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Professor Garcia

Enviromental Modeling

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At first, I was worried the production managers would have to participate in the same modeling projects as the artists. While I understand that a good way to learn the modeling pipeline is to work within it, I also believe that PMs have to also learn about the pipeline in a different context. So, I appreciate the change in curriculum this semester.

I did feel like I was constantly lacking the entire semester. I've heard that production managers for any career field have a looser job description than others. No one entirely knows what they do. But as students we still need directive. I, personally, have a natural understanding of project organization and discipline when applied to myself, but knowing how to help others is another set of skills. Other skills like leadership, teamwork, time management, and socializing are skills that don't always come naturally. I am better at some than others. And the other PMs of my class may have a different set of skills they're better at than me.

Being introduced to Scrum was helpful, though confusing for me, and I believe being introduced to more concepts in class with further improve our abilities as a PM. A rigid list of tasks to complete may be too much. A simple list of things to keep in mind when managing artists can start teaching us the mindset needed to be a good PM. Like what kind of questions to ask them, what data to record, types of think we can do if the artist runs into issues, etc.

During the Hard Surface project, I had no idea what to do other than ask for progress updates and pasting the emails they sent me into my word document. I also didn't like using Word Doc as it was a clunky way to organize information. But most of my

issues came from the fact that I felt guideless. I was having a difficult time with my personal life during most of the project and struggled to keep up with my artists too. Professor Garcia told me that I can communicate these issues with my artists to cooperate with my limitations, but I didn't think of it during the time of the project. I didn't believe that those compromises existed in professional settings.

I felt there was an expectation for me to already know about all of these concepts while also knowing how to skillfully apply them in class (whether that was the intent or not) when in reality I had no idea what to do beyond what was told to me. Most of my improvements came from trial and error. I learned to ask the other PMs what they did or how they approached a situation. I also asked my artists how they felt working with me and areas they thought I could improve on. It helped some, but even when we got to the Organic Modeling project, I felt like I didn't do much beyond semi-frequent progress checks and helping with account issues for Flow.

Flow was exciting at first. I wanted to learn how to use professional team-based programs for when I enter the workforce. But our experience was still limited. We had no use for much beyond a couple menus and out of those that we used, some were disorganized with room for improvement.

It was also hard to find resources for all of the aspects a PM would need to keep up to date with. I understood from freshmen orientation that it's important for us to stay updated with news revolving around the game industry, especially managers, but nothing has been given to us. We've been left to find sources on our own. Of course, we should learn how to explore job sites and common news outlets by ourselves, but having a good, reliable starting point can give us reference as to what we should look out for in case of faulty information. Like what are popular websites to check out, good social media sights to follow companies, where to go to fact check hot news or controversy about a game, etc.

It's not necessarily the point of modeling pipeline, but these same suggestions can be applied when finding places to further research the skills we need, people to follow,

account that teach emotional regulation or avoiding burnout, self-care concepts, and how to use them in a work/school setting while still tackling the constraints of the project itself.

I still greatly appreciated the class and valued what I learned. Professor Garcia was great in helping all of us when we needed it and maintained patience throughout every class. Because I know I may have tested him unintentionally. Continuing to study as a production manager will be challenging and I'm glad that all of the professors work so hard to give us what we need to succeed in the game industry. I hope the changes made for production managers will make the process easier for my class and all future PMs.