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Academic and Employability skills (BMSW4001)

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Date: 05/04/2020

Introduction

Developing our skills and realize what are we good at it is important to success in life.

On this report I am going to write about those important skills that makes us more eligible when it comes to finding a job or even if we are already employed where we should improve to develop our skills at work and university.

I am going to talk about employability skills (hard skills and soft skills) and academic skills, and I am going to analyse my skills based on my experience at work and what I have learned on this first term at university.

1. What is a skill

Skill is the ability of doing something well. It is the knowledge that we get through the years. We develop our skills through our experiences in our personal life, at school and at work.

2. Employability Skills

Employability skills are those abilities that make you eligible to perform a job. They are transferable skills that go along with good technical understanding. Often employees require certain skills that they want from an employee.

Employability also depends on your knowledge and attitudes. (STEMNET, n.d.)

3. Skills that employers are looking for

3.1. *Hard skills*

Hard skill is the specific abilities and knowledge we get through training and education.

Many companies and professions have abilities that are required to perform a job properly, they can be learned also on the job training (Computer skills, certifications and licenses and skills that we develop at work).

These skills are quantifiable and can be evaluated and defined. For example, a hard skill for a baker would be baking cakes and bread with all the abilities that are needed. (Doyle, 2020)

Through the years I have been obtaining hard skills in the places that have worked. I started working when I was 18 in a restaurant where I started developing my hard skills.

I learned how to use the retail EPOS system, where you can see all products that are available in the menu on a touchscreen so customers can make their orders and these orders are sent to the kitchen.

Few years after I started working in a KFC where it was required to have a food handling certificate, where I learned how to storage food properly where we cannot mix raw food and cooked food to avoid contamination and storage food at the right temperature.

In my current workplace where I have been working nearly 4 years, I have learned hard skills that are require for this job. I work in small supermarket where I learned how to use a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) Where I scan deliveries from newspaper also, I labelled items that are soon to expire, I change labels and I scan gaps over the store. These are an example of hard skills that I have obtained thanks to my experiences at my workplace.

(Doyle.2020)

3.2. *Soft skills*

Soft skills are interpersonal skills and personality qualities, these skills characterize how we interact with others. These abilities are harder to learn, we develop them through our experiences.

Employers care about soft skills because almost every job requires employees to interact with others (colleagues, managers, clients) and being able to interact with others is very important to success in a job. Soft skills are qualities transferable to any profession. You can be a waiter and all these soft skills that you have you could use them if you became an administrative, two completely different jobs but in both you need same soft skills.

Skills such as communication skills, leadership skills, time management, listening, team working, among others.

(Doyle, 2020)

3.2.1. *Communication Skills*

No matter where you work being able to communicate effectively with colleagues, superiors, and clients in person, in writing on the phone and online is indispensable to be successful.

Communication skills are very important at the workplace, these are the types of communication at work:

- Write properly to use the right format and language. (Written Communication)
- Express yourself clearly when talking on the phone, or face to face with customers, colleagues and managers so they can get the message properly (Verbal Communication)
- Listen to others opinion or what they are saying without interruptions.

These are the most important concepts of effective communication at work. It is essential to have an effectively communication at work to be success and productive at work when there is a lack of communication things do not go well. There are issues between staff or even with the customers and this is not favourable for the company.

Communication at my workplace is based mostly in verbal communication. Teams leaders give instructions talking to staff telling them what are the tasks that they the accomplished through the day.

I have been working as a team leader the last three months and based on my experience I think communication is not my strength and I need to work on it.

Sometimes it is difficult to give instructions or to correct someone that is doing something wrong. We need to find the best way so people do not take it personal as it could happen in some situations.

Customer service is very important, so it requires an effectively communication, so they are fully satisfied with our service.

Communication skill also is important at school and college. We need to listen actively and pay attention and ask when we do not understand something.

3.2.2. Time management

Time management is how we organize our time between different tasks and activities, it is knowing how to prioritize our daily tasks. It helps us to divide our workload in a smart way to meet deadlines and goals and to avoid stress.

It is important we plan our daily tasks at the workplace. Basically, as a team leader I have to plan before the shift starts. How I am going to divide my time through day with the staff I have available. There are some tasks that need to be done at certain time, so I give priority to those. Sometimes we have setback that we do not expect for example, a colleague did not come to work this makes our daily routine a little bit tighter. Time at my workplace sometimes is limited. I think I have been developing time management at work well.

It is possible to work and study at the same time but to avoid stress and get disappointed for not being able to meet deadlines we must manage our time wisely.

When I started studying, I dropped one day at work so I could focus more on my studies. So, this way I could be more productive at university, because manage our time is about being productive in life.

3.2.3. Team working

Working in a team is working with a group of colleagues or classmates that share a goal, and everyone contributes to the team with their strengths and abilities to achieve this goal effectively.

To work well in a team, you must have good communication skills and have a good attitude towards all members of the team. When working in a team it is important, you know how to take instructions, you actively listen all ideas exposed and discuss them objectively, and you offer help and ideas.

Teamwork skill is important because it helps your team to achieve their goals effectively. Employees sometimes need to work with others to accomplish projects and teamworking is a valued skill for many professions. (Youth Employment UK, N.D.)

On the first term at university we had to create a group to give a presentation about the modern technology in McDonalds, although it was cancelled due to COVID- 19. We still had to write

about a subject that it was assigned according to our strength. Everyone contributed to get the assignment done.

(Youth Employment UK, n.d.)

4. SWOT Personal Analysis



Strengths: I learned very quick when I am in a new job, I like always learning new things so I can help others. I am good at listening and I easily understand instructions. I have the ability of doing more than one thing at the time to be more productive at work.

Weaknesses: I am a person that gives up easily when I get frustrated. I think I have poor verbal communication because I do not feel confident sometimes speaking with others one of the reasons is because I am not social person which sometimes can affect communication and teamworking.

Opportunities: I think being living in London and studying in the university is a big opportunity for my future career.

Threats: In my opinion people from the Union Europe we are no going to have same opportunities as we used to have before Brexit.

5. Academic skills

5.1. *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is taking someone else work or idea and present it as it was your own work. Without giving credit to the original author.

You can avoid plagiarism by:

- Citing in your work when you are submitting someone else idea, statistics or facts.
- Using direct quotations when you are taking a quote, also you must give refence.
- Citing and giving refences when you take an image, video or document.
- Avoiding taking information from your previously work submitted, this is considered plagiarism too.

(APUS Librarians, 2020)

5.2. *Paraphrasing*

Paraphrasing is when you take an original source and you change it on your own words without changing the meaning of what you want to write. When you are paraphrasing you must make sure you cite the author in text ang give referencing otherwise this would be considered plagiarism. (Plagiarism.org, 2017)

To do paraphrasing we need to understand the original text, then we interpret it in on own words. Three techniques that can be used are, change the order of the words, change the class of the words also we can use synonyms. (Loan, UWTSD,2019)

5.3. *Summarising*

Summarising is a small report of the principal ideas from a long text. The principal objective of summarising is to make shorter a text without changing the principal idea. A summary must contain, the main idea, facts and concepts in your own words.

How to do a summary:

- Read the text first and understand it

- Take the important points that relevant to the text
- Take note of important information
- Without looking at the original text write again your notes in your own words using paragraphs and full sentences.
- Use headings if the text is long
- Read again what you wrote to make sure you did not lose any important information
- Make sure you give reference about the original text to avoid plagiarism

(n.a,2011)

5.4. *Presentation skills*

Presentation skill is the ability to address an audience about a subject. It is important we have knowledge about the subject to avoid mistakes.

Some ideas for a good presentation are:

- Have an idea of what the audience already know about the topic you are going to talk about.
- Be clear about the message you want to give.
- Be organized with your ideas.
- Give examples, this way audience can understand easier.
- Interact with the audience ask questions ask them if they have questions.
- Have some notes of the principle ideas, do not read them loud.
- Practice before the presentation take place.

(UBC, n.d.)

6. Conclusion

Have a good foundation of skills is essential at our workplace, how we communicate with others, how we manage our time to make sure we meet the deadline and how we play our role in a team to give the best of our skills. It is important to have academic skills like, paraphrasing and summarising to avoid plagiarism and to give credit to others when they do a good job and we are taking information from their work.

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