

# Healthy Foods Healthy Moods

## Food Truck Project

MGMT 326 – Fall 2023 - Contribution By: Erik Thompson

It has been an exciting and fruitful experience to work with team 3 on a management plan project, Healthy Foods Healthy Moods. Being a part of a preselected team is an excellent opportunity to work on personal relationship skills. We lost one of our team members early and it did take a few weeks to introduce ourselves to each other, but we finished strong. Leadership, technical expertise, web development, and great communication skills are the important qualities that I bring to any team that I join. Working with a new team can be nerve-racking and exciting at the same time, but once the ice is broken it is time to get down to business. Some of my important qualities that add value have taken years to develop, communication skills are still a work in progress for me.

Everyone has important qualities to bring to a team, but finding the right mix can be a challenging task. Your assignments allowed us to discuss our talents openly and this led to the process of assigning tasks within our group. Self-delegation is very important before a team has structure because it allows everyone to take ownership of what they are most comfortable working on. My biggest strength is most often my technical skills and then web development when we are working on a business project. Leadership is a skill that I have only recently developed during a sustainability program working with dogs. As an elected leader in a dog training program, I was required to train new recruits, hold weekly discussions, and demonstrate proper technique. I have always found success with inviting others to take charge of a situation and trying to make them comfortable at the same time.

Bringing leadership into a group is an important quality because all teams need direction. Being a leader does not mean that I oversee everything, it just means that I am motivating and encouraging my team to be successful. Having a professional attitude and being prepared can make our project goals more attainable. In our project I was selected to be a co-leader with Wilda Gray. Over time my team began to accept that I was reliable and consistent with setting and meeting deadlines. Acceptance is a big issue when it comes to leadership, and it's an important quality because self-appointed leadership can lead to discontinuity within our team. My first action was to initiate a democratic process that was inclusive, followed by setting up our first in person meeting at the catalyst building.

When we met at the catalyst building, I was able to show off some of my technical expertise. Ray Tozzi has some experience with technology, and we immediately started to work on some of our design elements. Wilda showed strengths in planning and organizing so we asked if she would be comfortable as our final presentation lead, she accepted. Meeting in person was a really important step in solidifying our direction. Mathew was not able to attend so I reached out to him with a list of options, and he decided to investigate the real estate market for us. I took the responsibility of collecting and assembling our contributions and then submitted them on behalf of the team. My skills with Microsoft products allowed me to create professional looking documents, a web portal, and power points. Wilda came up with our name, Healthy Foods Healthy Moods, so I secured our web domain. Using internet registrars is something I learned how to do early in my life. I have always wanted to start a web driven business but lacked the polished business skills to success with my vision of dot com success.

Building a quality web portal is important and one of my strongest qualities. I received my first computer in 1995 at age 15 and I was developing web pages with basic html by age 17. The dot com era had just begun, and any kid with a computer had an opportunity to be successful. After I secured [www.healthyfoodshealthymoods.com](http://www.healthyfoodshealthymoods.com), I setup a simple WordPress portal with a food cart plugin that allows our customers to find out future locations and time frames to access our products. There are numerous paid plug-ins available for food truck businesses that will interface with current ride share delivery providers. I wanted to make sure that our model demonstrated the ability to go live with some additional fine tuning if the capital investment was available. My motivation was to show my team how to assemble their input in a way that could have real world practical application. Team 3 should exit your class with a working understanding to source, prepare, and assemble a management plan while working remotely. Communicating remotely is easier once you know the people that you're working with, so meeting in person at least once was vital to our operational success.

Communication is perhaps the most important quality, but I admit that it is a quality that will take me more time to master. Personal relations and communication require attention to detail, excellent listening skills, acknowledgement of other points of view, and patience. There are so many channels available for communication because of modern technology. Creating a group chat with our mobile phones was by far the most effective. Because our schedules were out of sync, having the chat on our phones gives a more reliable way for important information to be delivered in a timely manner. The discussion boards were a great starting point, and email worked to send files, but the notifications for emails went unnoticed on occasion. Most everyone is used to checking their phone messages to see if someone is trying to reach them. It was the group feature of our mobile phones that allowed us to coordinate important tasks in a short time span when people were available. It was Wilda that first suggested the idea of sharing phone numbers for setting up group chat. Once the chat was set up, we really started to pick up the pace of getting tasks assigned, coordinated, and turned in on time.

Healthy Foods Healthy Moods is a workable business idea. If any of the group members wanted to run with it, I believe wholeheartedly that it could be done. The important qualities that I provided, leadership, technical expertise, web development, and communication skills were critical to our team's success. I was encouraging, supportive, and available for my team when they needed me. We met every deadline, and I communicated my expectations clearly. Leading by being a strong team member, leveraging my decades of computer skills, and even contacting our instructor on behalf of my team were but a few of the important qualities that I delivered to team 3. If we had an additional project that was not selected at random, I believe that Wilda, Ray, and Mathew would be very appreciative to have me as a member. I enjoyed working with Team 3 and I am most thankful for the diversity of skills that were available from the start. Healthy Foods Healthy Moods is an idea that would improve the greater Spokane area in addition to being a lucrative business operation. It is my hope that my teammates are successful in all future endeavors because of our experiences in the management 326 class. Thank you.