

A Reflection on the GlucoGauge Crisis Simulation

This was the first time I have participated in such an extensive and multifaceted online simulation. It was also the first time since studying Communication as an undergraduate, 14 years ago, that I was asked to present a press statement. I enjoyed working through the simulation and far less enjoyed working through my statement. I found it particularly interesting how the cohort participated in the exercise. The simulation was incredibly telling of processing and personality. This can be seen in my analysis of how I performed amongst the cohort, how my nature as well as my experiences of working in hospitality has shaped my leadership style, and how the results of this exercise supported my reasons for choosing the MSC program.

I have already learned that the cohort is a huge part of the MSC experience. This simulation highlighted differences within the cohort, and the analysis with reflection resulting from that, informed my takeaways. I would classify my results as outlying compared to many in the cohort. I think of myself as an effective and fair-minded leader, and I felt reassured in seeing my results. For each of the four cognitive biases that Michele explained, I was lacking strong biases. Most surprising was that each person was unique in the path taken to the decision. Brandee and Jennifer were closest in scenario and decisions throughout the simulation, but I chose to ship a new device while they chose to send replacement strips. Interpreting the results through a cognitive framework, I was paused by the display of biases, especially the confirmation bias among an intelligent group. Michele's explanation makes sense of this. It is a reminder to re-examine attributing poor decisions to stupidity.

Differences also emerged in approach. Some played the role of Product Manager, as originally given to us in the simulation, where as I chose to write as the CEO, because of ranking

and reputation. The other large difference was in sharing of details. I kept thinking, how much is enough? In deciding to use FDA and ADA versus Federal Drug Administration and American Diabetes Association, while I was counting the words, and therefore inclined to use the abbreviations, I still felt it necessary to write the full names of the organizations. Who was the audience and what if they did not know what those letters stood for? Tiffany and Alison, for example, chose a high-level approach, and did a great job of acknowledging and apologizing, but lacked detail. I failed to flat out apologize and was disappointed in my wording, as Michele commented on, but I was caught-up on including information while trying to be empathetic. I felt suffocated by the word count limit, but I am hard-wired towards details.

Beyond wiring, life experience and natural strengths explain each outcome. I have been participating in leadership development activities since a young age. Rather than being outgoing and loud, which I associated with being a leader, I was quiet and kind. As a teenager, I was selected to be in the “Leaders Club.” We spent one class period interacting with students who attended our high school but were usually in separate classrooms because of developmental issues they faced. This experience reiterated the need to be open-minded, patient and accepting. I was also selected to learn how to listen to and counsel potential suicide victims. This training bolstered my beliefs to always been a compassionate and empathetic person and to try to keep an open-mind. “Minds are like parachutes, they only function when open” was my yearbook quote. Cheesy perhaps, but I believe it is why I had, comparatively, a lower cognitive bias.

I also work in an industry where I am surrounded by individuals of various backgrounds and job functions. Being rooted in hospitality teaches the importance of all players, even those ones who are rarely acknowledged. The dishwasher is just as important as the Chef and the

warehouse selector job is equally as imperative the sales team job. Spending time with people on all levels of an organization has kept me humble and has been essential to my success, as has being passionate. While I have many personal fears, I am fearless when standing up for something I believe is right. Though I was in the “saving” group, I made the riskier choice in sending a new device rather than replacing strips. The numbers of employment were irrelevant to me, as my focus was always on the health of the user and the user experience. The same for the estimate of users synching monthly. I was told 10% and did bias in staying close to the anchor and estimating 25%, but unless it was a majority, I would have made the same decision. If those issues were not fixed everyone would eventually be out of a job. I knew my decision right away.

In the beginning of the simulation, I struggled to make a decision and was frustrated. The ranking question threw me off in interpreting device vs. user error. Are climate issues a device or a user error? I think it could be argued either way. This is reflective of the real world. Sometimes you have to make gut decisions without the luxury of being able ask questions. When Mr. Jackson provided the choice for use of \$1 million, I chose a communication campaign over a revision of instructions because the Doctor commented on patients failing to follow instructions. If I had a real choice, I would have spent far less money. It was also unclear how a patient obtained GlucoGague, at a drugstore or a Doctor’s office. Knowing all the touch-points to the patient for education and communication, would have informed my campaign decision. Lastly, I was confused by the replies of some of the chort, but it turns out we were sharing information on different situations. This is a lesson to be mindful of people’s experiences in making comments.

The simulation iterated that I am and can be a good leader in my own way. It also highlighted my need to work on being more polished and succinct. Many of my cohorts were, for

lack of a better word, professional, in their presentations. My style is a little different and, while I feel comfortable talking to anyone, even in a business setting, I prefer to stay out of the public eye and out of exceedingly corporate settings. It also is a lesson in learning how to communicate within time-frames and word limits. It is difficult but seeing my cohorts is motivating. Part of why I wanted to enroll in the MSC program, is to figure out how to balance the person I am with being able to show face and prove my skill sets are applicable outside of my typical environments. I am confident in my capabilities of being a compassionate, open minded leader and communicator when I can just be myself. Being a brand builder, I prefer to work with those who are the presenters and to be the voice that iterates the importance of authenticity and realness in story-telling while always recognizing how the message ties back to organizational identity. Here I had to be the voice and it was schooling in the difficulty of mastering the telling of the message and the understanding of the interpretation of that message as well.