Experimenting with Tipu Ake style team learning
Reflections on a 2005 Masters course at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

This is the assessment record for a group assignment done be a class of eleven students at the Auckland University of Technology studying on the Masters of Applied Science programme in Semester one 2005. The students were a diverse group from a wide range of countries, cultures and study disciplines.

This was a module on Project Management that contributed 7.5 % towards their Research Paper A778001; focusing on developing technology application and business skills.

This was a pilot programme that departed from normal tutor driven learning and timetabling conventions in an attempt to encourage self directed team learning. It was set up to force students to participate as a team. After the intense four hour session where templates and a list of resources was given, they had no other promises of tutor support, mentoring or team facilitation other than by email which was very limited. One extra one hour session was required to get them past some blocks regarding the application of Microsoft Project, a tool that no members were previously familiar with.

Participants were reminded at the start that the outcomes expected were about "learning" - to grow and work as a collaborative team and apply their collective wisdom to a challenge, picking up some basic project management tools and skills in the process; not to provide a perfect project plan for the actual project selected.

The tutor Peter Goldsbury is a part time lecturer at AUT, who normally works as an organisational learning facilitator with many New Zealand organisations focusing on Project / Program Leadership and Teamwork development, see www.projectmanagement.co.nz His work uses the Tipu Ake Lifecycle – an Organic Leadership Model. which was inspired by the Te Whaiti School supported by volunteers from AUT and elsewhere. See www.tipuake.org.nz

Contents:
1. The original assignment and ground rules handed to the student team.
2. Task 1 - Group reflection on Living Organisations
3. Task 2 – Group reflection on Teamwork and Leadership
4. Task 3 – Progress log / minutes
5. Task 4 – Feasibility study proposal checklist
6. Task 5 – Project Roadmap
7. Task 6 - Ms Project Overview and cashflow
8. Task 7 – Extracts from personal reflections
9. Tutors reflections

Thanks to the students who were the guinea pigs in this experiment, for allowing us to package their work and reflections as a resource to assist other tutors wanting to experiment with team learning. Any items of this document can be freely copied or used for educational purposes. Thanks to Colleen Higgins and Owen Young at AUT for initiating and supporting this.

Our particular thanks to the staff and students at Te Whaiti School who shared their collaborative learning processes with us as the Tipu Ake Lifecycle, and to David Socha of The University of Washington and other contributors for the resources and ideas they have shared.

ASSESSMENT #8
Project Leadership and Reflection

Outcomes sought:

 Participants will grow the skills to learn together in teams making new things happen as living organisations; applying all the tools of life, learning, leadership, management, science and technology to best advantage.

This is a team learning assignment; work together to exploit your collective wisdom to complete 1-6, then personally reflect on your own behaviour, learning and contribution for item 7 (<u>Individual reflection must be handwritten - group work may be either)</u>

COURSE: ......……. PAPER ………….. Module Facilitator ………… DUE DATE ……..

NAME: .... GROUP: ...... ID: .... DATE HANDED IN: ....

task	Description	Comments	Poss	Mark
1	Leading projects in a world of complexity apparent chaos inter-connectedness, and opportunity.	Reflect as a team on the differences that are likely to occur when we consider organisations, teams and projects/programs as living things, not machines with inputs processes and outputs. (hand in a one page group summary)	**10**	**10**
2	Teamwork and Leadership	Reflect as a team on how you performed this assignment, the different team roles that were demonstrated, how the "leadership" moved over its duration and the issues you had to resolve. (hand in a one page team summary)	**10**	**10**
3	Team progress /Learning log	Keep a dated log for your team with times you met, actions and initials of those attending. Concentrate on capturing learning events (hand in one log for the whole team and decide if every member deserves the same mark???)	**10**	**10**
4	Project Initiation	Go though the Project Feasibility Study checklist for your group's development project (hand in the sheet for your team)	**10**	**10**
5	Project Roadmap	Get together and produce an appropriate roadmap for your project/program environment (hand in the sheet for your team)	**10**	**10**
6	Process template	Use MS project to build a top level template for your project / program from your roadmap (print out a one page summary and a cash flow)	**10**	**10**
7	Personal Reflection (hand in all together for team)	Handwrite a 1-2 page personal reflection on your own learnings and how your behaviours changed (dig deep and use a personal journal)	**40**	**40**
Reserved for marker	Bonus (max +10% each) - teamwork / innovation Penalties (max – 10% each) - absence / late in (max 1wk)			**na**
		TOTAL MARKS:	**100**	**100**

Mode of Learning:

When we first got together we chose the following new project idea that someone suggested would be a good opportunity to pursue and learn from.

……………………………………………………………………………………………….
We were also told when and where this assignment had to be handed in namely:

……………………………………………………………………………………………….
We then went over a few exercises, tools and models that could help us get our minds around it in the areas of (a) Learning, (b) Project context, (c) Teamwork, leadership and innovation, including some organic team ground rules (d) Belbin team roles, (e) Project feasibility checklist. (f) Project / program roadmap (g) MS Project.

Some of the specified activities we did together as a group in reflective sessions during the workshop. We split ourselves into teams and were expected to supplement the four hour class workshop with a further four hours working together in our own time to complete it.

We had no tutor help available outside the workshop, so we had to find and grow the skills we needed within our groups. This involved us self organizing and quickly determining who knew what. We had to focus on learning from the very start; how to face the issues, share the leadership, recognize and control pest behaviour and be innovative as a group. We were told that our team would be marked down if one person was assigned or assumed the role of leader. We were encouraged to benchmark and share what we learnt with other teams, not to compete.

We were warned we may need to present our project proposal in a later section of the course.

Resources that were given to us as a starting point.

What is Project Management (The future may be different from past understandings)
www.projectmanagement.co.nz

Vision Verbs and Tipu Ake - Potent Program Leadership Tools for a World of Complexity
http://www.tipuake.org.nz/stories/program_management.pdf

The Project Management Institute Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)
Latest at www.pmi.org or in Library (Old version available on AUT network at wellesley / copy / business 400024- Managing Projects and Innovation in your Organisation)

Gantthead – The on line community (and resources) for IT Project Managers
www.gantthead.com

Teaching Reflective Skills in an Engineering Course (David Socha - Seattle)
http://www.cs.washington.edu/homes/socha/papers/Teaching%20Reflective%20Skills%20in%20an%20Engineering%20Course%20final%20submission.pdf

When conflict helps Learning: (David Socha – Seattle_
http://www.cs.washington.edu/homes/socha/papers/When%20Conflict%20Helps%20Learning%20final%20submission.pdf

PROJECT LEADERSHIP AND REFLECTION

Tutor Peter Goldsbury -27 May 2905

Task 1 Group Reflections — How Organisations are Considered.

When considering organisations, teams and projects as living things instead of machines we, can obtain both advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages

In our discussion we found that the most important advantage of regarding our project as a living organism is that in order to keep it alive you cannot neglect any part of it or it will begin to break down or die. The group needs to assume a holistic approach that takes into account the project as a whole and not as running parts of a machine, if the project is organised as a whole it is essential that the entire group is involved and that all decisions are made as a group. Also if all people within a team are given equal opportunity to contribute, individual motivation will increase and this will help to keep the living organism (project) alive. Other advantages have to do with the adaptation, versatility, and flexibility of living organisms towards new and stressful situations. These attributes of living organisms can be applied to the project, facilitating the way it responds to adverse situations. Problems can be easier to resolve when working in a team that is considered a living thing, as many minds working together can achieve greater outcomes.

Disadvantages

Disadvantages of considering organisations, teams and projects as living things, can be the possible conflict arising between team members, such as personality clashes. Problems may also occur if leadership and structure is not consistent. If there are any communication problems between team members the whole project can be put in jeopardy. Also if people are lacking motivation, have negative attitudes and are reluctant to contribute, processes may begin to break down. Therefore the presence of a strict machine like structure for some personality types may be more suitable.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP AND REFLECTION

Tutor Peter Goldsbury —27 May 2905

Task 2 Group Reflection on Teamwork and Leadership

We had six meetings more or less one a week from the time the project commenced. The objective of the first meeting was to develop the idea, and this objective was achieved. During this meeting a chairman was appointed by the team, to assist in the brainstorming that was needed to get the project running. A co-ordinator kept the team advised of future meetings and room bookings. As a team we were able to look for help when we had several technical problems. At the first meeting the chairperson assumed the leadership role, however as the meetings progressed this person relinquished this role, from this point leadership role did not fall onto a single person and different people contributed with their skills and talents to help the project advance. The artistic abilities of one of the group members helped in the development of the roadmap.

We found that it can sometimes be difficult to achieve a consolidated idea when working in such a large group of people. It was also discovered that the strengths and contributions of different people changed over the project process. People who were initially hesitant to contribute in the first few meetings gained confidence and were not afraid to have their say by the conclusion of the project.

There were several role changes over the process of the project. Initially, we discussed individuals assuming separate roles, however as the project progressed these roles were continually changing and were assumed by different people. In saying this there were also members of the team who remained within the same roles for the duration of the process.

It was also difficult at times to organise meetings times when everybody could be present, this was due to members other commitments and could not be prevented, and this issue was successfully resolved for the majority of the meetings.

Sample meeting minutes / Progress Log

MINUTES OF THE MEETING   29/04/2005

Project Leadership and Reflection Assessment — Tutor P Goldsbury

Crepes and Waffles Restaurant Project

Present: Felipe, Alyssa, Yuri, Nandani, Ishita, Pardeep, Mona, Saeedeh, Mary and Annie.
Absent: Eka

Chairperson: Felipe

Secretary: Alyssa

12:00 pm: General overview and assessment of how the project is progressing.

12:15 pm: Began work on Feasibility Study Proposal. With everybody contributing. There was some misunderstanding regarding several of the categories listed on the form, a decision was made to contact Peter Goldsbury and ask for his advice regarding these. Yuri volunteered to email Peter.

01:25 pm: We finalised the feasibility work and began the creation of the

project roadmap.

02:00 pm: Finalised roadmap and discussed possible styles for this.

02:10 pm: Next meeting scheduled for Friday 06/05/2005 in two study group rooms in the library. Will begin work on MS project and finalise the project roadmap and feasibility form.

Tasks allocated:
Yuri:	Email Peter Goldsbury regarding feasibility form questions.
Alyssa:	Prepare feasibility form. Book study group rooms.
Annie/Mary:	Prepare final of project roadmap.

2 May 2005   Alyssa contacted Peter Goldsbury regarding feasibility form questions, checked with Yuri first to approve this *(As Peter was away and he had not got a reply to his email)* Reply email attached.

Feasibility Study Proposal

Code: F-(feasibility study)	Title: Development of a Crepes and Waffles Restaurant.	29/04/2005

Where we are: At the stage of developing the idea of creating a restaurant which specialises in crepes and waffles, also planning the necessary process's to do this.	**Where we want to be:** We want to have a successfully opened restaurant, with the possibility of expansion.
Customers: Our customers will be the general public, who are seeking quality food at a reasonable price that is time efficient.	**Sponsor: ($)** Ourselves, family members and friends, SBA (Small Business Administration) loan from the Government.
Other Stakeholders: Competition, which will include direct competition such as creperies and pancake cafes, fast food and conventional restaurants.	**Sponsors: (E)** Ourselves, friends and family, government.
Other Opportunities: Expansion into catering, other products such as coffee, the opportunity to become a chain of restaurants.	**Possible Options:** Menu options such as salad bars, happy hour and promotions. Location options, including proximity to CBD, retail outlets, malls, universities and schools, also possible parking options.
Key Business outcomes: 1. Financial independence and profit. 2. Satisfied customers, happy with food quality, price, service and restaurant environment, high return visit rate. 3. Efficient processes. 4. Will learn to streamline all processes through hands on experience and will grow from all we are learning.	**KPI's** 1. Financial income per week. 2. Customer satisfaction daily, provided by feedback from customers and employees, a suggestion box could also be used. 3. Number of customers, estimated by reservations, number of tables occupied at any time and number of people waiting for tables.
Financial $: Weekly Estimate 1. Gross Profit: $10,000 2. Running Costs: Rent: $2000, Utilities: $1000, Suppliers: $2000, Wages: $3000, Maintenance: $600 3. Bonus Profit: $1400	**Max execution cost ($): Estimated** Amount required to start up business: $200,000 Annual bonus profit: $72,800 Return on investment period around 3 years.
Alignment: • We are satisfied that as a team we will be capable of successfully building and running a Crepes and Waffles Restaurant.	**Risks:** 1. No or too few customers. 2. Unable to compete successfully. 3. Design flaws in restaurant. 4. Insufficient staff. 5. Contractor problems. 6. Location problems.
Suggest feasibility process: Created with the services of a good consultant, an important investment that will pay dividends later.	**Communication plan:** To avoid disclosure of our restaurant idea, we could patent the idea and have all members involved in the project sign confidentiality agreements written up by a lawyer.
Project Team:　　　　　**Tasks:** Philipe　　　　　　　　Chairperson Eka　　　　　　　　　　Secretary Alyssa, Saheede, Mona. - Menu creation and design. Yuri, Pardeep, Mary – Location, interior design, approvals. Ishita, Nandani, Annie – All suppliers, advertising.	**Suppliers:** 1. Lawyer 2. Business consultant 3. Government 4. Regional Council 5. Architect 6. Interior decorator 7. Builder 8. Food wholesalers 9. Furniture wholesalers **10.** Uniform outlet

Prepared by: Alyssa, Annie, Eka, Ishita, Mary, Mona, Nandani, Pardeep, Philipe, Saheede and Yuri.	Approved by: Date:	Approval notes:

Date: 29/04/2005		

Still need to slot in the Roadmap and MS Project items here.

Extracts from personal reflections:

These were taken from handwritten submissions in no particular order and passages were chosen to portray different aspects of the team learning. A few minor grammatical changes were made where necessary to improve clarity.

Participant 1:

- Every person is blessed with some unique skills and abilities ….While working in a team I have learnt a lot.
- The strength of the group work subdues the diversity of problems. There is more exchange of knowledge and information. The sharing of ideas and knowledge leads to understanding.
- I learnt how to pay respect to my work-mates, how to work more collaboratively and productively with people
- I have also learnt to be punctual in all the meetings and it is also very important to know how attentive one needs to be.
- To sum up, from selecting the name for the restaurant and up to the opening of the restaurant, every step was different and widened the horizon of my limited knowledge in the field of project management.

Participant 2

- In much of our lives, success is measured by individual achievement, but there are many occasions when we need to walk with others
- While working for this group project I came to know how to be punctual for meetings, schedule group meetings well ahead, arrive at meetings prepared, listen to understand and speak to be understood, respect and trust each other, set realistic goals, stick to agenda, have enthusiasm for team goals, stay open minded, have a sense of humour, plan for fun as part of the process, see conflict as an opportunity, to explore new ideas, get to know each other, get into contact with each other and not to criticize people, work out time frame, plan and attend regular group meetings, keep notes of what has been decided and allocate tasks fairly according to who has what skills and resources.
- I also observed and learnt that the venue also influences the output of the project
- On the whole by working in the group project at AUT, I realized that one can achieve much if he has a group of people working collectively, contributing their different talents and perspectives and above all their time. … Hence making it possible to tackle much more significant projects of professional importance. This group project left a great positive effect on my attitudes, behaviours, professional and social interaction. Overall it was a great experience for me to walk with my classmates.

Participant 3

- Even though at first I was skeptical about the project and the way it could teach me useful things for my career, I found it a very productive experience. This project taught me a lot about myself, my potential and the way I relate to people.
- As is usual in me, during the first meeting when I saw little progress was being made I assumed the leadership role….. However as the project progressed, I realised that I was flexing my views over the others, and I thought the objectives of the whole experience

could not be achieved in such a way, so I decided to step down and started listening to the other members of the team. … At first, I got really frustrated because there was little progress. I also found it hard to express my opinion on what I thought about sharing leadership, and that everyone should assume leadership at some point in the project in a diplomatic non-confrontational way. So I decided to stay quiet. As I learnt or realized later it is all about being patient ... another member of the group assumed the role of leader and we started making progress again. This change of leadership procedure was repeated several times during the duration of the project and a lot of time was wasted. However I believe now that its more valuable to have a "skipping" leadership role than single person imposing his or her views on the team.

- What this project really taught me as opposed to other group projects that I have been part of was the value of people and reflecting about my attitudes.

Participant 4

- As the assignment progressed it became apparent that there were shortcomings within the group, and my lack of confidence in my ability was not really warranted. I decided that I probably knew as much as anyone about the issues, and therefore made more of a contribution. My confidence increased as the project developed, as well as the groups confidence in one another
- There was a good relationship between all members of the group and a good sense of humour prevailed. Several people were particularly humourous, particularly when the we had reached an impass. I think this served the group well, as it temporarily distracted us and once the moment was over there was a renewed enthusiasm and effort by us all.
- If I were to answer the first question given to us for the lecture on this topic (A Question of Control) I would certainly have a lower degree of confidence in the answer than I did initially. With the knowledge I now have about the workings of a large group, it is certainly true that the more perspectives you get, the more substantial the solutions.
- There was a small number of people within the group that dominated proceedings and were enthusiastic and determined, however this did not allow the group to proceed….. By the completion of the project all members were contributing and there was a much more comfortable atmosphere. It was great to get to know the group members better in this way, as generally there isn't the scope to get to know someone properly in class.
- I think this was a very worthwhile learning and growing experience, certainly for myself and I would suggest for all of us. I now know a lot more about group dynamics, how they should function and how to improve my own skills to increase my effectiveness in group situations.

Participant 5

- Nowadays teams have become the basic unit in modern engineering organisations. Because group environments encourage interaction and open communication, they create a desirable setting for generating new ideas and individuals are better able to function effectively as members in an interdisciplinary setting.
- At the first meeting, all eleven students attended and discussed the topic. One student wished to alter the topic that the teacher had named. After discussion most of the students agreed to change the topic. Therefore we decided to choose a new one "Creating a crepes and waffles restaurant"

- Though everyone had his or he own ideas reflecting various angles, they were not comprehensive. When we worked together, we shared these ideas and developed skill management. For example, I only thought about the location, customers and financial opportunities. I did not consider any long term plan for running a restaurant.
- It was a good opportunity to take part in the project and to learn from others. This changed my ideas and behaviour and also widened my mind. I thank that all members will sense our progress towards objectives and the project will succeed.

Participant 6

- Previously, that is before working in a team, I liked to be aloof and didn't mix up with any new people, but now my behaviour has changed and I like to be part of a team, by mixing up and sharing each others ideas. All the students came from different cultures and they related cultural experiences with research contexts and theories. I have learnt many new things and skills from this teamwork and these new skills have helped me to shape my likings, future and my behaviour. Many qualities of learning, leadership and management have become vital in my life. By working together in a team I have exploited collective wisdom. First, I didn't like working together but now after this delightful experience I have started enjoying working together. I was also a little bit hesitant and ashamed about putting my views in front of other people, but due to this team work I have become more confident and understand the foundations, history and ethics of intercultural communication skills.
- Being patient, listening to what others have to say, accepting the teams views are also some of the learnings that now reflect in my behaviour. Proper planning of the project or any assignment is needed. Every team member has to read the articles before the team organizes to meet for the very first time. Good and proper understanding of the topic is needed and not extensive reading of the literature. I have learnt how to keep records of the meeting (participants, issues discussed, general observations) and how to base your discussions on the cultures represented in your own team.
- I have also learnt by working together we question our assumptions, think and decide about the outcomes before we take any further step. Forward thinking is very essential and vital in team work. My behaviour has agreed to accept more and more challenges day by day. I have learnt to interact with team members by illiciting responses to questions you pose. My behaviour has become more sophisticated.
- Exposure to alternative assumptions, frames, and clash of ideas are some of the things that I have learnt. The sweet spot for learning is at the boundaries of individual and community. Now I am flooded with new thought forms which reflect in my behaviour

Participant 7

- From my personal experience a group project is a difficult task, but working effectively in groups and being a good team player is essential for the workplace.
- I personally enjoyed and got many benefits from participation and observation of group behaviours:
  - It increased my self confidence, self concept and growth of personality
  - Good interaction with group members derived strength and support from others
  - Be an effective listener and listen for the whole message of the speaker

- Always attend group meetings and be prepared. This results in professional rewards in such a way that each person influences and is influenced by the other persons in the group.
- Everybody has strengths and weaknesses
- Acknowledge your rights as an individual and the rights of others, so all can present alternative points of view without intimidating and putting down others

Participant 8

- The team self organized and quickly determined team member's skills, talent, sharing the leadership, how to face the issues, how to face the pests and control innovation as a group.
- We all had "can do" attitudes and got positive results
- If we had a problem we could not solve we asked help from our tutor – We always used networking.
- We had no room for egos here, we just encouraged ourselves to work together for our project.
- Although we were from different countries, different cultures and with other different backgrounds, we worked together as a family.
- We did not have a specific leader to instruct us but we did this work successfully

Participant 9

- One of the skills I improved during the group work is organizing or management skill. I think I took a quite a big part in the group as an organizer.
- My personality has always been as a quiet person … during the group work, I have developed some confidence and also developed the ability to express my own ideas. I also learned to be an active listener and practiced my listening skills on every meeting we had.
- I also learned to be more responsible and committed to the group……as the secretary to keep a record of everything including all the documents agendas etc
- I used to prefer working by myself … but during the whole process …. I learnt to be a team player, working with the team members, sharing the workload, took account of other peoples opinions, made decisions based on the group and solved problems together.
- After this group project, I realized that is easier, faster and better to get the work done as a group rather than an individual.

Participant 10

- Firstly we made a decision that we were going to set up a Crepes and Waffles restaurant. Then we started to do a feasibility study,- such as finding money, location and market opportunity. We analysed the costs and benefits that we expected; additionally, the potential risks we could face. We were working as a team, and everyone was assigned to do a specific task for the group.
- My task was to create the project roadmap. Before doing it we had a group meeting to discuss the aspects of the composition of the roadmap. By doing this exercise, I got so much practice on project research and management skills that I was not familiar with

before. I consider it is an essential skill for my Life. I am getting to know about leadership and cooperation that is very important when people are involved in projects.

- Before that I preferred to work or study by myself because it wastes time with a group especially when it is not well organized. But now I realize that working within a team has many advantages. Team work can combine individual's advantage and overcome shortage. We can share ideas, analyse any potential impacts, then we can get the best outcomes.

Participant 11

- When our team project commenced the group had a very positive attitude. We even became enthusiastic enough to change our project to a subject that was considered by the majority to be more interesting.
- …By this stage the situation was becoming extremely frustrating as we were close to our completion date for the project and were not close to finishing . These issues were resolved with a meeting with the project lecturer and an approval for a weeks extension. The problems with the team at this stage appeared to be a lack of communication, motivation and leadership. The majority of the group were not prepared or did not feel comfortable with taking over the leadership role, as the current leader was no longer comfortable in the role. Luckily these obstacles were overcome through discussion and teamwork.
- Overall our team consisted of intelligent individuals who worked together well at some stages. I feel the main drawbacks were lack of motivation, enthusiasm and leadership. On a positive note however once people were motivated some great ideas were formed and the hidden talents of certain individuals were exposed.

Tutor's reflections for students

This course segment was very much an experiment for me, so I was not sure when I handed this to you how well you would go. When I saw your diversity and saw so many for whom English was not your first language I was more than a little worried, but decided to trust the process. My concern was further reinforced when for weeks no-one seemed to be asking me any email questions - were you doing the common student (and project) thing - leaving all the work to the last moment?? (or perhaps even more personally - was I redundant; a useless appendix??)

All this fear subsided when one of you contacted me with a few simple questions about what words meant on a template and told me that though you had been having some ups and downs, you were all "learning heaps" about working together.

Late in the project one of you contacted me to see if I could help you enter your project into Microsoft Project - after only a half hour pressure cooker course at the start you were still struggling with it.   I was down country at the time so on my return was able to give you a further one hour hands on session and as "project sponsor" gave you a one week extension to complete the assignment. When we met I could see that perhaps many of you were trusting one or two people to know about this task and could see them and Microsoft Project Project taking you deeper and deeper down a single linear line of thinking that did not seem to match the bigger picture with many parallel paths that you had come to understand when you created the project roadmap earlier.   That's a danger to be wary of, particularly if you as a team are working at the collective sensing and wisdom levels of Tipu Ake, because from there you can do most of your control from this "birds eye" project perspective.

I was ecstatic when you handed in your assignment, not only with what you had managed to achieve entirely using your own team's initiative and internal resources, but even more with the deep personal reflection every member did to track the path that you went through both individually and as a team. These all indicated some deep and sometimes painful learning and more importantly some changes of behaviour and new expectations for team work and ongoing learning in the future.

I read that you all spent some time in the Tipu Ake undercurrents (some very deeply at a personal level) and most learnt to enjoy being there. You may recollect some people (probably those that enjoy the Belbin Implementer or Shaper roles) always wanting to force you back into an assumed order or some immediate action. That's dangerous around the project initiation stages where probably no-one really understands the project and you need to flesh out all the ideas and be innovative.

I read that there were some (probably Belbin Team Workers) who knew how to bring a bit of humour out to diffuse tension when things were stalling. I think I also detected some Belbin Coordinators who probably read through some of David Sochas references to try to help see what was really going on in your team.

In the conventional project management world I as " Sponsor" would have been angry at your cheek in tossing out the project "Produce and market a glutton free bread" that you initially agreed on with me. The PM world calls this big scope creep.   However in the Tipu Ake world we accept that the team does its own feasibility study and looks to define its own projects in a way that optimises outcomes. (in this case I very clearly defined this as being your learning, not

the physical project itself)   No-one happily puts their energy into something they can't believe in! I was thrilled that you took that initiative and did not think it necessary to ask me first.

I noticed that you appointed a "Chairman" at the start of the project. That is a word that carries a lot of "command and control" baggage which can bring with it pest behaviours and assumptions that may undermine growth in your team, perhaps even bringing out the poison of dependency in members. For Living Teams it may be better sometimes to drop this type of word (and even internally at least the name Project Manager – more a management role and external contact point) and focus instead on the unleashing the team role attributes you need at the particular time (eg a shaper to kick things off, a resource investigator to grow external connections and gather information, a Monitor Evaluator to process it and of course make sure there is a Coordinator keeping an overview and reflecting on how the team itself is functioning.)

If you had twice the time for this assignment I would have perhaps specified that you use one session to redo the Tipu Ake self-assessment to observe some global changes in your team behaviours and this plot your growth towards being more proactive. Try this with some of your future teams.

The technique you used for your project meeting minutes was OK – it focused on the process you needed to go through to deliver the outputs of each meeting and certainly provided the evidence of team participation AUT and I needed for assessment thanks.   However, as a Living Organisation operating at the Tipu Ake Collective wisdom you may find it very useful to use the log to reflect more on your learning, opportunities, risks and connections, particularly when you are at the front feasibility stage of a project or when working in a complex cross functional program.

Your MS project report gave the evidence I needed that you had a reasonable idea of how to apply it as a tool including costs etc.   For me a top level gantt chart printout may have given a better idea of the project by showing it on a timescale.   I think in the second tutorial you will have seen the importance of not starting to use it until your roadmap was clear and resisting the temptation to dig into a lot of detail in a linear fashion.. I think you probably also saw the sense of starting all task names with a verb to get you into the action thinking required.

In conclusion, thanks for your effort. I hope that you consider this as simply the start of your learning journey into growing effective projects in living organisations - and for life in general as your life is your most important project to work on.

I hope AUT and others will use your experience and this report to try and build on these techniques elsewhere. I would like you permission to put this on the Tipu Ake website please, so people around the world will see your team as pioneering a new kind of leadership and team learning that is seldom exploited in traditional tertiary education.

The biggest dilemma I faced with this assignment was how to convince AUT quality assurance processes that that you should all receive a100% mark for this segment of the paper (Worth 7.5% of total).   I believe the quality of your reflections justify this thanks.

All the best for your ongoing study and careers
Kia Kaha - Go strong
Peter Goldsbury 05/07/05