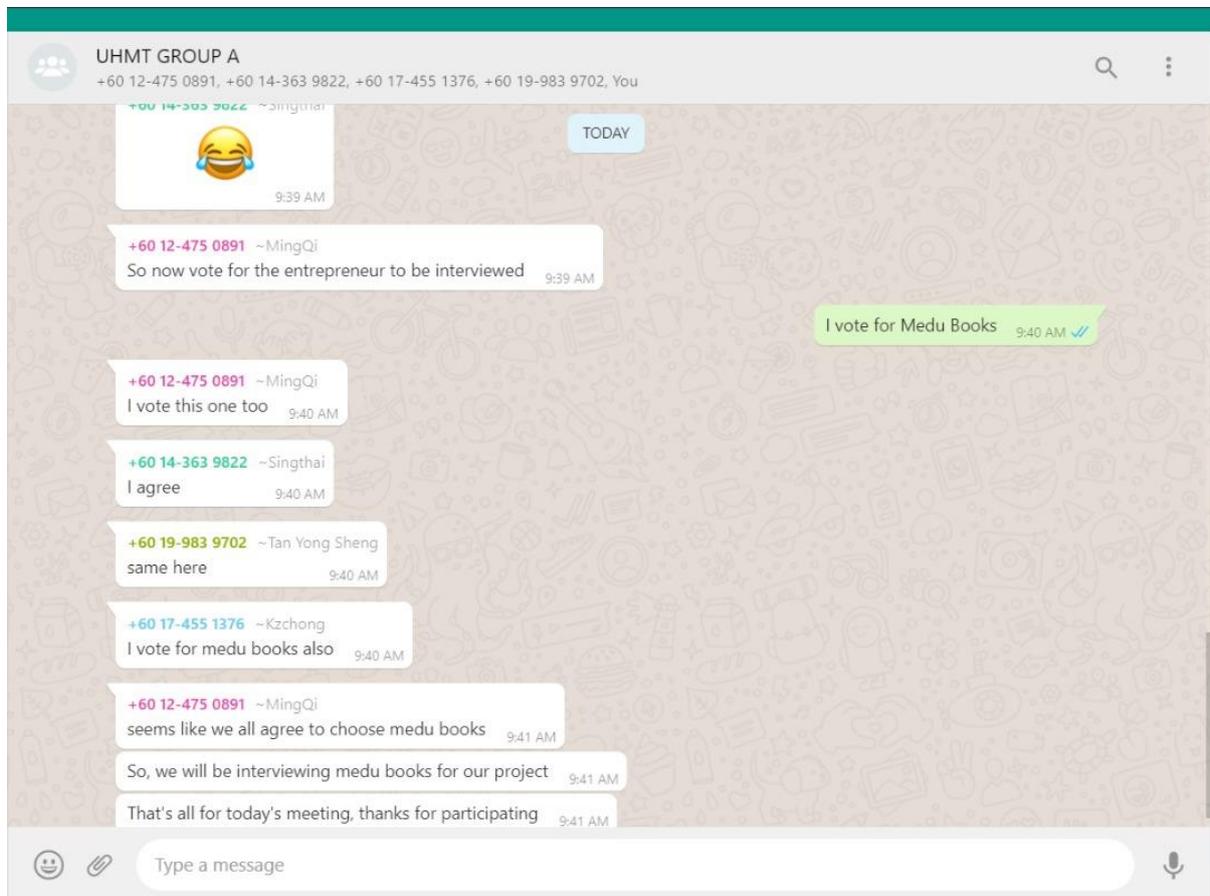


Figure 1 : Discussion in Whatsapp

Second Meeting (6/1/2021)

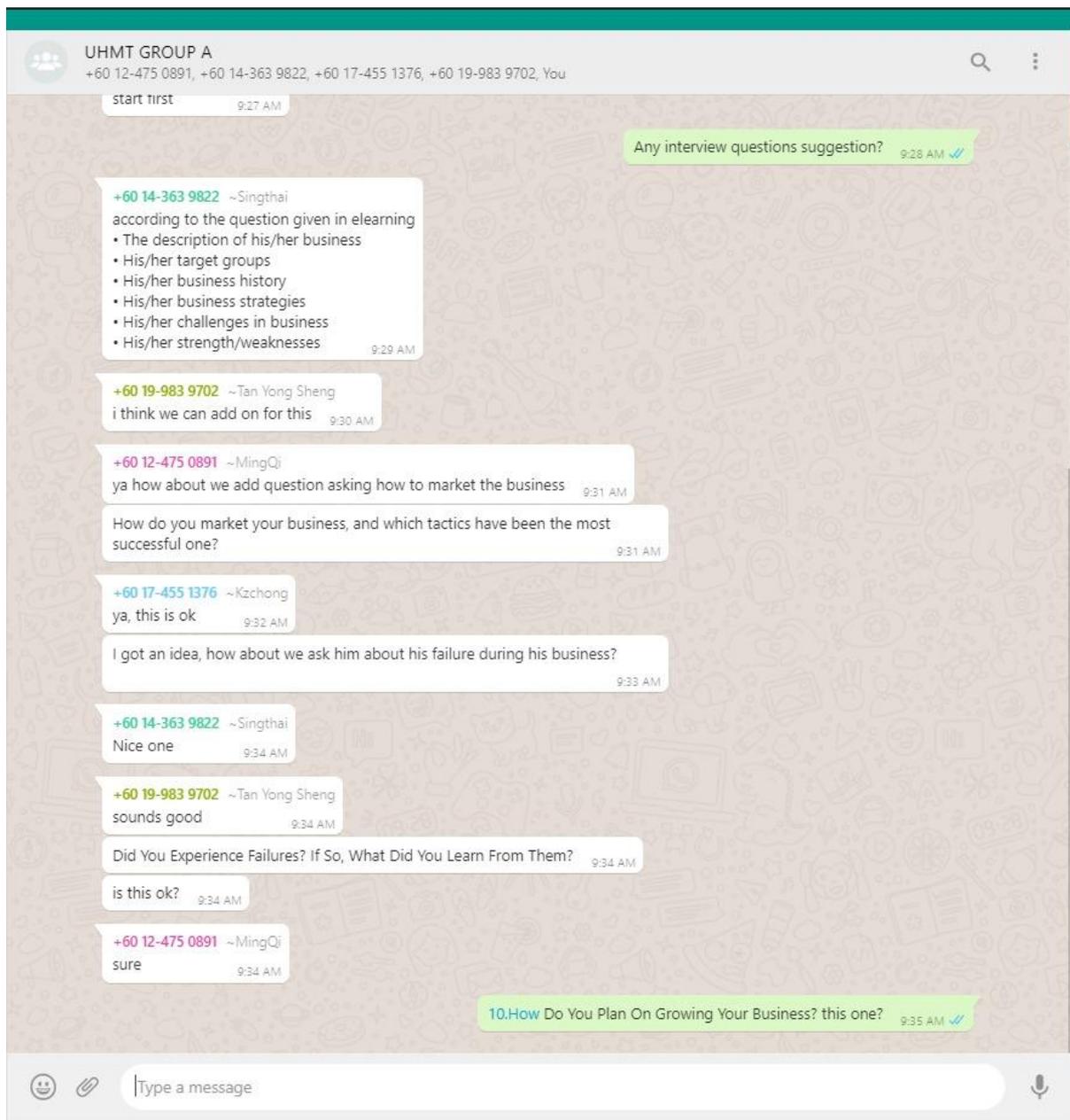


Figure 2 : Discussion in Whatsapp

Third Meeting (7/1/2021)

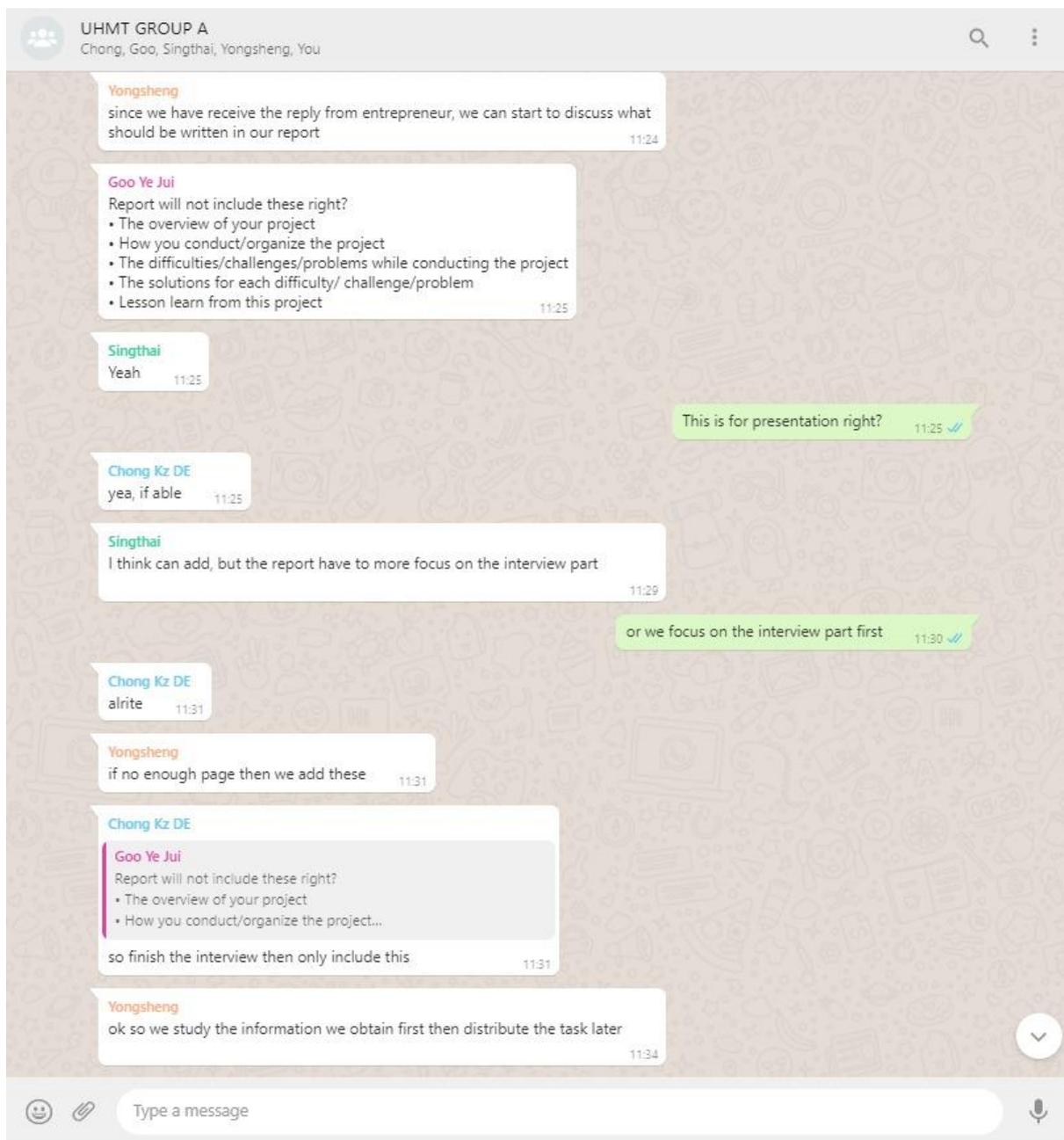


Figure 3 : Discussion in Whatsapp

Forth Meeting (8/1/2021)

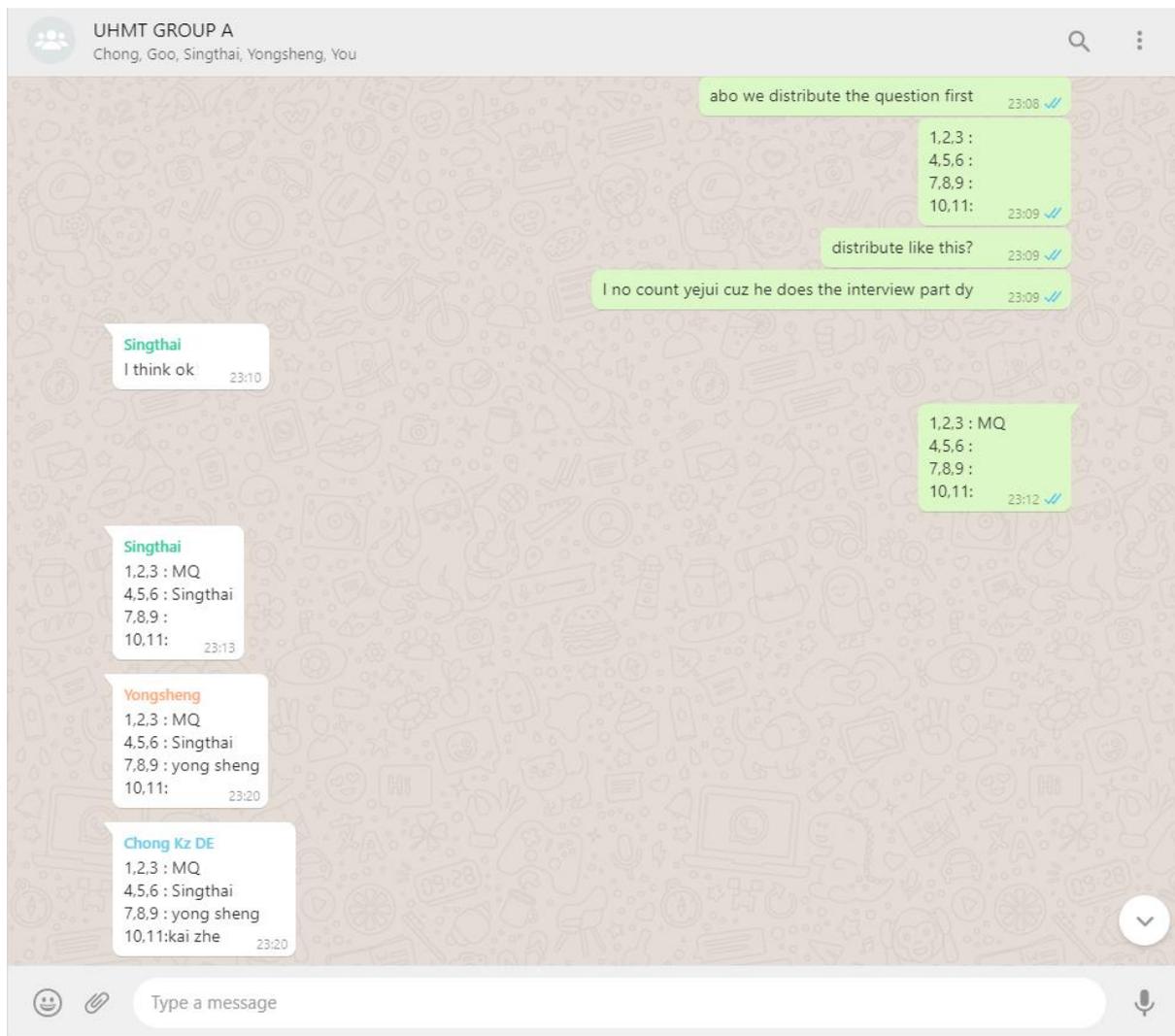


Figure 4 : Discussion in Whatsapp

Fifth Meeting (13/1/2021)

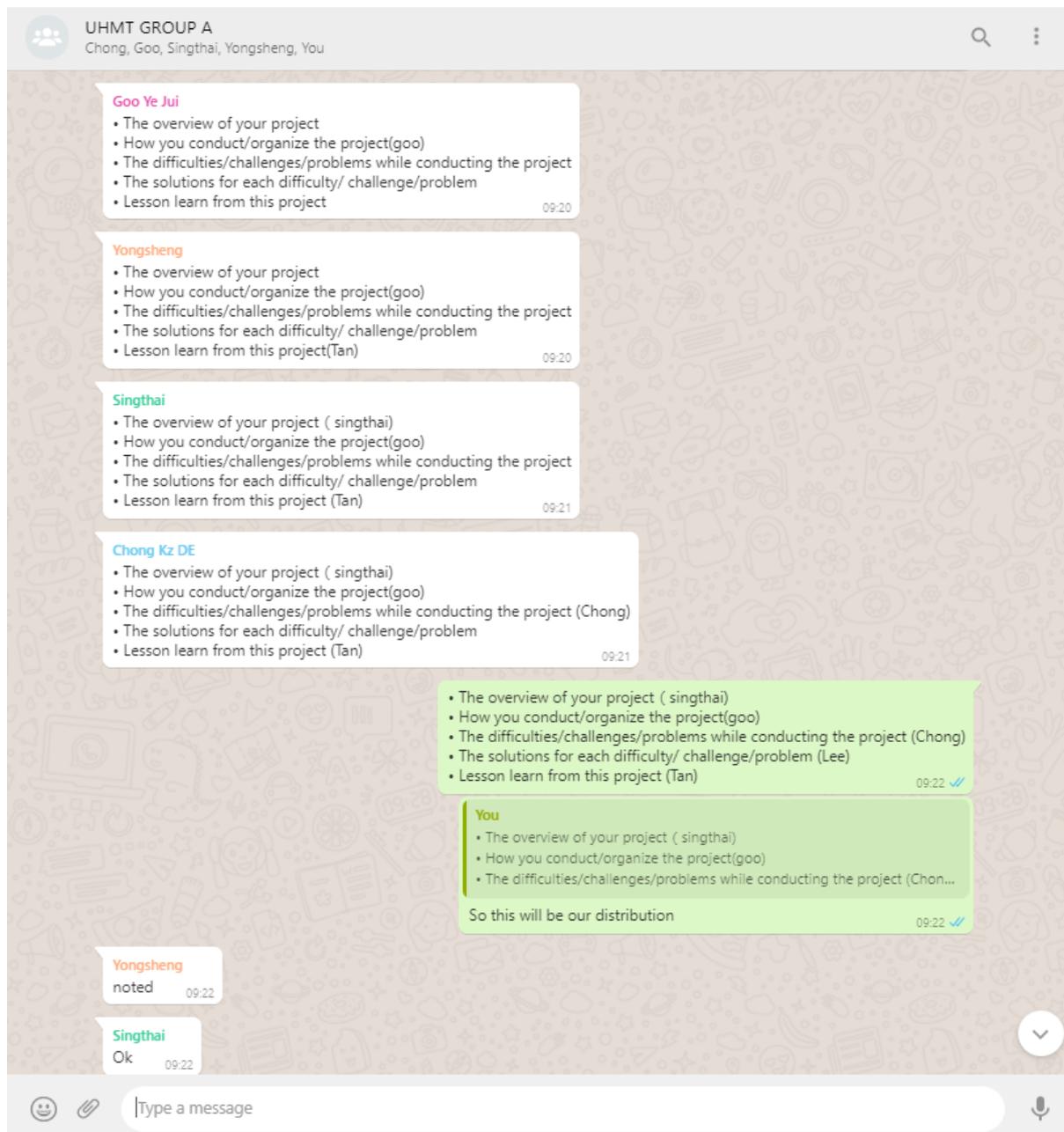


Figure 5 : Discussion in Whatsapp

Reply from entrepreneur

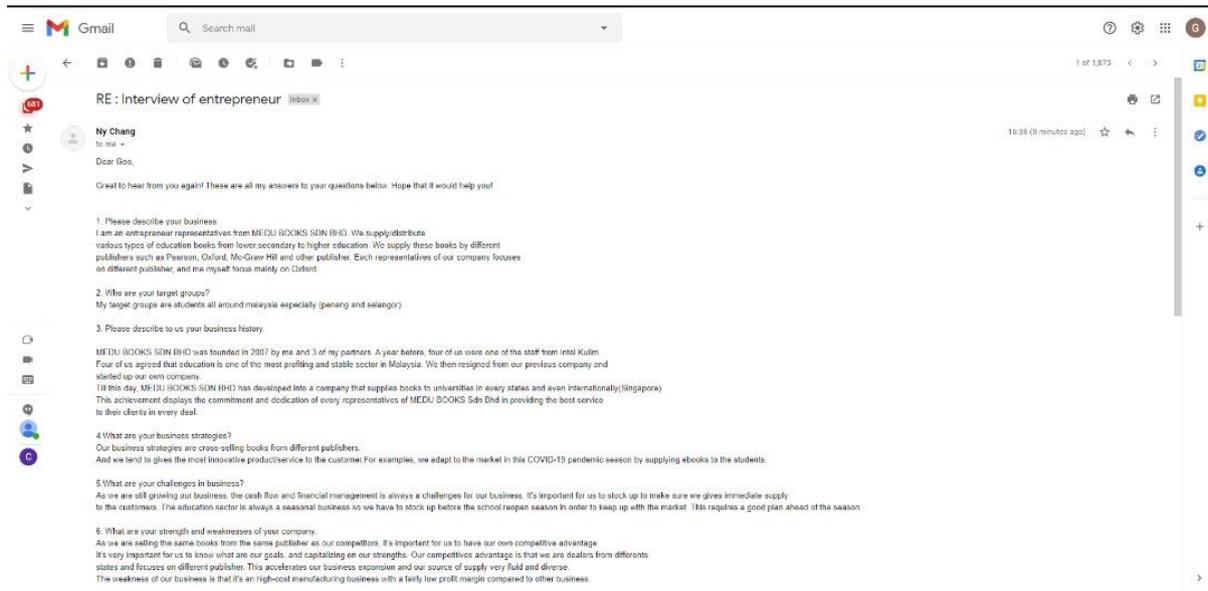


Figure 6 : Reply from Entrepreneur in Email

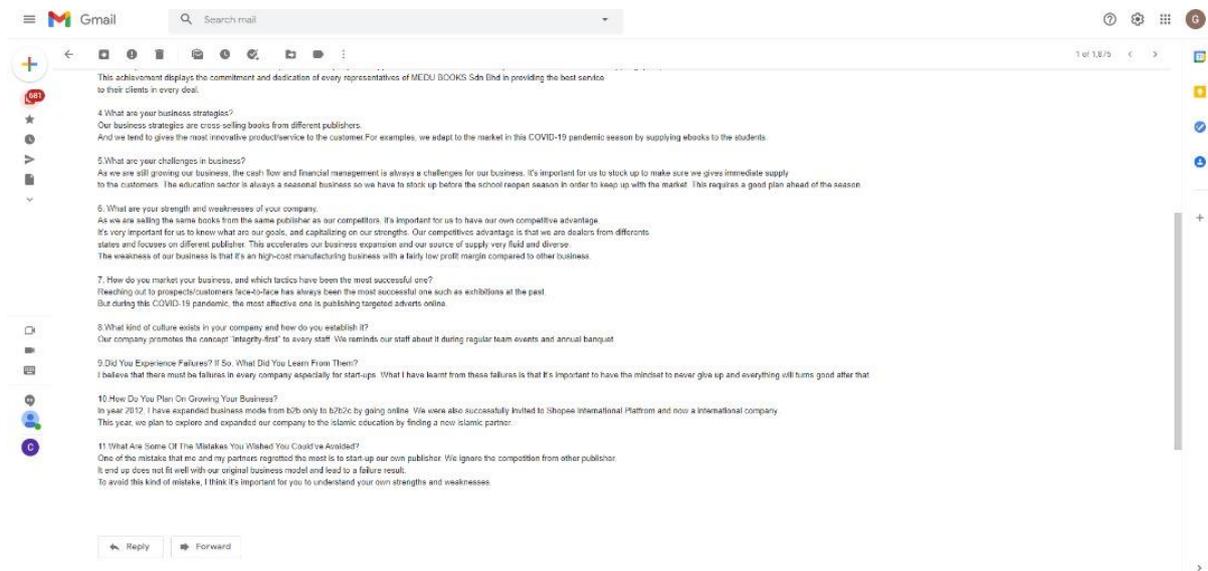


Figure 7 : Reply from Entrepreneur in Email