

Module Title: **Academic and Employability Skills**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to reflect on my learning in this module and I will be mentioning a few topics from my first and second terms while using the Gibbs model of reflection backed analytically by published literature

2. PARAPHRASING

2.1 DESCRIPTION

I was in class for my lecture on academic and employability skills when the lecturer asked me to paraphrase a quote, the class was full on that day with all the students present, I have always been confident generally about my writing skills but I had not done any revision on the subject and had never paraphrased before, I quoted almost the exact words without attempting to write in my own words, the lecturer nodded in disagreement at my attempt and had to call another student to carry out the task and I walked back to my sit with heavy legs and made an excuse to leave the class early without speaking to anyone.

2.2 FEELINGS

I felt dejected and ashamed of myself because I could feel the stare of all my course mates as I walked back to my sit that day and I was unhappy with the fact that the lecturer did not give me enough time to think about the topic and try to solve it before calling another student to do the same task which was done brilliantly further making me feel more like a fool.

2.3 EVALUATION

The good thing about thing about the experience was that it forced me to read my notes and find out more about the importance of using your own words rather than copying a direct quote. The bad thing was the embarrassment and sense of shame and disillusionment that I felt on that day.

2.4 ANALYSIS

The sensible thing for me to have done on that day was to tell the lecturer that I was not prepared to answer the question and she should call on someone else, all I had to do was give the same meaning in different words(Wang et al., 2013) but I thought I could do it

with my limited knowledge and I was a man proud of my abilities in general coupled with the fact that my judgement of the situation was wrong. All I had to do was give the same meaning in different words(Wang et al., 2013) because paraphrasing transforms a students knowledge(Hirvela and Du, 2013) but I could not do it and I felt challenged by the reality that I cannot paraphrase and did not know the meaning of the word.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Through this incident I have now acquired more knowledge about paraphrasing and the difference between paraphrasing and quoting. It has also exposed me to the consequences of plagiarism which is the absence of credit to the original owner of the idea (Rets, 2018) I also should have acted differently by not leaving the class early in a defeatist manner but face up to the fact that I am on a learning curve and studied the topic on Moodle before the class in order to gain more knowledge.

2.6 ACTION PLAN

Based on this experience I will do things differently in the future by reading more about paraphrasing and utilize my time at home productively (Morgan, 2017). I had a beneficial time discussing with my lecturer where she explained to me the importance of using synonyms, changing word class and changing word order which will be backed up by paraphrasing practice at home and in class.

3. SUMMARISING

3.1 DESCRIPTION

Another incident occurred as a result of my learning, my course mate asked me at lunch time if I could summarise a paragraph from the example in class, she gave me a minute to summarise the text and other students were also in the university canteen, I tried to summarize before the time she allocated to me expired but I found it impossible and had to give up, she summarised the text in less than a minute.

3.2 FEELINGS

I felt disappointed in myself because I wanted to impress her and the rest of the students sitting close to us and having their lunch, I also felt she might now think of me as less attentive in class than I would have liked her to think and I also suspected that I might not have the same opportunity to make up for my poor performance that week since she will not be in class the following week.

3.3 EVALUATION

The bright spot on that dark afternoon was the fact that it exposed my lack of understanding and inability to summarise effectively which in fact was in my best interest to be aware of such a weakness early in my studies, and the unpleasant thing about that afternoon was the fact that I wanted to impress her and other students in the canteen and this incident appeared to show that I did not grasp a subject that appeared simple like summarising.

3.4 ANALYSIS

The right course of action on that day that would have made sense was not to accept the challenge knowing fully well that the time she gave me to complete the summarising task was inadequate but I was clouded by my desire to impress her and the other students with us in the canteen. This helped me to understand the importance of summary writing in the educational pursuits of university students (Lin, 2013) and why it is a selective process to get important information from a known source (Abdi et al., 2016).

3.5 CONCLUSION

I wish I had behaved differently on that day like paying more attention to the lecturer in class before we broke off for lunch rather than staring at the messages on my mobile phone which distracted me this would have given me a better understanding of the topic, in retrospect I should have told her that I would like to be tested in some other topic because I was not versed enough in the skill of summarising.

3.6 ACTION PLAN

Based on this incident, I have learnt that I would be better prepared next time and study well in advance so that in the event that she tests me again in this subject I will be in a better position to excel by learning strategies to summarise (Numan Khazaal, 2019) moreover I will acquire more knowledge on how to condense a paragraph in a concise form (Bailey, 2020, pp.51–58).

4. ACADEMIC WRITING

4.1 DESCRIPTION

This incident occurred in class in week three while the lecturer was on the topic of academic writing I became bored earlier when the youtube videos was being played and was distracted which led to my thoughts strolling to a previous class where the lecturer of a different subject insisted on opening the windows to let in fresh air but some students complained about the cold, I was thrown back into the present by the lecturer pointing in my direction and asking what I understood by paragraph structure and sentence structure, I gave a general, lame and wrong answer based on the fact that I had not been attentive in the lecture.

4.2 FEELINGS

I was upset with myself because I had promised myself that I would stop day dreaming especially while in class so I can focus on my studies but I had failed to control the impulse to escape into a different place maybe it was because of the uninspiring video and topic that caused me to drift away. I felt disappointed in myself.

4.3 EVALUATION

What I derived positively from this experience was the importance of the youtube videos to the learning process and how the videos help in explaining the vital importance of understanding the mechanics of writing essays, structuring sentences, unity in academic writing, being conscious of mistakes in grammar amongst other things. The not so positive aspect of that incident was the fact that I had demonstrated that I had not yet overcome my the problem of distraction and lack of concentration.

4.4 ANALYSIS

Further analysis of my actions on that day showed that it made perfect sense for me to be unable to respond intelligently to the question posed by the lecturer because I had not been listening and had no previous knowledge of the subject, also the ideals and demands of writing academically was new to me (Arneback et al., 2017) . What happened shed more light on the importance of academic writing to students in higher learning, the benefits that can be obtained and how the knowledge gained made me start to think differently about my old manner of doing things. (Pacello, 2018). Furthermore it would

have made sense to listen to the instructions of the lecturer because the instructions students receive can help in developing their writing skills (Pacello, 2019)

4.5 CONCLUSION

I now feel differently based on my experience and realise that there is no effective substitute to paying more attention to the educational videos in class and using the correct vocabulary in my writing through employing what I have learnt through the class and in the videos, I will act differently by being more attentive.

4.6 ACTION PLAN

When faced with a similar situation next time I would be better prepared to face the situation because I would have read articles on how to write properly in an academic way while respecting the rules like grammar structure, sentence structure, punctuation, using other words and concentrating more in class.

5. CV WRITING

5.1 DESCRIPTION

The topic discussed in class on this day was CV, a curriculum vitae (CV) is a shortened account of your educational qualifications, previous jobs, experience and the things you find interesting that you send to an employer in your quest to find employment (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2020) and with the hope of convincing an employer (Morgan, 2017). In class we were told by our lecturer to list two key skills if I was applying for a job and my selling points for any employer, I had very basic knowledge about this topic before the class because the last time I wrote and submitted a CV was many years ago, I couldn't come up with an immediate answer and my mind went blank.

5.2 FEELINGS

Because of my basic knowledge of the subject of CV writing I felt that I couldn't contribute effectively in class to the topic and I didn't like the class very much because of the constant interruption from mobile phones of fellow students and the lecturer had to mute everyone several times during the lecture. I was thinking of the importance of this topic and how a mastery of this topic will shape my success but my mind was also racing towards the distracting thought of the sounds of mobile phones of other students ringing unexpectedly. The lecturer mentioned the importance of numeracy skills, data

management skills and IT skills as important attributes that employers are searching for and my feelings have changed about how knowledgeable I was as regards writing a CV.

5.3 EVALUATION

What was good about this class was that I gained more knowledge about the content of a proper CV and what I should be included and excluded, things like how to write my name, professional title and my preferred way of being contacted, this should be at the top of the page. I also learned the best way to write my personal statement or personal profile which ideally should be below my name and contact details (Henning, 2020), the bad thing about this experience is that I had to change the details on my old CV profile and tailor my profiles to whatever job I apply but I have already sent my application to some organisations and will not be able to apply my new knowledge of CV creation. In all, my judgement about the class and topic is that I have to improve from my old ways of writing.

5.4 ANALYSIS

The logic I can draw from this incident is that I was stuck in my old ways with my preconceived ideas about CV writing, and my assumptions were wrong about my knowledge of the subject which was wholly based on previous experience but should not have been because Cvs give the interviewee one chance to impress (Mortell, 2006) I also found it challenging that I could not introduce new skills to my CV and demonstrate how to express them to my lecturer.

5.5 CONCLUSION

I should have Learnt how to list and organise my relevant skills, and I should have practiced more about the topic. My shortcomings have also been exposed to me which will assist me in future situations.

5.6 ACTION PLAN

Due to this experience I have identified areas that I need to improve upon in my CV writing. I will avoid bringing my assumptions based on past ideas about how a CV should be written and I will read about writing great CVs (Mills, 2009, pp.135–163), if it was to happen again I will ask the lecturer to repeat the question again in order to buy me time to think.

6. CONCLUSION

In summary, this report tried to reflect my journey, convey my knowledge and understanding from the first term until now, while analysing and referencing the above topics using appropriate literature and demonstrating that I have learned through this reflection exercise because I believe someone that refuses to learn will be deaf to the truth, blind to progress and imprisoned to the past.

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