

My reflections on Academic and Employability Skills Module.

Student Name: Noemi Baglieri

Student ID: 1916148

Lecturer: Timothy Hopkins

Module: Academic and Employability Skills

Module ID: BMSW4001

Date: 25/08/2020

Term 2 - Group 3



Prifysgol Cymru

Y Drindod Dewi Sant

University of Wales

Trinity Saint David

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. CV Writing	3
2.1 Description	3
2.2 Feelings	3
2.3 Evaluation	3
2.3.1 Evaluation of the experience	3
2.4 Analysis	4
2.5 Conclusion (general)	4
2.5.1 Conclusion (specific)	4
2.6 Personal action plan	4
3. Paraphrasing	4
3.1 Description	4
3.2 Feelings	4
3.3 Evaluation	5
3.3.1 Evaluation of the experience	5
3.4 Analysis	5
3.5 Conclusion (general)	5
3.5.1 Conclusion (specific)	5
3.6 Personal Action Plan	5
4. Reflective Writing	5
4.1 Description	6
4.2 Feelings	6
4.3 Evaluation	6
4.4 Analysis	6
4.5 Conclusion (general)	6
4.5.1 Conclusion (Specific)	6
4.6 Personal Action Plan	7
5. Conclusion	7
References	8
Appendix (In-class exercises and homework)	9

1. Introduction

This is a report in which I will reflect on what I have covered in the module “Academic and Employability Skills”, what I have learnt from it, and my feelings on the subject using Gibbs’ “Reflective Cycle” (1988). I plan to look back at what I have learnt, and how I felt while studying some of the topics we have covered in the last two terms.

2. CV Writing

A CV (curriculum vitae) is a document in which someone would write their details, including basic information, education, and previous work experiences. (What Is a CV? Curriculum Vitae Definition and Examples, 2020)

2.1 Description

We began covering these topics by looking at what a CV is, and how to write one. We are tasked with writing lists, relevant to ourselves, showing our Knowledge, Skills, Attributes, and “other things” (hobbies, education, etc.). This was then used to write our own personal statement, which is a small, less detailed version of a cover letter. After we had completed this task, we were shown an example of a CV template for an Office Manager and asked what its positive and negative aspects were.

2.2 Feelings

I thought I would be enjoying this module more in Term 2 as, from what I understood, we were going to investigate Employability skills more in-depth. Sadly, the first lesson did not interest me as we focused on how to write a CV and cover letter. This is something I already knew how to do, so I was skeptical going in. I later realised that it was still helpful, as it allowed me to focus on my own personal skills.

2.3 Evaluation

While I found the lesson disappointing, the way that the lesson was delivered was good. The lecturer made the topic engaging for most and presented the information in a clear and concise manner. He also dealt well with questions and seemed knowledgeable on the subject. The PowerPoint presentation was also very clear and contained a good amount of information. It covered all aspects of CV writing which I am sure would be very helpful to someone new to the idea. All the information provided is also backed up by the National Careers Service, which is run by the government to give advice on finding employment, showing that it is clearly relevant.

2.3.1 Evaluation of the experience

The individual tasks set during the lesson were actually very helpful, even for someone who has experience writing CVs, as they made you think about your own personal skills, and what you should focus on. Writing the personal statement was useful for those who struggle when writing about themselves.

2.4 Analysis

Even though I did not personally find the lesson or topic particularly interesting, I believe that many in my class found it very useful. Many most likely did not know how to write a CV, so this was very much something that would help them. Looking back now, I feel that maybe I should have taken more of an interest in the topic, as while I have written CVs many times before, it is always possible to learn more, and perhaps it could have helped me to perfect my own CV in the future.

2.5 Conclusion (general)

From the analysis of the lesson, I can conclude that having time spent learning about how to correctly write a CV is a valuable use of time. While I did not necessarily find as useful as some, clearly there were many who did, showing that they perhaps did not know how to formulate a CV adequately, and considering it is an invaluable skill, it is clear that it was important to do.

2.5.1 Conclusion (specific)

I concluded from this lesson that I had a strong understanding of how to write a CV, but that there were a few areas I could improve, which I will outline below.

2.6 Personal action plan

I went into this lesson with reservations, as I did not believe I had anything to learn. I found however that by focusing on my personal skills, rather than solely on my work experience and education, I could better formulate a personal statement, which is a key area of a CV. Going forward, I shall endeavor to better understand what I can and cannot include, and also what is relevant to include in a CV.

3. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is writing or communicating someone else ideas in your own words. It allows you to both refer to work and to express a point or opinion without running the risk of plagiarism. (Cottrell, The Study Skills Handbook, 2008)

3.1 Description

Our lesson on paraphrasing began by going over what paraphrasing is, and why it is an important academic skill. We were also shown examples of how someone can use paraphrasing to avoid plagiarism. Once we had a basic understanding of the topic, we were given sentences and asked to paraphrase them based on what we had learnt.

3.2 Feelings

This was a topic which I was very much looking forward to, as the ability to write in my own words has always been something that I have struggled with. I felt as though this would be a very useful skill for me to learn both for my university work, and in future life, should I be required to do research for work.

I found the lesson to be both interesting and informative. We were given a good explanation as to what paraphrasing was, and how it can and should be used, as well as why it is important in academic writing. The tasks set to complete our own paraphrasing were very helpful in furthering my understanding of the subject, as well as improving my own capabilities. I thoroughly enjoyed completing these tasks as I really felt that I was learning something valuable.

3.3 Evaluation

The lesson was very well presented, and the lecturer clearly knew what he was talking about, which always makes a lesson more enjoyable. We were given clear and concise information, and it was easy to follow what was being said.

3.3.1 Evaluation of the experience

The tasks set were invaluable as they gave us a good opportunity to practice outside of an official essay or report and were a good practical indication of what is required to adequately paraphrase without risking potential plagiarism.

3.4 Analysis

I could tell that many of my classmates found covering the topic particularly helpful, as I believe many of them had not thought about needing to paraphrase before.

The best way to avoid copying/plagiarism is to read a passage, then cover it up with a piece of paper and trying to summarize what it said in your own words. Once you can summarize, you can write the point you are trying to get across without directly copying what was written. (Cottrell, The Study Skills Handbook, 2008)

This very much agrees with what was presented in our class, showing that it was accurate.

3.5 Conclusion (general)

This lesson showed that many people were not aware that paraphrasing or plagiarism were as important as they are, and even fewer had an idea of how to paraphrase correctly. This lesson clearly provided them with a good understanding of the topic, and would help most people to learn this skill, no matter at what point they started.

3.5.1 Conclusion (specific)

I learned a great deal from studying this topic. It was an area I had very little experience in so I was very happy to learn we would be studying it. I really feel that I grasped it well and am now able to paraphrase correctly.

3.6 Personal Action Plan

Going forward, I will continue to practice my paraphrasing, to ensure that I fully grasp the topic, and continue to improve my ability. I will focus on how to change sentences and formulate new ways to interoperate information to better my way with words.

4. Reflective Writing

Reflective writing is defined as an analytical process where the writer describes an experience and provides a personal reflection on what it means, or what they have learnt from it. It can be a real or imaginary experience, and can encompass an event, interaction, thought or memory amongst others (What does reflective writing mean?, 2020).

4.1 Description

We began by looking at a slide show which explained the meaning of reflective writing, and how it can and should be used, as well as why it is an important skill to have. We were taken through the different models of reflective writing, "Gibbs' 'Reflective Cycle'" (which I am using in this report), "Kolb's 'Experiential Learning Cycle'", and "Driscoll's Model". At the end of the lesson, we went through what would be required to complete a reflective writing report, as this would be our Term 2 assignment.

4.2 Feelings

I did not know what to expect from this class, as I had not put much thought into the idea of reflective writing previously. I expected that it would be quite simple, as looking back over an experience is something quite personal and did not think it would be very complicated. I was surprised to find out that it was actually a very important skill, and could be used to great effect to help improve yourself by reflecting on good and bad experiences, and what has been learned from them, as well as whether more could be learnt from taking a different approach. One negative I have on the topic, is just how structured it is. While the different models are useful for giving an understanding as to what areas you can look at, I found the rigidity of the structuring to be quite restrictive. I feel as though reflective writing should be much freer, and down to the individual to interpret, as there should really be no right or wrong way to evaluate an experience from your own point of view.

4.3 Evaluation

The lesson was presented well, and the lecturer was careful to explain each area thoroughly, I believe as to ensure full understanding because of the complicated nature of the subject. The slides were clear and easy to follow. The different models were expressed in a simple and relatively basic way, I am sure in order to avoid confusion. The explanation of how to write an academic report, however, was not as clear as the rest of the lesson. I found it was not looked at in enough depth, and I was left a little lost as to how to correctly format a report of this nature.

4.4 Analysis

I feel as though this topic will prove very helpful for not only myself, but for my entire class, as it will allow us to better evaluate our own performances, as well as just experiences that we have. The skills will be transferable to many different aspects of self-improvement, not only in our academic studies, but also in the future for our careers.

There are a few basic steps that you can follow, to make reflection, and by extension reflective writing, easier to comprehend and carry out. These include keeping some form of journal, in order to have a record of your experiences, and at the same time keeping note of how you felt at the time. This will prove invaluable when it comes to later writing about these experiences. (Cottrell, 2015)

4.5 Conclusion (general)

I feel as though everyone can benefit from studying reflective writing. It is a skill that can not only be applied in an academic sense, but also throughout your life to help better yourself in all aspects. My class especially seemed to learn a lot from our studying of this topic.

4.5.1 Conclusion (Specific)

I personally found this lesson extremely helpful. It was not the most exciting, but it I now understand the importance of being able to reflect on what you have done and learnt in the past, to do better in the future.

4.6 Personal Action Plan

I plan to start writing small reports based on my lessons in the future, in order to help when it comes to future reflective writing. I shall also keep notes on what I have learnt in each lesson, and how I found the experiences. Once I am more comfortable doing this, I will progress to keeping a journal of my nonacademic experiences as well, in order to maximize my learning.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, while I have not particularly enjoyed this module, I can not deny that it has been one of the most helpful when it comes to improving my academic skills. While I think I can be a great asset for a company due to the way I am as a person, my past work experiences, and ability to adapt to every situation, I had no academic knowledge whatsoever. I had never had to write reports or essays in my life and that is what I found most challenging about this module. The fact that it requires a high level of written communication in my non-native language, and my lack of interest in learning the different areas of this topic, also makes it more difficult, however over time, I feel I have warmed to this, and now realize how important these topics are.

References

Cottrell, S. (2008). *The Study Skills Handbook*. Palgrave.

Cottrell, S. (2015). *Skills for Success: Personal development and employability*. Palgrave.

How to write a CV. (n.d.). Retrieved from National Careers Service:
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/cv-sections>

What Is a CV? Curriculum Vitae Definition and Examples. (2020, March 17). Retrieved from Indeed:
<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/what-is-a-cv>

Appendix

(In-class exercises and homework)

CV Exercise

CertHE T2G3_GRP Notebook	
Welcome	CV Exercise
> _Collaboration Space	Cover Letter Exercise
> _Content Library	Image 1
▼ Noemi Baglieri (19161...	Homework 16/07
Homework	Term 2 Assignment draft
Quizzes	
+ Section	+ Page

CV Exercise

Summary

I am a highly motivated individual with good communication skills who is able to relate to different types of people. This has only been enhanced by the working experiences I have had.

I am also very organised and able to actively search for solutions to problems that others may find complex or difficult to evaluate.

Career summary

06 2019 - Present Tesco, London

Customer Assistant

Key responsibilities

- Stocked shelves, unloaded trucks, placed daily product orders, and created sale displays
- Wrote receipts and accepted multiple forms of payment
- Assisted customers with final purchases and answered questions at the checkout counter
- Ringed up purchases, scanned coupons, and ensured customer satisfaction
- Exuded friendly, courteous, and positive attitude and demonstrated professionalism

11 2017 – 05 2019 Esport Aero Association, Toulouse (France)

Professional League of Legends Team Player

Key responsibilities

- Exercised and practiced under the direction of a professional coach, in order to develop skills, and prepare for competitions
- Maintained optimum mental fitness levels by training regularly
- Participated in events and competitive tournaments, according to established rules and regulations
- Represented the team, performing such activities as meeting with members of the media, making speeches, or participating in charity events

CertHE T2G3_GRP Notebook	
Welcome	CV Exercise
> _Collaboration Space	Cover Letter Exercise
> _Content Library	Image 1
▼ Noemi Baglieri (19161...	Homework 16/07
Homework	Term 2 Assignment draft
Quizzes	

- Assessed performance following competition, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and making adjustments to improve future performance

09 2016 – 09 2017 Morgan School, Latina (Italy)

Receptionist and Translator

Key responsibilities

- Greeted and welcomed visitors as soon as they arrive at the office
- Answered, screened and forwarded incoming phone calls
- Ensured reception area is tidy and presentable, with all necessary stationery and material
- Provided accurate translations of texts and documents (English to Italian)
- Maintained office security by following safety procedures and controlling access via the reception desk (monitor logbook, issue visitor badges)
- Ordered front office supplies and kept inventory of stock
- Updated calendars and scheduled meetings
- Arranged travel and accommodations
- Kept updated records of office expenses and costs

04 2016 – 10 2016 Primark, Milan (Italy)

Customer Assistant

Key responsibilities

- Ensured high levels of customer satisfaction through excellent sales service
- Maintained outstanding store condition and visual merchandising standards
- Maintained a fully stocked store
- Ascertained customers' needs and wants
- Recommended and displayed items that match customer needs
- Managed point-of-sale processes
- Actively involved in the receiving of new shipments
- Kept up to date with product information
- Accurately described product features and benefits
- Followed all companies policies and procedures

Cover Letter Exercise

CertHE T2G3_GRP Notebook	
Welcome	CV Exercise
> _Collaboration Space	Cover Letter Exercise
> _Content Library	Image 1
▼ Noemi Baglieri (19161...	Homework 16/07
Homework	Term 2 Assignment draft
Quizzes	

Cover Letter Exercise

Friday, July 03, 2020 3:00 PM

Dear Head of Recruitment,

I am writing to apply for the position of Sales Assistant, currently being advertised on indeed.co.uk. Please find attached a copy of my CV.

I have previous retail experience suited to this role and I strongly believe that the sales knowledge and skills I have learnt during this time make me an ideal candidate for this position

In my current role, my day-to-day tasks consist of greeting and serving customers, assisting customers with queries, replenishing stock and keeping the store tidy and welcoming. I am also confident in handling money and working to provide the best possible customer experience.

From my experience, I have learnt the importance of engaging with customers, working in a team and always striving to deliver the highest standards in customer service.

I am a self-motivated and enthusiastic individual with a passion for customer service. I am able to confidently deal with problems that may arise and use my initiative to overcome challenging situations. My previous retail experience would make me an asset to your team.

Thank you very much for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours faithfully,

Noemi

Looking at a picture writing exercise

CertHE T2G3_GRP Notebook	
Welcome	CV Exercise
> _Collaboration Space	Cover Letter Exercise
> _Content Library	Image 1
▼ Noemi Baglieri (19161...	Homework 16/07
Homework	Term 2 Assignment draft
Quizzes	

Image 1

Friday, July 10, 2020 3:25 PM

In this image it looks like there's a big event happening, like a concert.

It appears there are no seating available therefore all the people are standing in front of a booth or a stall enjoying the concert.

A young man in a wheelchair is being lifted up by the crowd, possibly to help him see what is going on as he would be shorter than everybody else, as he is forced to remain seated.

People in the front may be moved by such action and let the boy move to the front so he can enjoy the event just as much as everyone else is.

Write a piece of reflective writing on today's lesson (homework)

CertHE T2G3_GRP Notebook	
Welcome	CV Exercise
> _Collaboration Space	Cover Letter Exercise
> _Content Library	Image 1
▼ Noemi Baglieri (19161...	Homework 16/07
Homework	Term 2 Assignment draft
Quizzes	

Homework 16/07

Wednesday, July 15, 2020 6:11 PM

If I had to pick out the most difficult module of my one-year course in Skills for the Workplace, it would definitely be "Academic and Employability Skills". This is something I used to think even before starting my classes, it turned out I was not wrong.

While I think I can be a great asset for a company due to the way I am as a person, past work experience and ability to adapt to every situation, I have no Academic knowledge whatsoever. I have never had to write reports, or essays in my life and that is what I find most challenging about this module. The fact that it requires high level written communication in my non-native language and me not being interested in learning on this topic, it also makes it more difficult, as I do not picture myself choosing a career where writing is fundamental even though I do recognise it is an important skill to have.

I have to admit almost no one of the topics really interested me so far and the only thing that makes this module interesting for me is the way my Lecturer teaches. I find it difficult to take an interest on writing methods and other things related such as paraphrasing, summarising etc.

I thought I would be enjoying this module more in Term 2 as, from what I understood, we were going to look into Employability skills more in-depth. Sadly the first lessons did not interest me as we focused on how to write a CV and Cover Letter. While this kind of lessons can be useful to someone who already knows their path or career choice, or someone that does not know how to do both of these things at all, I personally found it disappointing and a bit frustrating as I cannot find myself in neither of those categories.

Hi Noemi

Tim here – the next stage?

1) think of 'reflection' as useful learning process in itself – whether applied in an educational or employment context.

2) how can you develop this particular text as an example? have you considered all three steps?

1 Looking back at something (often an event/idea, something that happened – In this case a learning process).	2 Analysing the event or idea (thinking in depth and from different perspectives, and trying to explain, often with reference to a model or theory from your subject).	3 Thinking carefully about what the event or idea means for you (your ongoing progress as a learner and/or practising professional.
--	---	--

NB Are any of the three models useful – especially **how your future decisions may be affected** by the experience.

I think it may be useful to keep a short diary, addressing this at the end of each lesson – this can be a few lines on each experience – but it can form the basis of your report.

PS

On another educational note, I think being a student can be both a very frustrating experience and a very rewarding experience– sometimes at the same time! I also think sometimes we are learning things and we don't even know we are learning! What may be useful about the 'reflective writing' skill is that it gives us a framework to look at the experience, and benefit from it in ways we may not have noticed.

I think your academic skills are stronger than you think!