

Reflection of Changemakers: Building your Personal Brand for Sustainable Employment

By

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Description

As part of my Education Studies Degree, I was tasked with completing learning through online lessons as well as lectures on the topic of Employability. My learning for this module took place online with some parts requiring independent learning and others including my lecturer and my peers. I participated well in lectures around areas such as skills, networking, and reflective practice. However, I did not participate very well in the independent learning aspect of this course for several reasons. At the start of this course, I had high hopes to learn how to be employable in my chosen field and to learn more about what makes an educational practitioner successful in gaining meaningful employment. The independent learning was vague and not tailored directly to my chosen field or career path. While the lectures I attended did lend themselves more to education I wanted to gain a stronger understanding of some of the processes and requirement for gaining educational employment as well as advice on how to stand out in that specific field.

Feelings

Before the start of this course, I felt a mixture of emotions. I felt excited that I may gain a further understanding of employment and employability in my chosen field, but I also felt sceptical as I was unsure how a course that is delivered to all university students would benefit me and my studies in education. After making a start on the content of the course I became disappointed and frustrated as despite seeing the benefits of what I was learning I did not feel it appropriate for my development and my wish to gain a better understanding of education. This disappointed mindset unfortunately led me into negative thinking through-out the rest of the course. I felt as though this was a tick box exercise. I felt that I was wasting my time as I believe I already knew a lot of what I was learning. I would have preferred to have spent the time learning about something that links directly to my chosen area of study. Although it was difficult to tell as I did not interact with my peers in person, I do feel that some of them may have had similar thoughts and feelings towards the topic. Due to my feelings, I became quite disengaged with the learning and began to fall behind, this in turn led to me feeling anxious about how I would complete my marked assignments for the topic. Following some personal issues that also took place in this timeframe I experienced a general feeling of anxiety, stress, and avoidance which impacted my motivation towards completing this course, learning, and assignments to a high standard. Now I reflect on my feelings I can accept that I could have made actions to

rectify my negative feelings and benefitted more from the learning available to me.

Evaluation

The independent learning did not go well for me. I found it increasingly difficult to engage with it and early on I gave up. This led to me not gaining a wide understanding of the topic.

Despite this, there were positive elements to this course, all of which I experienced during the online lectures. The first of these being a “speed networking” activity which allowed me to interact with a range of my peers, some of who I have not spoken with before. The activity required us to discuss our own skills. The benefit of this for me was great. I found that having to discuss my skills and abilities with a stranger was representative of an interview to some extent. This activity broadened my communication skills as well as my confidence as I sometimes find it hard to talk about myself in a positive light. This activity allowed me to practice this which is something I will need to do when I begin to apply for further roles in education.

Another element of the learning that went well was a talk I received during a lecture from a local education agency. I found this very beneficial as I learnt more about different pathways into working in education. I also learnt that it is a pathway I could begin alongside my studies by being given information about the application process as well as the way employment works through the agency.

I contributed to my own learning and the learning of others by participating in discussions during lectures. This is something I always strive to do as it boosts my own understanding and can be helpful to others. While I did this during this course, I did not do so with the positivity and enthusiasm that I would if it was different topic.

Analysis

The things that went well were the things that I found a personal gain, benefit, and development from. Due to this, I had a positive mindset towards them and allowed myself to engage well therefore opening myself to learn from them.

The main reason that most of this course did not go well is the mindset and attitude I had towards it which led to a negative attitude meaning I did not engage and learn.

I can understand now that I allowed myself to enter a fixed mindset regarding this course and learning which led to me becoming less and less engaged.

I am aware that I allowed myself to be at a disadvantage through-out rather than find a way to alter my attitude and mindset through applying a growth mindset. Personal issues alongside a course that I did not enjoy allowed me to become withdrawn from my learning, if I had made active efforts to improve my mindset, I may have found more enjoyment in the course content which would have taught me something new that I may have found interesting therefore reinstating my motivation.

Conclusion

While I do not feel I learnt much from the content of this course, I have learnt about more about myself, my skills and my abilities which given the course content you could argue does link to the objectives. I learnt that given a situation which I do not have an interest in I can become withdrawn and unmotivated. Thankfully, this period of learning did not include any meaningful tasks where I was required to work with others which means I have only let myself down by not fully engaging. I need to improve my own skills by being more persistent to work through any negative thoughts and feelings I may have.

Action Plan

If in the future I was to find myself in a similar situation there are a few things I could do differently. Firstly, I would acknowledge my negativity early on in the process not only by recognising it myself but also by discussing it with my lecturer and peers. This could lead to me being able to change my perspective on the task which would reengage me with the learning. Secondly, I could address issues of poor engagement by ensuring I manage my time better by making a plan of when I will complete what and either writing it down or telling someone in order to hold myself accountable. Lastly, could investigate the topic in more detail by completing wider reading that connects the topic to an area of study I am interested in to help me understand the importance of the topic and how it links to me directly.

