

ETON TIMMY LARRY

Student's ID: 1818179

ACADEMIC AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

(ACE) TERM 1 BMSW4001

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LECTURER: ANITA NAN

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to analyse my own academic and employability skills.

The writing focuses on the following employability skills: Team working, paraphrasing, summarising communication, note taking. It further indicates the importance of each skills mentioned, my personal intake, and desire to improve on the skills for my personal and professional career development.

2. SKILLS

2.1 TEAM WORKING SKILLS

Team working skills is when workers in a workplace combine their individual skills for a particular goal. (T – together, E – everyone, A – achieve, M – more)

Why is it important to have this skills? It is important to have a team working skill because one person the effort will not bring as much result as when there is collective and shared knowledge, team working skills makes work effective and efficient (Katzenbach and Smith, 1993)). For instance, in the health care sector, a staff would not be able to effectively direct the general wellbeing of a client for example the personal care, administer medication and administrative works all at the same time, hence the need for teamwork. According to Katzenbach and Smith (1993), a team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they are mutually accountable.

To succeed in a career, employees/ student need to work well as a team. Team work helps to solve problems: the team exchange ideas by brainstorming thereby coming up with creative ways of solving difficult problem (Doyle, 2019)

Importance of teamwork

- ❖ Working as a team helps to meet deadlines. When work is divided among members of the team, it is done faster and efficiently.
- ❖ The workplace needs new ideas to succeed in the competitive world. When they have different people who can contribute individual ideas, the workplace excels.
- ❖ Teamwork builds morale. Confidence and trust is built within the team.
- ❖ Teammate complement each other. There is a sense of oneness developed as the team work together to achieve a goal. They understand each other, support and encourage themselves.

I have a team working skill. I contribute my own ideas. When a task is given to me in my team, I perform this task efficiently and on time. I support my teammates when the need arises, for instance, when a member of my team is running out of time on his or her task and facing a particular challenge I render a helping hand to get the desired result. I encourage my colleagues by listening to any issue raised and given feedback on my observation.

2.2 PARAPHRASING

Paraphrasing is writing what you have read in your own words. That is, changing the words and structure of the sentence (Dalal, 2016).

Steps to paraphrasing (Course Moodle, 2019).

- ❖ Read: You need to read through carefully.
- ❖ Think: Think of what of the main idea is.
- ❖ Understand: Try to understand it well to enable you explain to somebody else. Go away: Leave the text for some time.
- ❖ Return: Without looking at the text, return to your own writing.
- ❖ Write: Put down the idea of how you understand the text.
- ❖ Check: Your words and structure of sentences should be checked that is not different from the original text.
- ❖ Cite: The original source should be cited both within the text and after paraphrasing. At the end of the paper, the full information for the source should be cited.

The in-class exercise given helped me to realize the importance of paraphrasing and need to develop the skill. I need to develop and improve on this skills because it is very necessary for my academic writing.

2.3 SUMMARISING

Summarising is an important skill for communication. It is taking the point from the details. Dalal (2016) states that in summarising, the key points are considered in a conversation, document or presentation, so that all those involved (listeners) understand the message.

- ❖ To summarise effectively, a student should consider the following:
 - ❖ Identify message the speaker or author is trying to convey
 - ❖ Pick out the main points
 - ❖ Detect the desired outcome the speaker or author
 - ❖ Bring the points together
- ❖ Avoid adding new ideas from the original context, if necessary, indicate that you have added your personal and new ideas to the communication,
- ❖ Do not let your summary to be longer than the original communication.

The in-class exercise has helped me to understand the significance of summarising.

I need to develop summarising skill so that it will help me save time while contributing my ideas and make good impact at my workplace.

2.4 COMMUNICATION

Communication is the process of sending information from one place, person or group to another. It is sending of ideas, thoughts, views, beliefs, attitudes and emotion from one sender to another (skillsyouknow, 2019)

A communication can be said to have three parts: the sender, the message and the recipient. The sender 'encodes' the message which could be sent through speech or writing and the receiver 'decodes' it (skillsyouknow, 2019)

According to management study guide (2019), below are considered various forms of communication.

1. Verbal communication: this is by face to face, telephone, radio, television and other form of media.
2. Non-verbal communication: this include body language, sign language, our dressing, the way we stand and our language. The way your voice sounds can give an idea about the mood of the person while your hand or body movement can relate a spoken message.
3. Written communication: This could be through emails, letters, magazine, books, social media, the internet and any other form of media. It could also be in form of memos which employers use to send message.
4. Visuals: This could be through graphs, charts, animation, colors and other forms of visualizations. This could be mostly used in healthcare sector especially in nursing homes. The colors and animation is widely used.

Morgan (2019) stated that for communication to be effective, there must be feedback. Feedback is the response someone gets after sending out a message. Feedback could be non-verbal or oral inclined. Non-verbal could be your smiles, sighing, nodding of head and others while oral could be when you respond by asking question or commenting. Feedback could also be in written like replying to an email, letter and other forms

Principles of giving feedback (Morgan, 2019)

1. Be specific. For instance, when reviewing one's performance, give specific examples on performance.
2. Keep it objective. Offer positive criticism without personal emotions to avoid defensive response
3. Ensure that the feedback is good oriented. Don't express your anger or annoyance but let your feedback conversation help someone improve their performance. This is likely to help the person's performance than giving rise to resentment and other problems.

4. Time the delivery of feedback well: After undesirable behavior has occurred has occurred, give feedback immediately
5. Ensure the feedback is understood: To ensure the message is understood the recipient of the feedback can be asked to put the feedback in their own words or reflective question asked.
6. Give feedback on controllable behavior: finding about issues that affect individual's behavior is of value because it is likely the person could change their behavior.
7. Tailor the message: it is important to bear in mind someone's emotional state when we are giving feedback because any negative feedback given when someone is annoyed will reduce the quality of their relationship with you.

I have this skill because I build healthy relationships with my co-workers and students. I am able to understand them by listening and giving feedback.

2.5 NOTE TAKING SKILL

Note taking is simply recording important information so that you can recall it later. (skillsyouknow.com 2019).

It is not possible to remember all that is said during lectures or in a meeting hence the importance of note taking.

This involves you listening attentively to what the speaker is saying to enable you write the key points which will be useful later.

EFFECTIVE NOTE TAKING TECHNIQUES According to Osborne (2019), there are three effective note taking techniques.

1. **Outlining column:** To capture the relationship between ideas, data Roman numerals and bullet points is an effective way. Outlining is the best way if you're taking note from a book but for lectures, it may be more difficult.
2. **Mind mapping:** This might be better for lectures. Write your main topics of that day's lecture in the centre of your blank sheet of paper. Make a branch out and put "sub topics" in a new bubble as it comes in the lecture. After the lecture, you will be able to re-organise your mind map.
3. **The Cornell system:** To make the note more useful, this effective method was created. Draw a line across the width of your paper about a quarter of the way up from the bottom of the page. Then you will have three section on your paper. Take note normally on the largest section of your page. After the lecture, the section on the right will be used which you would like to write question based on the material that was given.

Then try answering the questions and then write a short summary of what you just learned at the bottom section.

IMPORTANCE OF NOTE TAKING SKILLS

According to Kokemuller .N (2079) the most important aspect in note taking skills is effective listening, clear hand writing, original outline and recording of key points.

This promotes academic success.

1. **Active learning:** it is a hands-on learning process in that note taking helps student achieve better learning and academic results. When a student is actually engaging in learning by listening and taking note of what was said, it helps knowledge growth and retention.
2. **Record keeping:** note taking helps gives a history of things learnt. A student can preserve what was learnt by note taking apart from the academic benefits. To make records useful, organise and thorough note taking is necessary.
3. **Studying:** Note taking serves as one of the best study aids for test. It allows you view the key points. It helps you realise where to focus most if notes are marked as "important".

4. Working: Note taking will help in remembering meetings, conference and event related to work since its purpose is to record and remember. This will enable the employee have a better understanding of work and be able to recall information.

I need to improve my skill in note taking because it will help me understand my lectures easily and make me more efficient in my workplace.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above report, my academic and employability skill mentioned are very important to have and develop.

They are some of the key factors a student or employee needs to have to build a close relationship and work efficiently in any workplace and thereby yielding great results. It also helps gives understanding to achieve an excellent academic performance.

Communication is seen as the force that binds all the others skill together because without it teamwork paraphrasing summarizing and note taking cannot be effective.

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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).

Student Name: ETON T. LARRY Student ID: 1818179

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.

Mike Erwin never thought of himself being a social entrepreneur or activist. His main job had been in big organised organisations. So he wasn't new to leadership positions. He succeeded in the most difficult programs offered by the school. As time went on, Erwin made it in his job in the Army, winning many different awards and medals. However, the beginning and rise of Team RWB didn't have same structure of his former achievements. Erwin's zeal and the organization's goals made the Team RWB get media's attraction more than expected. This in no short time, the organisation expanded more than Erwin thought. Without any plan, Erwin suddenly became a business man.

Good paraphrasing skills. Avoid using contractions!

Lecturer's signature: 

Date: 17/07/2019

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: The word structure is used correctly

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 word structure is right

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: _____

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 way it's reference is right

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."

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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

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