

Programme: Certificate of Higher Education
Employability Skills

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Introduction

Reflective practice refers to the intentional and systematic analysis of one's actions, experiences, beliefs, and theoretical understanding in order to gain new professional perspectives and improve one's performance (Fook et al., 2006). Using Gibbs (1988) reflective framework, I have decided to illustrate my grasp of the abilities and information I have acquired from professional career development courses.

Description

Many models and frameworks were addressed in the Professional Career Development lectures, including the Johari Window, Learning Styles, SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Important, Time-bound) goals, SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), and Personal Development Plan (PDP). Every session offered helpful details on many facets of personal growth and career preparation.

The SWOT analysis was one of the most useful models. This tool assists people in seeing possibilities and risks from the outside world as well as their own internal strengths and limitations (Jayatilleke, N. and Mackie, A., 2013). Engaging in a personal SWOT analysis has greatly impacted my outlook on the direction of my future professional path. This analytical tool enabled me to thoroughly assess my strengths and shortcomings, as well as recognise external elements that may either support or impede my progress towards accomplishing my professional goals. Through a meticulous analysis of my qualities, I managed to create a detailed inventory of my most notable strengths and areas that need growth. Furthermore, this technique allowed me to contemplate other possibilities and risks that may arise in reaction to my endeavours.

There is a lot of research that shows that doing a personal SWOT analysis can help you advance in your job. SWOT analysis is an important tool for strategic planning because it helps people and businesses figure out how to use internal and exterior factors to reach their goals. Valentin (2001) also talks about how important it is to match your skills with chances to advance your job, while also working on your flaws and reducing risks.

Feelings

I felt confused at first because the classes presented so many ideas and theories. And I didn't know how to use all of this information in my job goals because I was so confused. However, as we looked more closely at each model, I understood how important and useful they were. In particular, I connected with the SWOT analysis. With its organised approach, it provided a useful and insightful way to evaluate oneself. I felt upset while doing a reflective SWOT analysis. It was hard to see the consequences for my work and to honestly judge my flaws. Figuring out what skills I had and what chances I had was also powerful. This process helped me see things more clearly and with direction, which was reassuring and inspirational.

It was emphasised that the SWOT analysis is useful for self-evaluation and long-term job planning. During the lessons, we did an activity where we had to do a SWOT analysis on our own. In this case:

Strength: Evaluating personal qualities, abilities, and work experiences that provide one a competitive edge in the labour market. This covers elements like leadership traits, good communication skills, and a wide professional network (Gardner, F., 2009).

Weaknesses: identifying certain places that need work or where there are shortcomings. Lack of technical expertise, dread of public speaking, or inadequate experience in a certain area might be examples (Jayatilleke, N. and Mackie, A., 2013).

Opportunities: Figure out what outside things you can use to help your job. There may be apprenticeships, training programmes, business growth trends, or networking events (Wain, A., 2017).

Threats: Considering outside factors that might impede professional development, like economic downturns, fierce job market competition, or new technologies that make some skills useless

Evaluation

It turned out that the SWOT analysis was a helpful tool for my own personal development as well as my professional development. By acknowledging my assets, which include great interpersonal skills and a proactive approach, I was able to increase my self-assurance in my capabilities. My areas of improvement were more apparent as I became aware of my deficiencies in terms of scheduling and technical skills. I was able to identify prospective career paths with the help of my grasp of the available possibilities, which included chances for networking and trends in the business. Recognising potential threats, such as economic downturns and tight employment markets, assisted me in preparing for any challenges that I could face in the future. The SWOT analysis is known to help people grow personally and professionally because it helps people make the most of their strengths and work on their flaws while also noticing chances and risks in their surroundings (Helms & Nixon, 2010).

This exercise had a huge impact on the goals I had regarding my career. Through its assistance, I was able to formulate reasonable objectives and devise strategies to make the most of my strengths and minimise the impact of my weaknesses. As an example, I took the choice to broaden my professional network by participating in networking events and enrolling in additional classes to improve my technical capabilities.

Analysis

The way I'm planning my future by using the results of a SWOT analysis fits with how career growth is traditionally thought of. Experiences change us, according to Kolb's theory of experiential learning (Wain, A., 2017). My self-evaluation turned into useful

information when I did the SWOT analysis and thought about the results. Furthermore, Bandura's idea of self-efficacy emphasises that people's beliefs in their skills considerably affect their motivation and achievement (Bandura, 1997). This is a fundamental tenet of Bandura's philosophy. My self-confidence was boosted as a result of the SWOT analysis, which highlighted my strengths and gave a systematic strategy designed to address my deficiencies. Overcoming challenges and embracing new possibilities have both been significantly aided by this developing sense of self-assurance.

Ghosh et al.'s (2013) research backs up the idea that formal self-assessment tools like SWOT can have a big effect on job growth by helping people become more self-aware and plan their future. I've been able to set realistic goals and come up with good plans to improve my professional growth by combining these theoretical points of view with real-world analysis. I stay alert and flexible in a job market that is always changing because I'm constantly looking for chances and threats. This makes my work stronger and more successful in the long run.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the personal SWOT analysis has been very helpful for me in my career growth. By following this organised method, I learned a lot about my natural skills, areas where I needed to improve, possible chances, and outside threats that could affect my job path. The process gave me the tools I needed to set attainable goals and come up with practical plans to build on my strengths, fix my flaws, take advantage of opportunities, and prepare for possible risks.

The SWOT analysis supports Kolb's experiential learning theory and Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which argue that self-belief motivates and achieves. Integrating these theoretical ideas with practical self-assessment has helped me establish a growth mindset and a complete career strategy.

Furthermore, as shown by research by Ghosh et al. (2013), formal self-assessment methods like SWOT may greatly effect career growth by promoting self-awareness and proactive planning. I now have a plan for the future and the agility and tenacity to handle the ever-changing employment environment.

I plan to continuously evaluate and adapt my SWOT analysis to ensure it is relevant and aligned with my changing circumstances and goals. This iterative strategy will help me adapt, grasp opportunities, and confront challenges. SWOT analysis gave me a framework for self-assessment, goal-setting, and strategic planning, transforming my experience. It has established the groundwork for a satisfying and purposeful career based on self-awareness, flexibility, and lifelong learning.

Action Plan

To successfully turn the insights I got from the SWOT analysis into real progress, I will put in place a strong action plan focused on ongoing self-improvement and long-term job growth. First, I will actively look for training opportunities in my field. I will use the advice and experience of seasoned professionals to improve my skills and

learn important things about the business (Rekha and Ganesh, 2012). I will also work hard to go to classes, conferences, and professional development programmes that are important to my field so that I can stay up to date on the newest trends, best practices, and technologies.

Realising how important it is to have a strong professional network, I will attend networking events and use social media to meet people with similar interests and possible work partners. Forging and keeping strong professional connections can lead to access to priceless information, resources, and job openings (Wolff and Moser, 2009). Furthermore, I'll look into getting certifications or higher degrees that are related to my work goals. This will make me more competitive and trustworthy in the job market. I will adopt a development mindset and lifelong learning, accepting constructive criticism and seeing setbacks as chances for personal and professional improvement. In a dynamic world, self-reflection and goal reassessment will help me adjust my methods to shifting conditions and market trends, developing resilience and agility.

By carefully following this action plan, I'm sure I'll be able to build on my strengths, fix my flaws, take advantage of new opportunities, and avoid possible threats, which will eventually lead to a happy and successful job path.

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