

Academic and Employability Skills

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Analysis.....	3
SWOT Analysis	6
Time Management: The Eisenhower Method.....	6
Personal Development Plan	7
Conclusion	9
References.....	10

Introduction

The main rationale of this report is to perform a critical assessment on my employability and academic skills while reflecting on the previous literature, and by reviewing all the learnings that have gained through in-class activities. per the general view, academic skills refer to the skills that the students adopt in their academic life. As mentioned in the study of Finch and Fafinski (2014), academic skills as the core skills which supports and promotes the other complex skills. There are various academic skills defined by experts but the easiest and smart skills among them can be named as paraphrasing, note-taking, summarizing, researching and report writing. Students who have a bad memory of learning by heart or learning something of exactly same words can read and transform it into their own words and concepts that are known as paraphrasing and summarizing that not only enhance the learning but there are fewer chances of plagiarism. However, employability skills are the ones that are useful and most demanding skills in professional life. They are required to be developed with the essence of right knowledge and its smart implementations. In accordance with Cottrell (2008), employability skills are mainly referred to as soft skills, employment skills, and work-readiness or foundation skills. Some of the most important skills are, time-management, commercial awareness, communication, teamwork, negotiation, persuasion and organizational skills. Moreover, one should have an ability of problem-solving and leadership ability. Considering all this, I have conducted the analysis as I work in an Amazon Distribution Centre and also own a small online store, therefore, the evaluation has been conducted accordingly.

Analysis

Academic skills plays a crucial role in the professional development of students, as it encourages the student to become efficient learners. The skills that I embraced during my academic journey are paraphrasing, note-taking, summarizing, researching and report writing. Paraphrasing can be defined as reading the original text and converting it into one's own words with the help of knowledge and concepts. Note-taking can be referred to as making notes in the form of key points or bullets points. According to Soheim (2017), paraphrasing and note taking skills holds huge importance for speaking and writing in both social and professional circumstances. In formal meetings, most of the people find themselves in a position where they are asked to explain other people statements. In this regard, the skills of paraphrasing and note taking cannot be ignored in

the context of corporate world, and I believe that having these skills will help me in future to achieve goals related to my professional career.

In summarizing, the whole text is required to be read and to make a summary of the main concepts and ideas on your own. Research is a systematic way of studying a subject in detail to discover new information using facts and figures (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). Report writing can be business or academic. It includes logical facts and figures rather than writers own point of views. It is a process of creating an account or statement that gives an overview of the occurrence of events (Reference, 2020). The skills of report writing and summarising helps me in making more formalised, well-argued and organised reports both in the workplace and in managing my own website. Although, in any business context the skills of report writing and summarising are viewed as a valuable abilities, as well structured report helps the reader to get a clear picture of business situation, which eventually result in better decision making (Walton, 2020).

As I am working in a retail distribution centre and also manage my own online store, the skills that I possess are time management skills, commercial awareness, communication skills, teamwork skills, negotiation, and persuasion skills. Moreover, I also possess the skills of problem-solving ability, leadership ability, organizational skills, perseverance and motivation, confidence, absorb pressure and work under the pressure. These skills should be commonly applied in any field that has to work especially to achieve a specific target. Time management is one of the toughest skills. Managing the time represents the nature of work and the ability of the employee. When it comes to professional life, different tasks and workload have to be assigned with a deadline. An individual needs to manage the time and complete the task on time. Experts gave a variety of tips that how can an individual manage their time and complete the work before the deadline which include organization, prioritization, goal-setting, communication, planning, delegation and stress management (Indeed, 2020). Time management is considered as the most important skills to have for any businesses professionals, particularly in the context of retail industry which is recognised as a labour intensive industry and demands the workers to perform multiple priorities. Similarly, considering the complexity of my job role, I often find it difficult to effective manage my time while carrying out multiple tasks.

Commercial awareness can be defined as staying updated on the current happenings and progress in the commercial and business world (Sexton and Naves, 2020). In the field of law, it includes the act of acknowledgement about current deals and the issues that might affect the clients.

Experts claim commercial awareness as a dynamic concept as it keeps changes constantly with time. In different situation, I have found myself interested in knowing different political, economic and consumer trends, which developed into a great habit of commercial awareness. Moreover, I have always been focused on developing a habit of business savvy, which helps me in getting complete understanding of business situation. Further, communication skills are also one of the most important skills. Generally, the process of communication involves five elements; sender, receiver, message, medium and feedback. When the sender uses clarity while delivering a message, the receiver will have a proper understanding of receiving the message properly.

Teamwork skills are the skills that everyone cannot tolerate easily. It is an art to work in peer-group with colleagues to achieve a shared target. Cooperation and coordination result in good teamwork outcome (Betta, 2016). According to experts, teamwork not only imposes a positive effect on employees but also it helps the company or firm to get progress effectively as all the members give their best to achieve the same target. Meanwhile, negotiation and persuasive skills can be defined when the people work together as colleagues or in the form of a team, they might face conflict and disagreement. People with dominating nature sometimes suppress the other members. In this case, negotiation and persuasive skills are used to resolve the disagreements and misunderstandings between the people. Similarly, in my job role at the Amazon Distribution Centre there is a huge need of having effective teamwork skills, as the nature of job demands collaborative working environment to get the job done properly.

Additionally, problem-solving skills include to locate the issues and problems and resolve them with a clear understanding and with the most possible and effective solutions (Jamhari and Sipahutar, 2018). Employees with problem-solving skills are enough efficient to take their part in the progress and development of the company because every company needs smart minds to solve their issues. Leadership skills are to guide, motivate and support the employees and team members with their verbal and non-verbal channels. Working in the distribution centre and dispatching drivers to delivery routes, the effectiveness of leadership skills carries out huge importance, as I have to make sure that every driver working under my supervision should be highly motivated towards the work, and have a clear understanding of job requirement.

Organizational skills are also one of the important skills at every level. When things go according to organization and planning, the employee feels relax (Bruce and Acquaye, 2018). This skill should be applied by everyone even in daily routine, students and professionals to get

something productive. Perseverance, motivation and confidence are the intrinsic elements of an individual. Similarly, in order to effectively perform my job duties, I always emphasised on improving my organisational skills to stay focused on different tasks, and utilise my energy, time and strength efficiently to accomplish desired results.

SWOT Analysis

	Academic Skills	Employability Skills
Strength	I have good skills in paraphrasing and conceptualizing things with the help of examples. I am good at researching different topics	I am good at leadership skills and communication skills
Weakness	I face problem in learning the stuff by heart (memorisation)	I am facing problems in time management and organizational skills due to heavy workload
Opportunity	Since I can paraphrase the text, I can get a good job for the position of content writing and report writing skills.	I believe that I have advantaged with effective leadership skills, which can play a major role in accomplishing my career objective.
Threats	I believe that my ineffective time management skills can negatively influence on my current job performance, and also in future career prospect.	I am feeling threatened due to my bad time management and organizational skills that I might lose my job or reputation at work.

Time Management: The Eisenhower Method

Name(s): _____

URGENT

NOT URGENT

IMPORTANT	• Managing daily routine • Read a book • Read the daily newspaper or listen to the news	• Completion of homework • Completion of the task given by the boss • Start a research work
NOT IMPORTANT	• Responding to urgent emails • Attending phone calls from colleagues, family or friends.	• Using phone • Socializing with others • Unnecessary talks and gossips • Sorting emails

Personal Development Plan

	Personal Development Short-Term Time Frame	Mid-Term Plan Frame	Time Long-Term Time Frame
Section 1 - My Goals	I want to get myself enrolled in commercial awareness courses.	I want to study a course related to management and business	I want to become a manager in Amazon
Section 2 - Skills and Knowledge to be Learned	To develop a business savvy skills, by enhancing knowledge and awareness about the business.	To enhance marketing, sales, communication and leadership skills,	I want to get promoted by working on my management and leadership skills
Section 3 - Next Steps	By taking online classes regarding the course	By taking admission in the school of business	By working hard on my current position in the centre.

		management and science	
Section 4 - Resources	An internet connection, Laptop, a subscription/enrolment	Funding, books and an admission	Skills to get promoted
Section 5 - Time Schedule	12 pm- 2 pm	8 am-10 am	6 pm
When will I start?	Just after completing my exams	After my short course	From today
When do I expect to finish?	1 week	6 months	2.5 to 3 years
Section 6 - Completion	☐ Getting internet connection, laptop, subscriptions. Date 20 th May 2020. ☐ Started taking online classes Date 1 st June 2020 ☐ Completing course Date 10 th June 2020	☐ Started taking online classes Date 15 th June 2020 ☐ Completing management and business course Date 15 th December 2020.	☐ Completing 2 years of experience Date 1 st May 2022 ☐ Learning all the important skills of senior manager Date 1 st December 2022.

Conclusion

It has been concluded that to get success in the academic or professional level there are some specific skills and abilities that one should adopt. In this report, the discussion has been done related to academic and employability skills. In the previous researches, the researchers claim that there should be proper training given to the students at initial level i.e. in the last year of graduation. Getting trained at the university level will help them to learn about work with their peers and to get know-how about the work.

Furthermore, we have analysed and defined academic and employability skills. At the end of the analysis we, have briefly analysed my skill level by using SWOT analysis. After that, a template has been used for time management that prioritizes and organize the task according to its importance. Also, we have made a personal development plan by categorizing the plans according to the expected time of completion by mentioning its aims and goals.

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