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1.0 Introduction

Importance of Professional Career Development

Professional career development is regarded as incredibly important as it is considered as a career long obligation which consists of personal responsibility of maintaining current skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the public and consumers (CPD, 2014).

Self-Awareness

Harvard Business Review (2018) states that self-awareness falls in to two categories, internal and external. Internal self-awareness consists of how one sees themselves fit within their environment in terms of values, behaviours, strengths, and weaknesses. External self-awareness represents how others view us with the same factors mentioned above.

Self-Improvement

Self-improvement is vital as it is part of a person's growth and progression and in developing key components allows the individual to feel fulfilled in both personal and professional life. Benefits of self-improvement include exploring goals and determine the purpose of what it is the individual is doing. Self-improvement will keep the individual motivated in achieving targets as well as track progress via productiveness in completion of tasks (Reed, 2021).

For this reflective report, I will be using models and theories such as SMART, SWOT and conduct a personal development plan to achieve my employment goal. I will also be completing two learning style questionnaires (VARK and Honey & Mumford) to determine my learning styles. I will also be researching the relevant employability skills required to achieve my SMART goal. I will complete the report with a conclusion.

2.0 Findings

2.1 A SMART Goal

SMART is an acronym and can aid in setting goal(s). To ensure goals are concise and attainable each area should be:

- **Specific**- questions such what needs to be accomplished, why is the goal of importance and what resources are required and need to be addressed.
- **Measurable**- goals need to be measurable so any progress can be monitored. Keeping track can help in motivation and self-accomplishment can be fulfilled when the goal is achieved.
- **Achievable**- The goal needs to be attainable, so individuals need to be realistic in one's abilities in reaching the desired result.
- **Relevant**- goals need to be controlled so it aligns with plans to move forward. The goal needs to be worthwhile and match the effort put in.
- **Time bound**- goals need a deadline so there are time constraints to work towards and priority need to be given to tasks to reach the target date.

(Mindtools, 2021).

My SMART goal is as follows:

Specific - Open a takeaway business. Find a desirable premise. I need to establish skills required to run a successful business which will thrive in the current climate. Stephen Covey's habit 7 **Sharpen the Saw** will enable me to acknowledge my greatest assets such as having experience in working in the food industry and then balance my mental and physical areas to ensure I can open a successful takeaway (Franklin Covey, 2019).

Measurable – Acquire financial resources and stay within budget to open within 2 years. The drive is to serve quality food at reasonable price, serve the community and to make money. I will measure my accomplishment when I am making a profit monthly and when I have paid of debtors. I will measure my success via Maslow's fourth level, **Esteem needs** which consists of self-esteem such as achievement and seeking respect from others (Maslow, 1987) and by achieving a good reputation I will know I have reached my goal.

Achievable – I will know that I have accomplished my goal when the business is set up and running. My goal is realistic because a small budget should be sufficient as the main costs include kitchen equipment and I can source preowned goods at competitive prices. An organised list will aid in what needs doing initially.

Relevant - I think it is worthwhile to provide quality food and service at a reasonable price. I think utilising Covey's 4th habit **Think Win-Win** (Franklin Covey, 2019) will be beneficial as I will be serving quality meals and in turn make a return on my investment (working effectively). There is always a demand for new innovative food places as customer palettes are always expanding. I have the drive and motivation to be successful. Through collaboration with a suitable team of chefs and staff who are adequate in fulfilling my goal through initiative and teamwork can allow a "if I win you win" mentality.

Time-bound – To seek Maslow's fifth level, **Self-Actualisation**, the period to complete the takeaway to be fully operational is in a two-year window. I need to start searching now for premises and research the requirements needed to make the takeaway stable and functional. In the next 6 weeks I need to draw up a business plan. Here I need to realise my full potential to peak in fulfilment (Maslow, 1987).

2.1.1 SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis comprises of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

- Strengths- are internal positives of an individual or organisation and are within control such as knowledge and assets.
- Weakness- factors that can hinder the success of the company or limitations within a team.
- Opportunities- external factors that can be of an advantage such as trends that can contribute to success.
- Threats- external factors that are out of the individuals or organisations control that can leave a negative impact.

(Live Plan, 2021).

My SWOT Analysis

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
• Experience of food industry • Good customer relations	• Time keeping • Lack of motivation • Procrastination • Keeping focused
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
• To improve quality of life • Better quality of job • Job security	• My current job • My family commitments • Lack of job qualifications

My SWOT conversion strategy (see appendix 1):

Weakness – Opportunities

The food industry is in a saturated market. Also, there is a lot of competition from established businesses and the question is, is there any room for another eatery?

The opportunity here is to create an eatery whereby customers want to return for the quality of the food/menu and the prompt service that will accommodate and satisfy customers' needs.

The weakness posed is that eateries that have been serving the community for a long time have loyal clientele.

The opportunity however is to create a menu which offers:

- meal deals (set prices to attract those who want to dine on a budget)
- Meet consumer dietary requirements such as vegan, vegetarian, halal, gluten free etc.
- Offer food samples when opening as well as having special offers.

Strengths – threats

I have over 20 years' experience in the food industry. I have the know-how and expertise on how a takeaway operates and I know how the daily running's of food related businesses work.

The threat is being extremely busy and not being able to meet demands. Also putting too much pressure on the staff to meet the demands might result in high staff turnover.

The strengths are to open a modern facility with quality equipment in a prime location.

The threat is not attracting enough customers to meet the overheads which can cause a hindrance in retraining staff.

Weakness – Threats

The takeaway will be new to the market. I need to ensure that sufficient time and resources are utilised to establish ourselves as a successful business.

The threat is that established businesses can take advantage of lack of resources as they have more access to finance and marketing. The threat ultimately could result in closure and owing money to lenders.

2.1.2 The VARK Questionnaire

According to the VARK website (2021) the VARK questionnaire was initially devised by Neil Fleming in 1987 in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire is categorised into four principles:

- Auditory- learning via hearing.
- Visual – learning by what is seen.
- Reading- learning by reading and writing.
- Kinaesthetic- learning through experiences and activities.

(Define Stem ,2021).

Upon completion of the questionnaire (see appendix 2) my scores have determined that I fall into the Read/Write category. Through the Read/Write category I can use the following techniques to learn new skills:

- Use lists in hierarchal orders (1,2,3,4).
- Condense large texts into bullet points.
- Extract information from people and write them into short notes.

Those who can learn through a practical environment are more engaged with decision making and through practical activities the experience is memorised (UC Education Marketing, 2020).

2.1.3 Honey and Mumford Learning Style Questionnaire

According to University of Leicester (2021) Honey and Mumford questionnaire was created in 1992. Based on four different categories of learning methods:

- Activists - learning style suited by hands on approach.
- Reflectors - learning style suited by that who like to calculate best approach with research.
- Theorists - learning suited to those who like collect data and information aligned with subject in hand.
- Pragmatists - Learning style suited to those who like put action into practice.

After completion of the questionnaire (see appendix 3) my scores have determined that I fall into the Reflector category. From the Reflector category I can use the following techniques to learn new skills:

- Observe everyone's views and ideas before my input given.
- Taking on feedback from others through interviews/discussions
- Take appropriate time before concluding.

However, I believe that the best category suited to me is Activist as I learn best by group discussion and brainstorming. The activist category is people who benefit from practical approach. They have an open-minded view on learning new things with no previous experience in the subject.

2.1.4 Identification of Relevant and Required Employability Skills to Achieve the SMART goal

Johari Window

The Johari window is made of four elements which are Open, blind Area, Hidden Area and Unknown. Johari window helps people learn information about themselves to help them get feedback on how to improve on their abilities. The Johari window delves into addressing questions such as what others think of the individual, what is unknown to the individual, what others do not see in the individual and what others and the individual both recognise (Saxena, 2015).

My IT skills unknown (see appendix 4) as I have not used a computer in the previous 20 years. I will have to apply the time to learn and refresh my IT skills by practicing the use of computers. I believe IT skills is important in working towards my SMART goal as in a takeaway I need to use online ordering systems

as well as the new food delivery apps. This will boost sales. I need to learn how to navigate these online systems so my skills will be moved from Unknown to Open Area of Johari Window. Using the Johari window (Saxena, 2015) will help me improve my productiveness.

The Four Stages of Competence

I believe that on The Four Stages of Competence Matrix (see appendix 5), I am currently in the stage of Conscious Incompetence (Unconsciously unskilled) as I am aware of my lack of IT knowledge. This skill is relevant to my SMART goal as it will help me fulfil orders online, take online bookings, order supplies and submit weekly takings via a spreadsheet. I will register for online courses and do wider reading to help further improve my IT skills so I can be at the stage of conscious competence (Consciously skilled) so I will be able to use the skill with minimal effort (Mindtool, 2021).

2.1.5 Personal Development Plan

A personal development plan is a table structured to help aid an individual understand how to achieve a goal (Cottrel, 2015).

Development objective	Specific actions	Barriers & how they will be removed	Support required	How I will know when I have achieved the objective
IT Skills	My IT skills are unknown currently. I have not used a computer in the past 20 years. According to the Honey and Mumford learning style questionnaire I am a reflector so I will observe computer	As I have limited IT skills. I will have to be proactive in seeking current methods used and practice more on through trial and error. This way I will learn better through	I can get support from my fellow classmates, lecturers and family. Through feedback I can develop my skills further.	When I am able to consciously be sufficient in IT skills and be confident.

	tutorials for my assessment and gather information on my IT skills and I will observe other peoples' techniques and apply to myself.	problem solving.		
Time management	As a reflector I will have to improve on my time keeping. I will have to prepare my schedule and time better. I can do this by using a calendar and diary.	I will have to prioritise tasks by importance. By planning out my daily calendar on paper with time slots and monitoring progress.	I can get support from my family by delegating chores and tasks. Ask for help when needed. Ask Peers on how they prioritise their schedule and workload and balance family commitments.	When I can keep up to date and manage my commitments within a suitable timeframe.

3.0 Conclusion

In conclusion to achieve my SMART goal I will have to improve my IT skills by using various methods such as SWOT conversion strategies to help me attain my goal. I will also use the Honey and Mumford Learning styles questionnaire to ensure it guides me on the right path. As the questionnaire revealed that I

am reflector, I will gather the relevant information and observe by watching tutorials and YouTube video to help me attain my goal.

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5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• 20 years' experience in the hospitality trade.	• Saturated market. • Too much competition.
Opportunities	Threats
• To become an established brand • Expansion opportunities. • To enhance reputation.	• Not being able to meet demands. • High staff turnover due to dissatisfaction of meeting staff needs.

Appendix 2 VARK Questionnaire

VARK

visual aural read/write kinesthetic

The VARK Questionnaire – English Version (version 3)

How Do I Learn Best?

This questionnaire aims to find out something about your preferences for the way you work with information. You will have a preferred learning style and one part of that learning style is your preference for the intake and output of ideas and information.

Choose the answer which best explains your preference and circle the letter next to it. Please circle more than one if a single answer does not match your perception.

Leave blank any question which does not apply, but try to give an answer for at least 10 of the 13 questions

When you have completed the questionnaire, use the marking guide to find your score for each of the categories, Visual, Aural, Read/Write and Kinesthetic. Then, to calculate your preference, use the Scoring sheet (available in the "advice to teachers" section of the VARK web site).

1. You are about to give directions to a person who is standing with you. She is staying in a hotel in town and wants to visit your house later. She has a rental car. I would:
 - ☒ a. draw a map on paper
 - b. tell her the directions
 - c. write down the directions (without a map)
 - d. collect her from the hotel in my car
2. You are not sure whether a word should be spelled 'dependent' or 'dependant'. I would:
 - ☒ a. look it up in the dictionary.
 - b. see the word in my mind and choose by the way it looks
 - c. sound it out in my mind.
 - d. write both versions down on paper and choose one.
3. You have just received a copy of your itinerary for a world trip. This is of interest to a friend. I would:
 - a. phone her immediately and tell her about it.
 - ☒ b. send her a copy of the printed itinerary.
 - c. show her on a map of the world.
 - d. share what I plan to do at each place I visit.
4. You are going to cook something as a special treat for your family. I would:
 - a. cook something familiar without the need for instructions.
 - b. thumb through the cookbook looking for ideas from the pictures.
 - ☒ c. refer to a specific cookbook where there is a good recipe.
5. A group of tourists has been assigned to you to find out about wildlife reserves or parks. I would:
 - ☒ a. drive them to a wildlife reserve or park.
 - b. show them slides and photographs
 - c. give them pamphlets or a book on wildlife reserves or parks.
 - d. give them a talk on wildlife reserves or parks.

6. You are about to purchase a new stereo. Other than price, what would most influence your decision?
- a. the salesperson telling you what you want to know.
 - ☒ b. reading the details about it.
 - c. playing with the controls and listening to it.
 - d. it looks really smart and fashionable.
7. Recall a time in your life when you learned how to do something like playing a new board game. Try to avoid choosing a very physical skill, e.g. riding a bike. I learnt best by:
- a. visual clues -- pictures, diagrams, charts
 - b. written instructions.
 - ☒ c. listening to somebody explaining it.
 - d. doing it or trying it.
8. You have an eye problem. I would prefer the doctor to:
- ☒ a. tell me what is wrong.
 - b. show me a diagram of what is wrong.
 - c. use a model to show me what is wrong.
9. You are about to learn to use a new program on a computer. I would:
- a. sit down at the keyboard and begin to experiment with the program's features.
 - ☒ b. read the manual which comes with the program.
 - c. telephone a friend and ask questions about it.
10. You are staying in a hotel and have a rental car. You would like to visit friends whose address/location you do not know. I would like them to:
- a. draw me a map on paper.
 - ☒ b. tell me the directions.
 - c. write down the directions (without a map).
 - d. collect me from the hotel in their car.
11. Apart from the price, what would most influence your decision to buy a particular textbook?:
- a. I have used a copy before.
 - ☒ b. a friend talking about it.
 - c. quickly reading parts of it.
 - d. the way it looks is appealing.
12. A new movie has arrived in town. What would most influence your decision to go (or not go)?
- a. I heard a radio review about it
 - b. I read a review about it.
 - ☒ c. I saw a preview of it.
13. Do you prefer a lecturer or teacher who likes to use:?
- ☒ a. a textbook, handouts, readings
 - b. flow diagrams, charts, graphs.
 - c. field trips, labs, practical sessions.
 - d. discussion, guest speakers.

VARK

visual aural read/write kinesthetic

The VARK Questionnaire – English Version Scoring Chart

Use the following scoring chart to find the VARK category that each of your answers corresponds to. Circle the letters that correspond to your answers

e.g. If you answered b and c for question 3, circle R and V in the question 3 row.

Question	a category	b category	c category	d category
3	A	R	V	K

Scoring Chart

Question	a category	b category	c category	d category
1	V	A	R	K
2	R	V	A	K
3	A	R	V	K
4	K	V	R	
5	K	V	R	A
6	A	R	K	V
7	V	R	A	K
8	A	V	K	
9	K	R	A	
10	V	A	R	K
11	K	A	R	V
12	A	R	V	
13	R	V	K	A

Calculating your scores

Count the number of each of the VARK letters you have circled to get your score for each VARK category.

Total number of Vs circled =	2
Total number of As circled =	4
Total number of Rs circled =	6
Total number of Ks circled =	1

Calculating your preferences

Use the "Scoring Instructions" sheet (available in the "advice to teachers" section of the VARK web site) to work out your VARK learning preferences.

Appendix 3 Honey and Mumford questionnaire

Learning Styles Questionnaire

Name: _____

This questionnaire is designed to find out your preferred learning style(s). Over the years you have probably developed learning "habits" that help you benefit more from some experiences than from others. Since you are probably unaware of this, this questionnaire will help you pinpoint your learning preferences so that you are in a better position to select learning experiences that suit your style and having a greater understanding of those that suit the style of others.

This is an internationally proven tool designed by Peter Honey and Alan Mumford.

There is no time limit to this questionnaire. It will probably take you 10-15 minutes. The accuracy of the results depends on how honest you can be. There are no right or wrong answers.

If you agree more than you disagree with a statement put a tick by it.

If you disagree more than you agree put a cross by it.

Be sure to mark each item with either a tick or cross.

- ☒ 1. I have strong beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad.
- X ☐ 2. I often act without considering the possible consequences
- ☒ 3. I tend to solve problems using a step-by-step approach
- ☒ 4. I believe that formal procedures and policies restrict people
- ☒ 5. I have a reputation for saying what I think, simply and directly
- X ☐ 6. I often find that actions based on feelings are as sound as those based on careful thought and analysis
- ☒ 7. I like the sort of work where I have time for thorough preparation and implementation
- ☒ 8. I regularly question people about their basic assumptions
- ☒ 9. What matters most is whether something works in practice
- ☒ 10. I actively seek out new experiences
- X ☐ 11. When I hear about a new idea or approach I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice
- ☒ 12. I am keen on self discipline such as watching my diet, taking regular exercise, sticking to a fixed routine, etc.
- ☒ 13. I take pride in doing a thorough job
- X ☐ 14. I get on best with logical, analytical people and less well with spontaneous, "irrational"
- ☒ 15. I take care over the interpretation of data available to me and avoid jumping to conclusions
- ☒ 16. I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives
- X ☐ 17. I'm attracted more to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones
- ☒ 18. I don't like disorganised things and prefer to fit things into a coherent pattern

- ☒ 19. I accept and stick to laid down procedures and policies so long as I regard them as an efficient way of getting the job done
- ☒ 20. I like to relate my actions to a general principle
- ☒ 21. In discussions I like to get straight to the point
- ☒ 22. I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work
- ☒ 23. I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different
- ☒ 24. I enjoy fun-loving, spontaneous people
- ☒ 25. I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion
- ☒ 26. I find it difficult to produce ideas on impulse
- ☒ 27. I believe in coming to the point immediately
- ☒ 28. I am careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly
- ☒ 29. I prefer to have as many resources of information as possible - the more data to think over the better
- ☒ 30. Flippant people who don't take things seriously enough usually irritate me
- ☒ 31. I listen to other people's points of view before putting my own forward
- ☒ 32. I tend to be open about how I'm feeling
- ☒ 33. In discussions I enjoy watching the manoeuvrings of the other participants
- ☒ 34. I prefer to respond to events on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than plan things out in advance
- ☒ 35. I tend to be attracted to techniques such as network analysis, flow charts, branching programs, contingency planning, etc.
- ☒ 36. It worries me if I have to rush out a piece of work to meet a tight deadline
- ☒ 37. I tend to judge people's ideas on their practical merits
- ☒ 38. Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me feel uneasy
- ☒ 39. I often get irritated by people who want to rush things
- ☒ 40. It is more important to enjoy the present moment than to think about the past or future
- ☒ 41. I think that decisions based on a thorough analysis of all the information are sounder than those based on intuition
- ☒ 42. I tend to be a perfectionist
- ☒ 43. In discussions I usually produce lots of spontaneous ideas
- ☒ 44. In meetings I put forward practical realistic ideas
- ☒ 45. More often than not, rules are there to be broken
- ☒ 46. I prefer to stand back from a situation
- ☒ 47. I can often see inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people's arguments
- ☒ 48. On balance I talk more than I listen
- ☒ 49. I can often see better, more practical ways to get things done
- ☒ 50. I think written reports should be short and to the point
- ☒ 51. I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day

- ☒ 52. I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in social discussion
- ☒ 53. I like people who approach things realistically rather than theoretically
- ☒ 54. In discussions I get impatient with irrelevancies and digressions
- ☒ 55. If I have a report to write I tend to produce lots of drafts before settling on the final version
- ☒ 56. I am keen to try things out to see if they work in practice
- ☒ 57. I am keen to reach answers via a logical approach
- ☒ 58. I enjoy being the one that talks a lot
- ☒ 59. In discussions I often find I am the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding wild speculations
- ☒ 60. I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind
- ☒ 61. In discussions with people I often find I am the most dispassionate and objective
- ☒ 62. In discussions I'm more likely to adopt a "low profile" than to take the lead and do most of the talking
- ☒ 63. I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer term bigger picture
- ☒ 64. When things go wrong I am happy to shrug it off and "put it down to experience"
- ☒ 65. I tend to reject wild, spontaneous ideas as being impractical
- ☒ 66. It's best to think carefully before taking action
- ☒ 67. On balance I do the listening rather than the talking
- ☒ 68. I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach
- ☒ 69. Most times I believe the end justifies the means
- ☒ 70. I don't mind hurting people's feelings so long as the job gets done
- ☒ 71. I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling
- ☒ 72. I'm usually one of the people who puts life into a party
- ☒ 73. I do whatever is expedient to get the job done
- ☒ 74. I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work
- ☒ 75. I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning things and events
- ☒ 76. I'm always interested to find out what people think
- ☒ 77. I like meetings to be run on methodical lines, sticking to laid down agenda, etc.
- ☒ 78. I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics
- ☒ 79. I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation
- ☒ 80. People often find me insensitive to their feelings

Scoring And Interpreting The Learning Styles Questionnaire

The Questionnaire is scored by awarding one point for each ticked item. There are no points for crossed items. Simply indicate on the lists below which items were ticked by circling the appropriate question number.

2	7	1	5
4	13	3	9
6	15	8	11
10	16	12	19
17	25	14	21
23	28	18	27
24	29	20	35
32	31	22	37
34	33	26	44
38	36	30	49
40	39	42	50
43	41	47	53
45	46	51	54
48	52	57	56
58	55	61	59
64	60	63	65
71	62	68	69
72	66	75	70
74	67	77	73
79	76	78	80
TOTALS			
	Activist	Reflector	Theorist
			Pragmatist

Appendix 4 Johari Window

Open Window Area	Blind Area
• I know I have the capability to develop my IT skills. • I have been given positive feedback from others that the work done so far on features of the computer has been good.	• Others recognise that I am a quick learner.
Hidden Area	Unknown Area
• I have previously studied IT in college.	• Minimal skills in IT

Appendix 5 Four stages of competence

Unconscious Incompetence	Conscious Incompetence
• IT skills- Current stage	
Conscious Competence	Unconscious Competence
• IT skills- I want to be here	