

Reflective portfolio

Portfolio of work



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Contents

Introduction	2
You are always on	3
What skills I have transferred and what new skills I need to develop to be a good Manager?	5
Related concepts	7
Conclusion	9
Sources	10

Introduction

Let me start this report with my favourite 5 Es:

Exploring

Engaging

Experiencing

Embarking

Elevating ... into new opportunities.

This comes immediately into my mind when I am thinking about Personal Development Plan (PDP) and Career development. These five words and the sentence which I have read recently in a completely different occasion: " Nothing is permanent except change".

As the purpose of this report is to reflect on my personal career development and the PDP, I will start with the verb " explore". According to Oxford dictionary the verb explore means " to search and discover (about something)" and " to think or talk about something to find out more about it". So, in terms of your career development the best thing to start with is just to explore, to search, to know more about it. Of course, you are going to ask me: How? And where? And why? My simple answer will be just referring to the next words above.

How can you explore? - by engaging yourself in different activities, or initiatives, or conversations, or networks, or events, or education, or job interviews, or careers the list goes on.

Why should I explore? – because you are going to have your unique experience in discovering who exactly you are, you will be able to embark to your chosen life and career path and finally- if you are lucky enough - you will have this unique opportunity to reach a new level of your job, or to start a new job or to change your career completely, but finding a missing part of your own or to be able to connect all the parts of your experiences together. And this is not permanent, because nothing is permanent, except change.

You are always on

Let's start with my first graduation ceremony- so here I am. A young person, who worked very hard during the last couple of years and now I am ready to start my new life. It is true that we are always on our career development cycle, this is your life so naturally you want to go ahead and explore new opportunities. The exploration of those opportunities could be as simple as we are being exposed to something in your undergraduate career or exposed to something as a mid-level manager and we want to know more about it, so we are going to do our research and try to figure out some individuals who we would like to speak with, or maybe will try to search and find some associations to talk to. But sometimes this exploration phase tends to come out in a crossroads or there is something which provokes us to try to find out more information and this time out could be a very skerry time. So, in my life I came to this point not at the beginning, but in the middle of my career development. I was looking to swich careers, so this was a time to reconsider opportunities, to redefine the meaning of success for me, to know more about myself, to understand my personal performance.

I was lucky enough to start together a new career and new level of qualification in the health sector. Working on my SWAT analysis (Neugebauer, Evans-Brain, 2016) and comparing my strengths and weaknesses together with my opportunities and threats, I decided to change my career path to invest in future education, and to look for a promotion in midterm and long term perspective.

Here is how my analysis looked like:

S Degree in Education Passion for helping clients Current Education in Health care	W Finds challenging to compete for clients Limited care experience Nonflexible in terms of shifts
O Fixed days or bank staff offer possible Possible optimizations and future offers Attend specialized courses Room for career development	T Competition among other personal in the hospital Others may be more confident with care component

Working on my Personal Development Plan (PDP) my main idea was to change the sector and to transfer my related skills and practical experience, (Lyons, Buckley, 2009). This idea to more detailed plan about my opportunities in the future. The table below shows what my main and specific goals are, how I am going to achieve this and what is the overall timeframe for the plan to be realised.

Long term goals	Specific career goals	Key skills needed	Actions to be taken	Deadline
Promotion to a Manager position NHS	Become team leader	Leadership and communication skills	CertHE in HSC course Y1 (Level 4) NHS leadership course	12 months
	Become a deputy manager	Leadership skills, Project management skills, Presentation skills	Bachelor in HSC course Y2 (Level 5, 6) Volunteer to lead department meetings to build/ upgrade and update skills Ask the deputy manager what the highest level of responsibilities is I can take	24 months
	Become a manager	Management skills, Networking	Master in HSC course Y3 (Level 7)	24 months

		skills, Strategic thinking skills	Volunteer to go with Deputy Manager on network sessions	
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What skills I have transferred and what new skills I need to develop to be a good Manager?

The analysis the literature shows what skills are necessary to be a good manager working in various sectors- public, private, third sector- and in different types of organizations. This group of managers deals with different tasks and are on a different level of the organizational hierarchies. This diversity in manager's roles is making hard to generalise the management and especially what managers do. In addition to this I am agree that the good manager should be the connector (the intermediary) between their own employers and those who they manage – employees. (Alvesson, Willmott, Alvesson, Willmott , 1996). Complicated, isn't it?

Having in mind these statements, and the things which my friends like in me I decided to promote myself in my future job and in the new field in general with two main characteristics:

- My ability on time management and prioritizing and
- My attention to details

In addition, after the analyses done it is necessary for me to work hard in the future to develop my:

- Communication and Interpersonal Relationship Skills and
- Decision Making Skills

Regarding the Time management skills- this are skills related to our approach on dealing with the daily tasks to be more productive. At the same time if we are thinking about the type of this skills, they are highly transferable and applicable to any job. Time management skills include also good planning skills, meaning we must identify and plan our daily tasks, prepare presentations or tasks requested for future meetings, as well as creating the plan and meeting deadlines. It is not just about the amount of time we normally we have, but the

management that is made of it. (Sainz, Ferrero, Ugidos, 2019) . If we are thinking specifically about the time management strategies in clinical practice (or nursing practice) two strategies needs to be considered: routinization and prioritizing in the light of “accepting the influence of others”(Salima, 2021). Ignoring this may lead to failure to address the organization of the work or may lead to problems with coordination of care involving other carers. So, in my case these specific aspects of the time management were extremely important and requires future application in a health care setting.

Regarding the Decision-making skills, for me it was a question to discover ‘What works’ which is closely connected with my knowledge-based practise and the future challenge to add to this experience the lived experience of the people who are using the service. If I need to explain deeply this is a question about how I am going to apply in practice the UK evidence-based policy in health care (NHS White paper, 1997) and to answer to the question if it is just enough to follow the relatively simple rules, or there is a need to approach also the quality and synthesising findings. (Glasby and Beresford, 2006)

Until now I explained two selected skills that I was planning to transfer to my new career and now, let’s talk about two more, which I needed to develop for the future.

Regarding the Communication skills Trevithick (2012) discusses the relationship between the effectiveness and level of communication skills in health care – from basic, to intermediate, to advanced. It is also important to be discussed here that due to the nature of the people- care work, it is not possible to plan your progress through different stages.

Finally, I needed to develop a completely new set of decision-making skills, just because the area in which I am going to use it requires you to be equipped with clinical decision-making skills. It often includes you to ‘think on your feet’ and ‘without a comfortable blanket’, which is a quite stressful experience. This will be an ongoing process for the future years of study, as it will require knowledge on how clinical decision-making is integrated throughout the HSC curriculum, and how I will be able to develop new skills.

Related concepts

In the next chapter I will try to summarize the skills required in order to be an affective manager in HSC, the main concepts in career development as a process of learning about myself, how I was exploring different options, how I made my choice and why I took actions.

First, let me start with my new *developmental goal*. by 2026 to complete HSC master course and enhance my skills as an effective leader according to the feedback from my supervisor and the accomplishment of my performance plan goals.

I used the SMART analyse in order to set it. The common goal is to improve my degrees and to develop myself to a higher professional levels in new career. I need to switch my career by transferring my skills from educational to health and care services, and to developing completely new specific skills required for this new professional field.

As you can see here I have to deal with two different types of tasks- academic tasks and professional tasks. All of this tasks are learning tasks, and at this point I needed to discover how I learn, what type of learner am I?

According to Honey and Mumford's (1986) *learning stiles* approach I am pragmatists: I am learning by gaining new information and applying this information in real life situations. I like to give presentations and speak in fort of people so this will be a good starting point as I am aiming to develop my leadership skills. Some risks for me could be not enough listening to others in particular when there is a need to implement practicalities.

In addition to this from my practical experience, I liked very much the *action learning* (Marquardt and Banks (2010)) - real work and peer experience which I had an opportunity to experience in my workplace. It helped me a lot to develop new skills by discussing and dealing with real tasks in real work situations, with the support of my colleagues. I was doing a job shadowing for about 2-3 weeks, and had an opportunity to deal perfectly with my daily job afterwards. So it is working perfectly for me.

Regarding the legal framework of the relationship between the employer and the employee there is also a need for the manager to have basic knowledge on the employment

law, its general purpose and practical aspects. The employment law comes into play as soon as the recruitment process is started, goes through the contract signing process, (Employment Rights Act 1996) to data protection (Data protection Act 2018), working time and holiday regulations, health and safety (HSWA 1974), antidiscrimination policies and the dismissal procedures. In my experience, this specific knowledge helped a lot on avoiding any confusions and misunderstandings before and after signing the employment contract. In addition to this it is very applicable during the management of the holiday time and payments related to it. Let's mention here the health and safety aspects as well, not only playing preventive role, but very useful in case of work accidents.

Conclusion

For the near future I am aiming at develop my career in the HSC sector and to be more active in dealing with different professional situations. This should be done in line with my role within the working team and my level of experience. This includes dealing with service users, passing different type of information to the relevant staff and working on my leadership skills and professional qualification. Moreover, I will address the current needs and decide how to approach service users and staff in the future by ensuring I use appropriate methods of communication. I will undertake some relevant independent research as well mainly focused on service user's specific needs; this information I can use in my practice.

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