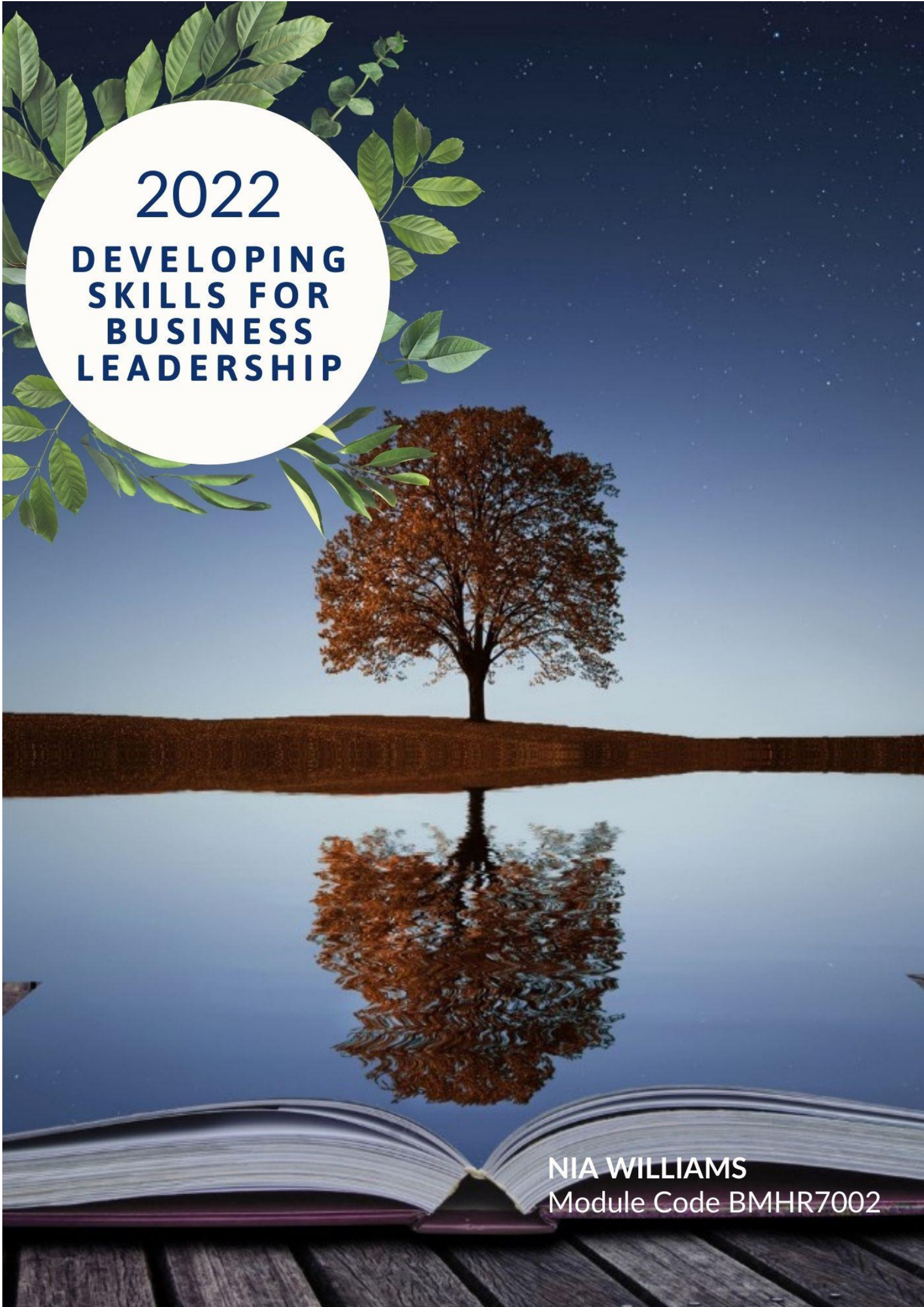




2022

**DEVELOPING
SKILLS FOR
BUSINESS
LEADERSHIP**

NIA WILLIAMS
Module Code BMHR7002



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Qualification: Post Graduate Diploma in HRM

Module Name: Developing Skills for Business Leadership

Module Code: BMHR7002

Word Count: 4394 (10% over)

Student Name: Nia Williams

Student Number: 1806523

CIPD Membership Number: 53274221

By signing below, I confirm that the work presented is my own, unaided work. I understand the regulations pertaining to candidate malpractice and the action that may be taken as a result.

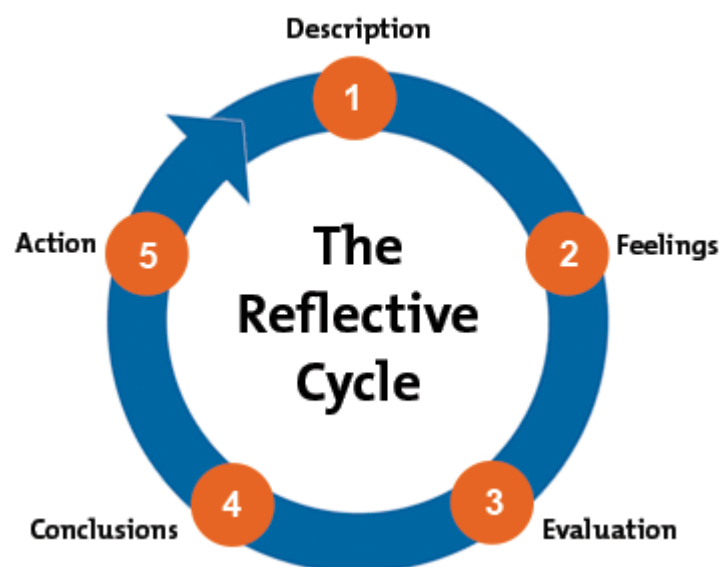
Signed: *N. Williams*

Date: 8th May 2022

LINK TO BLOG: <https://editor.wix.com/website/builder?storyId=c1ed4dc4-af98-4334-af06-8a123da9819a#!/builder/story/c1ed4dc4-af98-4334-af06-8a123da9819a:529771e7-a43f-4fb1-9c01-a2824e75b32f/preview>

Welcome to my Developing Skills for Business Leadership Journey

This portfolio consists of four scenarios which covers eight learning outcomes. Gibbs (1998) reflective model has been used to reflect on these scenarios for each learning outcome. This model is useful to help people learn from situations that they have experienced. It is made up of five steps as detailed below.



The organisation that has been referred to throughout is Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion (CSG&CC) which is a Further and Higher Education College.

CIPD Professional Map

The CIPD profession map is a set of standards which guides those that work in HR to develop their skills, knowledge and behaviours. This map has been referred to throughout each blog (CIPD, 2022).

About Me

Welcome! My Developing Skills for Business Leadership Journey has been over a two-year period whilst studying for my Level 7 CIPD Postgraduate Diploma. This site is where I share with you my journey of what I have learnt from this course and how I have transferred this knowledge to my role as HR Partner at Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion.

“We don’t learn from the experience, we learn from reflecting on the experience” – John Dewey (2003).

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Scenario 1: The journey through a postgraduate diploma!

Learning outcome 3: Make sound and justifiable decisions and solve problems more effectively

Learning outcome 8: Demonstrate competence in postgraduate study skills

According to Watson and Reissner (2014), to be an effective leader you need to be able to make decisions and problem solve. These are also qualities that are needed to be an effective HR practitioner (something that I am constantly developing on!)

For the people profession, the CIPD (2022a) identifies three key principles as the pathway to good decisions (Figure 1).

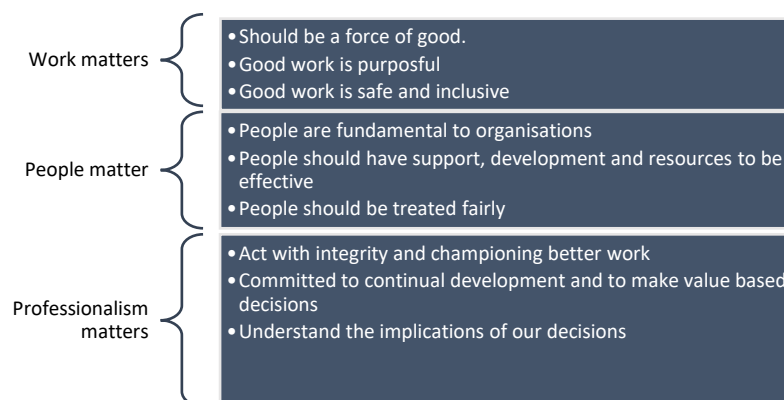


Figure 1 - Key principles to good decisions (CIPD, 2022a)

Description: Throughout my postgraduate diploma I have had to make sound and justifiable decisions to solve problems more effectively in particular through the investigating a business issue (IBI) module where I demonstrated the link between employee health/wellbeing and the increase in absenteeism rates at CSG&CC (Figure 2). As part of this research report, primary research was conducted through interviews

and questionnaires to demonstrate the link. This also corresponded with secondary research. To find solutions to this issue and improve health and wellbeing in the organisation, I made sound and justifiable decisions based on research to improve wellbeing by recommending that CSG&CC need to implement a hybrid working policy and training for managers on mental health.

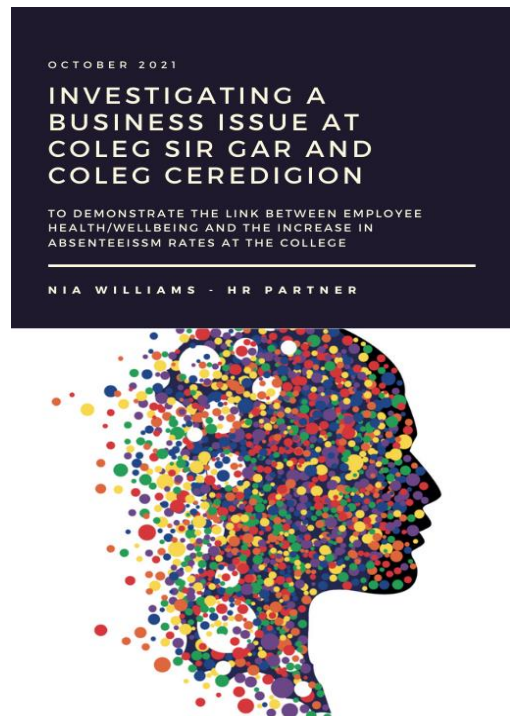


Figure 2 – IBI report

Feelings: Before undertaking the module, I was overwhelmed with the amount of work involved especially in terms of collating primary research over the summer period when academic staff are on annual leave. It was also difficult working full time and studying whilst also trying to maintain a social life! One way that I kept on top of the research report whilst maintaining a social life was by sticking with the timescales outlined in my project initiation document (PID).

Evaluation:

To help with my decision making I referred to the OODA Loop method which is made up of four steps (Figure 3) (Richards, 2020).

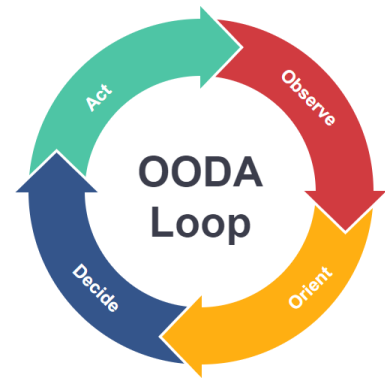


Figure 3 - OODA Loop Method to decision making (Richards, 2020)

1. Observe - I identified the problem and made time to understand the external environment (PEST analysis) and the internal (through primary research).
2. Orientation – this involved reflecting on what had been found during the primary and secondary research and considering action. This involved understanding to make decisions.
3. Decide - I made suggestions towards creating an action plan of recommendations in response to improving wellbeing at the college.
4. Act - I carried out the decisions by implementing training for line managers around mental health.

Throughout the module, I also referred to the key principles of decision making by the CIPD (2022a).

I have also demonstrated competency in my post-graduate study by evaluating the credibility of sources by using the CRAAP test by evaluating the currency, relevance, authority, accuracy and, purpose of the research to inform my decisions to solve the

business issue (UWS, 2022). All this helped me to pass the module and achieve my highest mark of 80%!

If I was to do the report again, I would give longer than a week to capture responses to make the data more accurate to influence my decisions.

Conclusion:

The IBI module involved making decisions based on evidence-based information to address wellbeing in the organisation. Evidence-based is one of the core-knowledge of the CIPD professional map and contributes to making better decisions (CIPD, 2022b). Before this module, I was at the foundation level where I knew how to analyse and use problem solving tools such as PESTLE and SWOT. Since completing this module, I am now at the chartered level where I know how to make decisions in response to business issues.

All people professionals need to undertake continuous learning to upskill their knowledge and to keep up to date with any changes in the profession. Passion for learning forms one of the core behaviour of the CIPD professional map (CIPD, 2022c). Before undertaking this module, I was at the foundation level where I remained inquisitive about issues and development in the people profession and the wider world of work. After assessing myself after the module I am now at the associate level where I keep up to date with external trends and developments and consider how they will impact my work as demonstrated by this module.

Action:

To improve further in **decision making** and to become chartered fellow, I need to understand emerging research and findings that have the potential to add value to the organisation and to help with advice, by keeping up to date with new research developed by the CIPD, ACAS, and employment law.

To become a chartered member with regards to **passion for learning** I will need to reflect on my experience on the course, seek feedback from my colleagues on how I have applied my learning and how I can improve in the future. I will seek feedback on this from my appraisal with my line manager.

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Scenario 2: DELIVERING DBS TRAINING

Learning outcome 6: Demonstrate enhanced IT Proficiency

Learning outcome 7: Demonstrate an essential people management skill-set

According to CIPD (2022a), technology forms one of the core knowledge areas of the CIPD professional map. People professionals must understand the importance of technology and the positive impact it can have on the organisation.

Demonstrating an essential people management skill-set such as training forms one of the specialist knowledge of the CIPD profession map “Learning and Development”. HR professionals must have the knowledge, skills, and experience to fulfil individual and organisational needs (CIPD, 2022b).

Description: As part of the Design Delivery and Evaluating (DDE) module I had to design a learning resource that met a business need within CSG&CC. The learning resource that was produced was a step-by-step Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) poster guide for campus office staff to process student DBS (Figure 1). This demonstrates an enhanced IT proficiency.

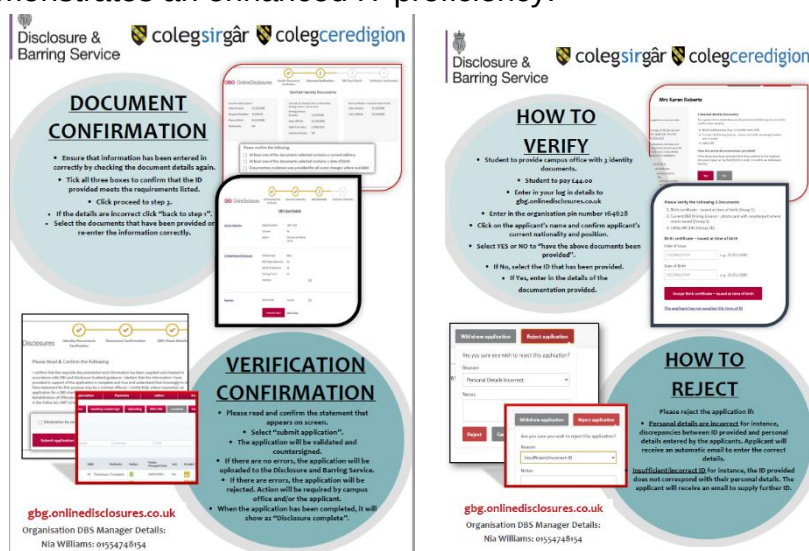


Figure 1 – DBS poster

This poster was produced as the college adopted a new online DBS system. Two A3 posters were created using the Microsoft Word package for staff to pin to a billboard to view as and when needed. I selected a poster as according to Comben (2020), posters are cheap to produce and can portray information simply and effectively. When creating this poster, I took into consideration the different generational learning styles, for instance, generation Z prefer to go directly to the website link for guidance in comparison to baby boomers who prefer to read the step-by-step guide on the poster (BBC, 2021). A link to the website was therefore included on the poster. I also took into consideration the VAK learning styles theory by Fleming and Baume (2006) where the poster appeals to visual learners as it includes print screens of the DBS system, text, and images. It also appeals to the kinaesthetic learners as it provides a step-by-step guide on how to verify DBS documents for them to try themselves.

As well as creating this poster I also delivered training to campus office on how to process the applications. This was delivered to 20 campus office administrative staff who are based at all 7 campuses. This was delivered over Google Meet due to the pandemic where I shared my screen to demonstrate the system. Consideration was also given to the Adult Learning Theory where components such as motivation, relevance, life experience, preparation, and self-impact to learn are needed (Knowles, 1973).

Feelings: When creating the poster, I felt confident with my IT skills as I have previously studied IT A-Level. I also felt confident with training others on the DBS system as I use this system every day. Before campus office were trained on the system, they were worried that the system would be complicated, but feedback after the session highlighted that the system was much easier than the paper-based system and that the poster was helpful to remind them of the process.

Evaluation and conclusion: On reflection, I should have used Canva to create my poster rather than Microsoft Word (Canva, n.d). Using this platform would have allowed me to have a more professional-looking poster that makes use of different templates (Figure 2).

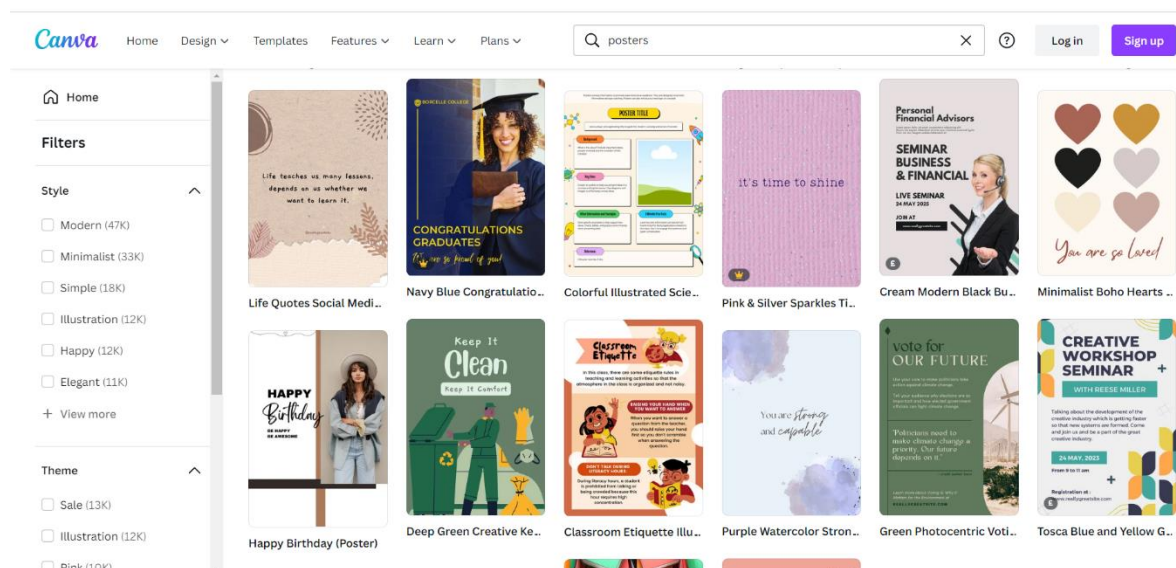


Figure 1 - Canva (Canva, n.d)

The reason Microsoft Word was selected was because the college logo has a white background and I found it difficult to layer a white background on a colourful background as it did not look professional. If I had started the poster earlier, this would have allowed me to seek advice from the marketing department in the college to find a logo without a white background. As well as this, the training delivered went well and feedback also confirmed this. In hindsight, it would have been better to conduct training in person and make use of a whiteboard for everyone to see.

Action: Before undertaking this task, I undertook a self-assessment against the CIPD professional map against “technology and people” which forms one of the core knowledge areas of the map (CIPD, 2022a). This indicated that I was at the associate level where I understood what technology is available in the people profession and how it can improve the organisation. After completing the module and implementing the changes into the organisation, I am now at the Chartered member level where I have maximised collaboration through technology to improve performance. To become a Chartered fellow, I will need to enhance my use in technology to improve performance by making use of better software packages that are available. I will do this by setting up a one-to-one session with a technology specialist in the organisation who I can meet with every couple of months to collaborate and share insights.

Before undertaking the training on the DBS system, I assessed myself against “learning and development” of the CIPD map where I was at the Associate level. Since

undertaking this training, I have undertaken another self-assessment against “learning and development” where I am now at the Chartered member level. To improve further in delivering training, I should become a project manager of a bigger learning and development programme across the organisation as the DBS training was on a smaller scale.

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Scenario 3: DEALING WITH EMOTION AND FINANCE THROUGH DISMISSAL

Learning outcome 2: Manage interpersonal relationships at work more effectively

Learning outcome 5: Interpret financial information and manage financial resources

Employee relations forms one of the specialist knowledge of the CIPD profession map. According to CIPD (2022a) and Sunderland (2021), HR professionals must ensure that the relationship between the organisation and its people is managed through transparent practices and the relevant law. It is important to have effective listening skills, emotional intelligence (EI), and verbal communication to manage interpersonal relationships (SHRM, 2019).

Business acumen also forms one of the core knowledge of the CIPD profession map and HR professionals need to be able to interpret financial information and manage financial resources (CIPD, 2022b).

Description: As part of the Employment Law module, I had to calculate the notice pay that the employee should have been entitled to by their employer. Since this module, I have transferred the knowledge to real-life situations within my organisation by dismissing an employee on long-term sickness through a capability process. We dealt with the long-term sickness in line with the organisations sickness policy where we conducted three absence review meetings and made several occupational health referrals which indicated that the employee was not fit to return to work and there was

no possibility that the employee would get better or be able to perform their role as Technician in Construction or any alternative role. A capability hearing was arranged where the decision made by the Chair was to dismiss based on ill-health with immediate effect. With my knowledge from the course, I was able to calculate his notice and holiday pay in line with ACAS (2022) (Figure 1).

Statutory Notice:	Holiday Pay:
Formula: $\text{Salary}/52 \times 12$ $18,769/52 = 360.94$ $360.94 \times 12 \text{ weeks} = \text{£}4,33.13$	Formula: $\text{Holiday}/260 \times \text{Salary}$ $31.5/260 \times \text{£}18,769 = \text{£}2,273.94$

Figure 1 – Statutory notice and Holiday pay calculations (Acas, 2022)

Feelings: This was the first capability hearing that I supported the Vice-Principal (Chair of the capability meeting) as HR Advisor. I felt apprehensive as I had never been the HR Advisor on the panel before as previously I acted as a notetaker. I lack confidence and self-esteem and get anxious in new situations. From undertaking the emotional intelligence (EI) test by Goleman (2004) and Mind Tools (N.D), it highlights that my emotional intelligence is “OK” with a score of 46%. Figure 2 is a summary of the scores that I received against each 5 elements that make up EI.

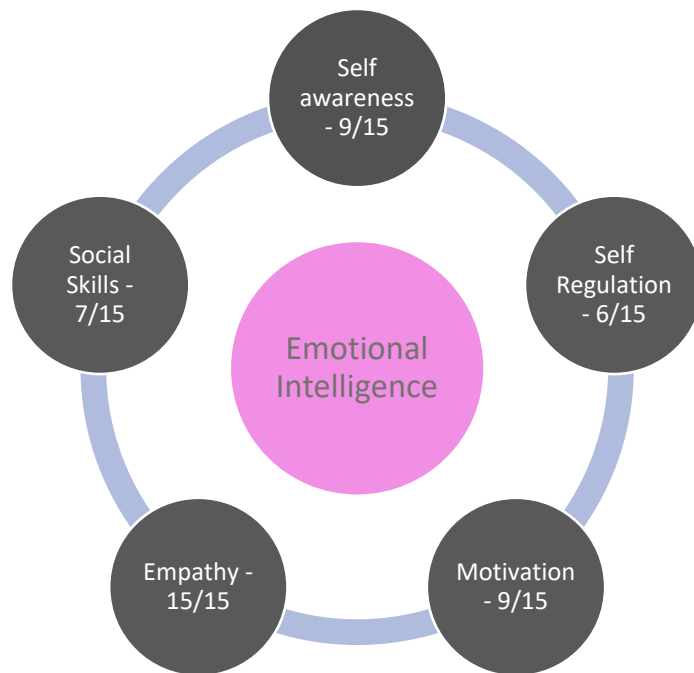


*Figure 2 – Summary of EI scores
(Goleman, 2004), (Mind Tools, n.d.)*

To help improve on these areas before the meeting I prepared for possible questions and asked advice from my line manager who has had the experience of capability meetings. It was also reassuring that my line manager was there in the capacity of note-taker which made me feel less anxious. I also undertook mindfulness to help with my anxiety and stress as suggested as one of the top tips to improve my self-regulation.

Evaluation/Conclusion: On reflection, this meeting went better than expected, and I surprised myself with how confident I was in advising and answering any questions in terms of notice pay, holiday pay, pension, and termination date. Since this meeting, I have asked my line manager for feedback on how to improve my EI going forward.

Positive feedback suggested that I was empathetic with the employee and reassured them and made the process as easy and comfortable as possible. Feedback on how to improve in the future is to continue with mindfulness to increase self-regulation and build confidence, practice deep breathing when in a new setting, and take the communication quiz to find ways to improve social skills.

Action: Before undertaking this task, I undertook a self-assessment against the CIPD professional map against employee relations. This indicated that I was at the basic level where I understood employment law, but after completing this task I am now at the associate level where I demonstrated how to apply employment law in a capability process and work with a range of representative bodies such as Trade Unions. To become a Chartered fellow, I will need to improve my EI skills in particular self-regulation and social skills by undertaking mindfulness and by undertaking the communication quiz to improve my social skills (CIPD, 2022c).

Before undertaking this task, I also undertook a self-assessment against the Business Acumen area of the CIPD profession map. As part of my role in HR, I do not have much experience with managing financial resources as that gets done by the finance department. When assessing myself against the CIPD map at the beginning of my studies, I was at the foundation level against "Business Acumen" as I did not feel that I met all the criteria of this level such as how to make common calculations. After this experience, I feel that I have now achieved this due to the calculations involved in

calculating notice and holiday pay. To meet the criteria for associate-level for Business Acumen, I will need to understand CSG&CC financial statements and understand the link between HR and finance to meet the organisations goals. To do this, I will liaise with the Executive Director of Finance to shadow and gain experience.

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Scenario 4: LETTING GO AND PASSING OVER KNOWLEDGE THROUGH MENTORING

Learning Objective 4: Lead and influence others more effectively

Learning Objective 1: Manage themselves more effectively at work or in another professional context

According to Clutterbuck (2004), mentoring is defined as “off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking”. Mentoring is when an experienced person known as the mentor, helps another person known as the mentee in developing their skills and knowledge (CIPD, 2021). To be an effective leader, it is important to mentor others as it demonstrates confidence in their abilities and indicates their willingness to nurture others and build trust (Rashid, 2017).

It is also important for HR professionals and leaders to manage themselves more effectively at work by considering their personality type to lead and influence others for them to have a positive employee experience (Landry, 2019). According to CIPD (2022a), employee experience forms one of the specialist knowledge areas of the CIPD profession map.

Description: As part of the Leading Managing and Developing people module, I learned about mentoring and the different theories involved, and how to deliver this effectively. Learning about this helped me to effectively mentor a new HR colleague.

In 2021, I was promoted to HR Partner meaning that my previous role in recruitment had to be filled. Once appointed, I was required to mentor my colleague and show her the ropes! During my studies, I learned about the five personality traits of the Big Five personality theory which I assessed myself against (Truity, 2022) (Figure 1).



Figure 1 – The five personality traits of the Big Five Personality Theory (Truity, 2022).

Results indicated that I scored the highest (96%) in agreeableness where I put other people's needs before my own, and cooperate with others rather than compete with them. People who score high on this are usually trusting and forgiving. This came across in the way I mentored my new colleague where it was important for me to build a relationship with her where she was comfortable enough to ask me any questions. I created a timetable over two weeks of all the tasks that I needed to cover with her. This consisted of showing her the preparation of job descriptions, how to advertise on the website/FE Jobs/Indeed, and how to prepare to shortlist. I did this by setting aside time where I would sit with her to demonstrate and then allow her to have a go.

Feelings: Although I was embarking on a new exciting promotion to HR Partner, I knew I had to delegate and show the ropes to a new HR colleague which I find difficult as I find it hard to let go of work! I knew I had to delegate the work I was previously doing as Assistant HR Officer to enable me to carry out the duties as HR Partner. Although I found this extremely difficult, I knew that it was essential to put on the best training for my new colleague to enable her to carry out my previous tasks to the best of her ability. I also wanted her to have a positive first impression of the college for her to fulfil her needs such as belongingness and love as identified in the Maslow's Hierarchy of needs model (Kremer and Hammond, 2013), (Figure 2).

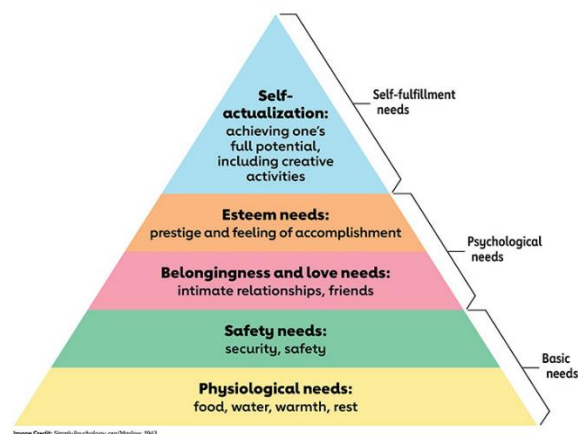


Figure 2 – Maslow's hierarchy of needs model (Kremer and Hammond, 2013)

I felt that this approach to mentoring has resulted in a strong relationship where my colleague can ask me any question without feeling uncomfortable. I also allowed my colleague to tell me what she wanted from the sessions and how she best learned. It was decided that after I showed her how to do something, she would then try it by herself and come back together to evaluate how it went.

Evaluation/Conclusion: I felt that the experience was positive and feedback provided by my colleague has also stated this. She liked the way the mentoring was delivered and felt that she was able to get on with the work herself without feeling that someone was over her shoulder 24/7. This has resulted in her picking up the work quickly. When looking back, there were a few days when I was unable to be in the office and therefore the timetable was not strictly followed as originally planned. I would factor this into the next mentoring training that I deliver allowing me to set tasks for certain days that the employee can do without me being there. I would also not fear letting go as this allows me to develop my HR career and delegation is important to be an effective leader as it allows me to focus on higher-value activities.

Action: Before studying the module, I was at the associate level when assessing myself against the CIPD map “employee experience” (CIPD, 2022a). After completing this module and transferring my knowledge and skill into the workplace, I am now at the Chartered Member Level where I know how to build trust with workers and evaluate worker voice tools to drive forward output. To work towards becoming a Chartered fellow I will become part of the Engage for Success movement which is a community working to create better and more engaged workplaces for the future (Engage for Success, n.d). I will also take the engagement quiz to understand what actions I can take to make an impact to influence and inspire (CIPD, 2022b).

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Development plan

LO	What do I want/need to learn?	What will I do to achieve this?	What resources/support will I need?	What will my success criteria be?	Target dates for review/completion
LO 3	Understand emerging research and findings to add value to the organisation and to help with my decision making with employee advice.	Keep up to date with new research developed.	I will need to read research from the CIPD, ACAS and employment law on a weekly basis. I will also attend relevant CIPD and Employment law events.	My success criteria will be receiving positive feedback from colleagues and line managers and feeling more confident in giving advance.	This will be done on a weekly basis and reviewed weekly.
LO 8	Reflect on my experience during my studies and how I have applied this in the workplace and how I can improve in the future.	Seek feedback from my colleagues and line manager on how I have applied my learning and how I can improve in the future. I am due my appraisal with my line manager which will provide me with feedback on how I have applied my learning and how I can improve in the future.	Colleagues and Line manager.	Positive feedback from colleagues and line manager and improving from the feedback provided.	Target Date: 31 May 2022
LO 6	Enhance technology to improve performance by making use of better software packages that are available.	For any future posters/instructions I will make use of free software packages such as Canva. I will also set up one to one sessions with the technology specialist in the college to meet with every couple of months to collaborate and discuss any upcoming projects where he will be able to advise me on what software package to use.	I will need the use of technology and the expertise of the college's technology specialist.	My success criteria will be being confident to use other software packages other than word to create content.	Target Date: 05 October 2022 Review: 31 October 2022

LO 7	To become project manager of a bigger programme across the organisation.	Meet with my line manager to discuss a bigger project where I can become a project manager.	I will need the support of my line manager to deliver a larger project training.	My success criteria will be feedback after the session. To gain feedback I will create a google form to gain feedback on how employees thought the session went and tips on how to improve for the future.	Target Date: 5 September 2022 Review: 12 September 2022
LO 2	Improve EI skills in particular self-regulation and social skills.	To continue with mindfulness to increase self-regulation and build confidence and to practice deep breathing when in a new setting and take the communication quiz to find ways to improve social skills within the organisation.	Self-Mindfulness – Calm is a free android app for mindfulness. Communication Quiz –. This will allow me to find ways to improve my communication skills.	I will feel more confident and less anxious before entering new situations. I will also improve my communication skills. Success will also be scoring higher on all 5 EI skills compared to previously.	Target Dates: 31 March 2023 Review: 30 April 2023
LO 5	Understand financial statements and understand the link between HR and Finance to meet organisational goals	I will liaise with the Executive Director of Finance to shadow and gain experience.	I will need the support of the Director of Finance to mentor me in understanding financial statement and the link between HR and Finance to meet organisational goals.	To be confident in understanding financial statements and explaining the link between HR and Finance. Being more confident in managing HR and Finance systems such as payroll.	Target Dates: 30 November 2022 Review: January 2023
LO 4	How to create better and more engaged workplaces for the future.	I will do this by becoming part of the Engage for Success movement.	I will need to register with the Engage for Success movement. This is free to register.	Implementing ideas and tools from the engage for success movement into the organisation. Sickness absence and turnover rates should decrease when implementing ideas.	Target Dates: 01 September 2022. Review 31 August 2023 to see improvement in sickness and turnover.
LO 1	To understand what actions I can take to make an impact to influence and inspire others.	I will take the engagement quiz.	The engagement quiz.	My success criteria will be implementing those actions provided by the engagement quiz. Measuring engagement levels through employee engagement surveys.	Target Date to undertake Quiz: 30 June 2022 Review: monthly