

Academic and Employability Skills

Name: Selina Cole

Student number: 2018135

Module code: BMSW4001_LON

Lecturer: Sylvia Hoffmann

Assignment title: ACE Practical Portfolio

Contents

Introduction.....	3
CV Writing	3
CV Writing Reflection Model:.....	5
Cover Letter Writing	6
Cover Letter Writing Reflection Model.....	7
Academic Writing	8
Academic Writing Reflection Model	8
Conclusion.....	9
References	10

Introduction

In this report I will be discussing and reflecting on my learning during this module. Reflection methods are important as they help to improve your knowledge and awareness (Baird et al., 1991). The topics I will be reflecting on are CV Writing, Cover Letter Writing and Academic Writing. I will be using Kolb's 'Experiential Learning Cycle' (1984) as my reflection model throughout this report. I will be discussing what I knew before the module and the knowledge I gained during.

CV Writing

Before starting this module, I knew the basics when it came to CV writing. I knew what a CV was used for, however I have not written one in a while so there were some details about a CV I had yet to discover. The following is what I was able to learn through the module learning and doing my own extended research:

A CV, short for the Latin expression curriculum vitae, is a personal document used to apply for employment, detailing your most desirable characteristics. It is standard practice to present your CV while going after any position, from passage level to senior positions. A CV should show your professional history, your skills, abilities, certificates, and achievements. It should be a clear indication of why you are the best person for the job. Other segments can be added to your CV, if they are relevant, including accomplishments and hobbies (Indeed Career Guide, 2021).

There are 3 main types of CV:

1. **The Chronological CV**
2. **The Functional CV**
3. **The Combined CV**

1. **The chronological CV** is the most widely used kind of CV. It centres around introducing the candidates experience on an employer-by-employer basis, with the posts being recorded .in reverse chronological order. A chronological CV also contains details of schooling and qualifications, along with interests and hobbies.

Advantages

- Shows a clear career progression so is useful when applying within the same industry.
- Easier for the employers to simply identify roles and responsibilities.

Disadvantages

- In the event that you have gaps in your employment which you would prefer not to highlight, an ordered CV will make them more obvious.

2. **A functional CV** typically starts with a personal profile which will focus on the skills and expertise that the candidate possesses. Lists of relevant abilities should be recorded from most important. This CV differs from that of a chronological CV in that it focused on the skills and accomplishments the potential employee has accumulated, rather than focussing on the chronology of your employment.

Advantages

- If you move jobs frequently, or have many unrelated job experiences, a functional CV will allow the recruiter to focus on what you offer as a whole, including your transferable skills.

Disadvantages

- If you do not have a lot of previous work experience, it is possible that you will struggle show your achievements in a different section.
- It does not show a consecutive career progression.

3. **A Combined CV** looks like both the chronological and the functional CV's put together, and therefore making it slightly longer than the previous two. It is a popular structure to use.

Advantages

- It allows the candidate to sell their characteristics and skill strengths as well as highlighting their experience.

Disadvantages

- Not suitable for candidates who have little experience, achievements, or employment gaps.
- A longer CV than both the chronological and functional CV

(Adenle, 2008)

CV Writing Reflection Model:

Concrete experience

- Being asked by my son for help with his CV writing when applying for a new job
- Experiencing new things about this topic in my module that I did not already know.

Reflective observation

- Paying attention to this topic in my module and thinking about how I can do my own extensive research and reading at home to update my current knowledge on this topic.

Abstract conceptualism

- Analysing how I can use my newly learned knowledge in my own life and how it can be beneficial for me.

Active experimentation

- Being able to apply my knowledge to my own life by helping my son with his CV writing for his new job application.

I enjoyed the discussion of the CV writing topic as I found it easy to understand. I enjoyed learning about the different types of CV and the detail of what should go into your CV writing. I also found this topic to be very useful as I was able to take the things I learned in class and apply them to my own personal life by helping with my son's CV application.

Cover Letter Writing

Prior to starting this module, I knew what a cover letter was used for and how to write one. I knew the benefits of including a cover letter in a job application and generally what should be included. However, I lacked knowledge of different types of cover letter and when it is appropriate to use each one. I also was not aware of the correct structural format of a cover letter. The following is my own research done to be able to fill in the gaps in my knowledge of cover letter writing:

A cover letter is a written document commonly submitted with a job application outlining the applicants' credentials and interest in the open position (Kagan, 2021).

There are 4 main types of cover letter:

1. The application cover letter

This is the standard cover letter used alongside and during a job application. It shows you are tailored to the skills and specifications listed in the job posting.

2. Prospecting cover letter

The prospecting cover letter is written by a job seeker to a company that the seeker is looking for. It is an open letter and not a response to a specific job posting.

3. The networking cover letter

The networking cover letter is the black sheep of the cover letter family. This type of cover letter is the most casual and will in general be the briefest. It still comes from the work searcher; however, it is sent to previous colleagues, tutors, companions, and different contacts as opposed to being sent to a company.

4. The “non cover letter” cover letter.

This is a basic introductory letter, proficient and short, that is sent over email. This kind of straightforward introductory letter is good to use when a conventional cover letter is not mentioned in the work posting.

How to format your cover letter:

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email
- Greeting- Addressing the hiring manager by their name
- Opening- Information about yourself
- Body- Main part. Why you are applying.
- Closing

(Jobscan, n.d.).

Cover Letter Writing Reflection Model

Concrete Experience

- Being faced with new knowledge about this topic in class

Reflective Observation

- I spent some time analysing the gaps in my knowledge and thinking about how to fill these gaps.

Abstract Conceptualism

- Realising why it is important for me to have knowledge on this topic and how it can be beneficial for me in the future.

Active Experimentation

- Using my knowledge and applying it to present life. It has allowed me to be prepared for any applications requiring a cover letter.

Like the CV Writing, I also very much enjoyed discussing and learning more about the cover letter writing topic. I found it easy to learn about as I already had some foundation level knowledge and a basic understanding. I enjoyed learning about the structure that a cover letter should be as this information seemed most useful to me in enhancing my current cover letter writing skills.

Academic Writing

Before starting this module, I did not have much knowledge on academic writing. I thought I knew the basics of what a piece of academic writing entails, however during this module I have discovered that there is much more to it. The following is some of my extended research on Academic Writing:

Academic writing should be used in a formal and full format. It should avoid using rhetorical questions as the reader may not know the answer. Instead, it can be made much more precise by using a clear and upfront statement. This reduces the risk of your point not being understood (UniLearning, 2019). Academic writing is focused and structured and should be backed up by evidence. The aim of this style of writing is to help the person who is reading to understand. Although the style of this writing is formal, it does not require complexity and long elaborate sentence (UniversityofLeeds, n.d.).

Academic Writing Reflection Model

Concrete Experience

- Being faced with the academic writing topic during this module

Reflective Observation

- Learning a lot of new information that I did not know before and being able to tie it in with any of my previous knowledge.

Abstract Conceptualism

- Realising academic writing can be important in my personal and business life. Coming to terms with pieces of writings I have done in the past and how I could have used an academic style of writing to enhance them.

Active Experimentation

- Using my new knowledge and ideas about academic writing to assist me with my assignments. The information I have learnt along with realising the meaningfulness, has allowed me to actively incorporate my new learning into my work.

Although I still enjoyed learning this new topic, it was my least favourite to learn out of my 3 chosen topics to reflect on. This was partly due to the fact I did not know much about this topic prior to starting and so I had a lot to learn. I also found it slightly harder to learn as I have been so used to writing in a different style and format. With this said, I found learning this topic to be very useful, especially for my written assignments. For the future, I want to practice writing in this academic format to try and perfect my skills.

Conclusion

In conclusion, through reflection I can see that I have learnt a lot throughout this module. Not everything I have learnt has been easy, but everything has been useful in one way or another. I have been able to establish my weaknesses and detect where my gaps in my knowledge are. Throughout this module it has taught me that I should step out of my comfort zone and be willing to push myself to learn more. With this being said, I have also been able to pin-point my strength, being resilience. I have learned that although I need to make more of an effort to broaden my knowledge, when faced with difficulties in learning, I am able to push through and try my best until I am able to understand. I can see that what I have learnt is not only beneficial to me, but also those around me who may need my help and knowledge, such as my son, with CV writing and cover letter skills for applications. As well as this, the knowledge I have gathered in my academic writing topic can be put to use by helping me for my future assignments.

References

- Adenle, C. (2008). *3 Types of CVs: their Advantages and Disadvantages*. [online] Catherine's Career Corner. Available at: <https://catherinescareercorner.com/2008/12/03/3-types-of-cvs-their-advantages-and-disadvantages/> [Accessed 22 Apr. 2021].
- Baird, J.R., Fensham, P.J., Gunstone, R.F. and White, R.T. (1991). The Importance of Reflection in Improving Science Teaching and Learning. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 28(2), p.
- Indeed Career Guide. (2021). *What Is a CV? Curriculum Vitae Definition and Examples*. [online] Available at: <https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/cvs-cover-letters/curriculum-vitae#:~:text=What%20is%20a%20curriculum%20vitae> [Accessed 23 Apr. 2021].
- Jobscan. (n.d.). *Cover Letter Examples*. [online] Available at: <https://www.jobscan.co/cover-letter-examples> [Accessed 21 Apr. 2021].
- Kagan, J., 2021. *Cover Letters*. [online] Investopedia. Available at: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/cover-letter.asp#:~:text=A%20cover%20letter%20is%20commonly,can%20sink%20a%20job%20applicant.>> [Accessed 14 April 2021].
- Kolb, D. A. (1984) *Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs; London: Prentice-Hall.
- UniLearning (2019). *Checklist of Language to Avoid in Academic Writing*. [online] Uow.edu.au. Available at: <https://unilearning.uow.edu.au/academic/2e.html> [Accessed 23 Apr. 2021].
- UniversityofLeeds (n.d.). *Academic Writing*. [online] library.leeds.ac.uk. Available at: https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/14011/writing/106/academic_writing#:~:text=Aca-demic%20writing%20is%20clear%2C%20concise [Accessed 21 Apr. 2021].