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Academic and employability skills

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**Modul Name: Academic and
employability skills.**

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to analyse academic and employability skills referring to definition of this skills and their importance. I will identify my skills and what I need to improve. I will do a SWOT analyse to find what are my strengths and weaknesses, the opportunity that I must improve my skills and the threats I can encounter in my way.

What are Academic and Employability skills?

Employability skills – refer to a set of transferable skills, and key personal attributes which are highly valued by employers and essential for effective performance in the workplace. (Sydney.edu.au) From this definition we can see that employability skills are very important to the employers, they prefer a candidate with good experience and that have a degree. Examples of employability skills are: communication skills, team working skills, problem solving, planning and organisational skills, learning skills, technology, self-management etc.

Academic skills – refers to aptitudes that help you to become a more effective learner at university or college level and developing the research and study skills that will help you in the future. For achieving academic skills, you need to go to university or to college. These skills will increase your confidence and will help you to find a better job well paid once you have a degree. Academic skills are transferable, and you can take them with you beyond your education into new context. Examples of academic skills: essay writing, reading, note-taking, independent learning, research, presentation skills, referencing etc.

What is the importance of academic and employability skills?

Why are important academic and employability skills?
Because the recruiters are looking for a well-trained candidate who will pose these skills. They are in demand and are considered valuable human capital assets to companies.

Now a day employer needs responsible employees who can solve problems and to work with other people in a team who have a common purpose. It is essential for an employee to fit and remain in the work environment.

These skills are important for getting, keeping and doing well on a job. Academic skills are essential for a high job performance. Employees need to have the ability to listen and read instruction and then to carry out those instructions. They should be able to respond appropriately both orally and in writing. The ability to read and understand what has been read and to use a diversity of written materials, including graphs, charts, tables and displays. A person who can think critically, act logically, and evaluate situation to make decisions and solve problems is a valuable asset. (Jacquelyn P.R. 2010)

Employees with good academic and employability skills have confidence in themselves and deal with others honestly and openly, offering respect for themselves, their co-workers, and their supervisor. They have a positive attitude and are always

ready to learn new things to get the job done. This kind of employers are responsible and punctual.

Academic skills

Academic skills are a group of study habits, learning strategies and time management tools that help students learn. This skill encourages students to become more efficient learners giving them confidence. They are also transferable, and therefore vital for success in any career. The first academic skill that I will describe is:

Academic writing is a formal type of writing and is used throughout academic career and after completing their degrees at their workplace. Academic writing respect rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Therefore, the ideas need to be presented through references from published data and reports. The theories reflected in academic writing should be supported by properly citing the author and their published literature. The ideas should be objectively, concisely and in a formal way.

There are a few types of academic writing:

Essay involve a discussion trough finding arguments for or against a particular issue. In an essay the writer should bring solid arguments based on research and focused to a relevant literature and facts. An essay has three basic sections: introduction, evidence paragraph, conclusion.

Report is an informative piece of writing that aims to identify, assess and evaluate a particular issue in a specific setting. In a report we need to investigate problems causes and solution for this issue. Therefore, a report is based on relevant information for the reader. Here is the structure of a report:

1. Table of contents
2. Abstract/Executive Summary
3. Introduction
4. Literature Review
5. Methods
6. Results/Findings
7. Conclusion
8. Recommendations
9. References/Bibliography

For improving academic writing, we need to use simple language, critically analyse and to provide arguments and reasons, avoid plagiarism. Referring to my experience in academic writing I need to work hard for improving this skill because English is not my first language and that is why I find difficult to write a report, essay etc. I should improve my vocabulary, learn more grammatical a lot of other aspects of English.

Referencing is an important part of academic skills. We do references when we use someone else's ideas. Referencing correctly helps as to avoid plagiarism, to give arguments and

opinions for supporting our idea and allows to the others to identify the sources you have used. Sometimes is difficult to do referencing especially when you take ideas from Google and not from online libraries, e-books etc.

Time management is an important skill that everyone need can benefit from reviewing how to manage time effectively. Making time management work for you is based on two key factors: how you plan your time and how you implement the detail of what you do. (Patrick Forsyth,2007)

We should be able to use our time effectively this will guaranty our success at university. In managing our time is important to know what your priorities are and to focus to achieve them. An effective method to manage your time is planning and scheduling your actions and activities at university or at your workplace. A lot of people use diary's for manage their time. There are two steps to do: identify what you need to do and prioritise that. There you should be clear about how much time your activities and projects will take according enough time for their achievement and be sure that you use your plan and stick on it. Time management is important for me and my activities, so I try always to organise my time and my actions according enough time for every activity but Is always place for improving.

Critical thinking is a form of thinking which is “critical”, where “critical” is usually taken to mean something that is negative

and painful to receive, rather than something that is helpful and that many people would not have spotted or thought about. (Peter Morgan,2017)

Someone who think critically will be able to find gaps, errors and weaknesses in other's work, will be able to provide proper arguments for a particular view and to act, and he need to identify a clear interpretation of events and situation. Critical thinking is the capability to engage in reflective and independent thinking. Critical thinkers can easily to identify, analyse and solve problems sooner than by intuition or instinct.

Employability skills.

Employability skills are the skills required for the workplace, but every workplace will be different, and the skills required for performing well will be different. Examples of employability skills are: leadership, communication, problem solving and decision making, team working etc.

Leadership skills A leader is someone who has followers. (Peter Morgan, 2017)

A good leader should be able to create the right environment for the action to happen, to inspire others and to encourage their effort in a particular goal. To be a good leader does not mean to give orders, but you need to build effective relationships with your team and to be sure tat they will be

there for you in tough times and easy times. Effective communication with your team is essential because your followers are sure that their activity and effort are needed. Leadership is about relationships, character, action and communication. (Peter Morgan, 2017)

At my workplace I had the chance to lead a small team and I think I had a good relationship with all my colleagues, and we did nice things together. I was receptive with their needs, I was motivating them, I worked next to them not just giving orders and we had a good relation.

Communication skills is an exchange of information, ideas and thoughts between two or more people. Communication is one of the main ingredients for the success of an organization or a team. A good communicator should be able to transmit information to others in a simple and clear way that the receiver can understand the right message. Now a day, employers are looking for employees with good communication skills and who will be able to communicate information, negotiate and confidently deal with customers. Communication is important for me but sometimes I find it difficult to speak with some people when we don't share the same ideas. I still need to improve this skill because I still have a psychological barrier – I am too shy.

Team working. A team is a number of individuals working as one to achieve a particular goal to which they are all mutually committed. (Peter Morgan, 2017)

All the members in a team should respect a few rules, they need to understand each other, to support and encourage each other for a more effective result. They put their egos aside for the benefit of the team. Working in a team is not easy but you need to give your best and to collaborate with the other team colleagues for the success of your task. In a team the responsibilities are divided for a better team performance. The relations between the team members need to be based on trust.

Team design begins with a clear understanding of the task that the team is being asked to accomplish. (Andrew Maund et.al. 2017)

I like to work in a team because I have the chance to find new ideas, to meet new people and new cultures. Working In a team can be hard but I try to do my role accurately and responsible.

Problem solving is the action that we do every day at workplace when you solve a client problem or helping other colleagues and discovering new problems to solve. Problems that we solve can be large or small, simple or complex, easy or hard. You should be confident problem solver for the success of your team. We know four steps in solving problems:

1. Defining problem.
2. Generating alternatives.
3. Evaluating and selecting alternatives.
4. Implementing solutions.

I like to solve problems, is a challenge for me and I am happy when I am useful for others. S a satisfaction for me knowing that I made life easier for my friends, colleagues and other people.

Decision making. We make decisions every day, at work, at home, at university etc. Every decision we make can result substantial consequences because of that we need to be more careful and to analyse all the factors before acting. The quality of decision depends of our learning, understanding and critical thinking. Your decisions can change your life that is why you need to think about your decisions and to not rush by taking them. To decide sometimes is difficult but you need to be rational and first to recognise that a problem exist. I make decisions every day, good or bad but I always learn from mistakes and I do not give up easily. I assume my responsibility for my decisions, and I support the consequences.

SWOT analysis.

A SWOT analysis can be used to assess yourself, compare yourself with your peers/competitors and also use to find career growth opportunities.

<u>Strengths:</u> • Able to study • Motivated • Responsible • Discipline • Patience • Able to work under pressure	<u>Weakness</u> • Lack of experience • English skills • IT skills • Lack of confidence • Shay person
<u>Opportunities</u> • To have a degree • To develop personal skills • To meet new people and new culture • Enhancing education • To utilise skills in different way	<u>Threats</u> • Time management • Brexit • Assessments • Difficulties in finding a job

Conclusion

In this report I have described academic and employability skills making references to my experience, what I am good at and what I need to improve. I described the importance of this skills and I have made my personal SWOT analyse to find what

are my strengths, my weakness, what opportunities I have and the threats for enhancing my skills.

References

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3. Patrick Forsyth, 2007, Successful Time Management, page 3 The Sunday Times. Google Scholar
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Time allocated: 1 hour. Please return your paper to the lecturer upon completion. It will be returned to you at the next session. You will need to include a scanned copy of this exercise in the form of an appendix together with your Task 1 (part of the Assignment for this module).

Ex.1

Read the following text and make notes on the main ideas. You can do this on a separate piece of paper which you do not have to hand in.

The success of ALDI

The food retail industry is a highly competitive market. Aldi understands that its customers want value for money but do not want to compromise on quality. This case study will demonstrate how Aldi uses a lean approach to its business operations to offer its customers quality products at competitive prices. What distinguishes Aldi from its competitors is its competitive pricing strategy without reducing the quality of its products. In fact, in some cases Aldi's products are 30% cheaper than those offered by its competitors. Aldi can do this because the business operates so efficiently. The three core values of Aldi are simplicity, consistency and responsibility. Lean production ties in closely with these values. For example, Aldi stores are simple in design and all stores are very similar which creates consistency.

For Aldi operating efficiently involves reducing costs in all areas of the business. Some of the key areas where Aldi is able to minimise costs are by saving time, space, effort and energy. Aldi's approach to doing this is to run its business around the principles of lean thinking. Whereas other food retailers have elaborate displays, additional services and promotions that draw customers into the business, Aldi's core purpose is to 'provide value and quality to our customers by being fair and efficient in all we do'. The principles of lean production are planned and built into everything that Aldi does. This starts within its supply chain. For example, up to 60% of Aldi's fruit and vegetables are sourced locally where possible, reducing the need for long and costly delivery journeys.

The principles of time based management are also built into the training provided for Aldi's employees. Through training staff to do a variety of tasks around store Aldi can minimise its staff requirements. Staff costs can also be reduced as fewer staff are required if they can perform a variety of duties throughout the store. Aldi's 'no-nonsense' approach to retailing therefore leads to cost saving in numerous areas. These cost savings are passed on to customers in the form of lower prices, allowing the business to differentiate itself from its competitors in terms of price, as well as the quality of the products it has on offer.

Lecturer's signature: _____



Date: 14.08.2019

Ex.2

This task is designed to see if you can **summarise** ideas from course materials in **your own words**. Re-read the text 'The success of ALDI' on previous page. Now answer the following question in **your own words**: What factors contribute to ALDI's success? Write about 175 words.

ALDI success is assured by factors like quality products at competitive prices this is happening because of the efficiency of the business. ALDI is a successful thanks to the values that they have: simplicity, consistency and responsibility. Another factor is that ALDI can minimise costs by saving time space effort and energy. Their products like fruits and vegetables are ~~are~~ brought from local sources, and this way they reduce money on deliveries. ALDI's staff is trained to do various tasks in the store and reduce the need to pay more employees. ALDI stores are simple in design and ~~that~~ all similar that's why this creates consistency. They respect their values putting in the first place quality and customers needs. Time management is another factor that contribute to ALDI's success.

Lecturer's comments:

good attempt, although there are minor errors in sentence structure and grammar. You could have also mentioned the no sense policy.

Lecturer's signature:



Date:

14/8

Ex.2. Decide whether the paraphrased passages are acceptable or unacceptable by circling the correct answer and briefly explain why.

Original Source: A key factor in explaining the sad state of American education can be found in overbureaucratization, which is seen in the compulsion to consolidate our public schools into massive factories and to increase to mammoth size our universities even in underpopulated states. The problem with bureaucracies is that they have to work hard and long to keep from substituting self-serving survival and growth for their original primary objective. Few succeed. Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience. If there is a single stumbling block on the road to the future, it is the bureaucracy as we know it.
Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture*, Anchor Publishing, 1977, p. 219

Paraphrase 1 - acceptable / unacceptable

Reason: Paraphrase 1 is unacceptable because here says that bureaucratizations have a conscience or a soul.

American education is overly bureaucratic. This is manifest in the increasing size of educational institutions, even in small states. Bureaucracies are bad because they tend to work to promote their own survival and growth rather than that of the institution, as was their initial objective. Most bureaucracies fail because they have a conscience or a soul. I believe that bureaucracies are the biggest stumbling block on the road to the educational future.

Paraphrase 2 - acceptable / unacceptable

Reason: The main ideas were written.

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. Bureaucracies have to work long and hard to keep from promoting their own survival rather than the educational goals that were their primary objective.

Paraphrase 3 - acceptable / unacceptable

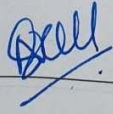
Reason: Not educational institutions have no soul, no memory and no conscience but bureaucratizations.

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. This means that, as Edward T. Hall says in his book, *Beyond Culture*, today's educational institutions "have no soul, no memory, and no conscience".

Paraphrase 4 - acceptable / unacceptable

Reason: The main ideas were ~~wrote~~ and the structure is different from the original and word were changed.

In his book, *Beyond Culture*, Edward T. Hall discusses the problems posed by the increasing bureaucratization of American educational institutions. Hall maintains that overbureaucratization is one of the key factors governing the state of education in America today. He points to the tendency of bureaucracies to promote their own growth and survival first and foremost, and observes that few overcome that tendency. He believes that this is responsible for the fact that many public schools bear a closer resemblance to factories than to educational institutions. In Hall's words, "Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience."

Lecturer's signature: 

Date: 17.07.19

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Time allocated: 1 hour. Please return your paper to the lecturer upon completion. It will be returned to you at the next session. You will need to include a scanned copy of this exercise in the form of an appendix together with you Task 1 (part of the Assignment for this module).

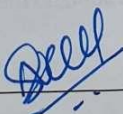
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Ex.1

Write a paraphrase of the following passage

Mike Erwin never envisioned himself as a social entrepreneur or activist. While he was no stranger to leadership positions, his primary experience had been in large, structured organisations. He thrived in the highly regimented program offered by the school. Later, Erwin excelled in his assignments in the Army, winning multiple awards and medals. However, the founding and growth of Team RWB had none of the characteristics of his previous endeavours. Erwin's enthusiasm and the organisation's mission caught on rapidly and Team RWB attracted media attention disproportionate to its size. Very quickly, the organisation grew beyond anything that Erwin had anticipated. Without any intention to do so, Erwin accidentally became an entrepreneur.

Some interesting
Mike Erwin did not thought that he will rich the position of entrepreneur or activist even if he had high positions in complex companies where he achieved knowledges. The factors that helped him to progress were awards and medals received for his activities in the Army and important programs in which he was involved. He is the founder of Team RWB and thanks to his organisation skills and impatience to create this became very quickly one of the most mediated companies.

Lecturer's signature: 

Date: 17.07.19