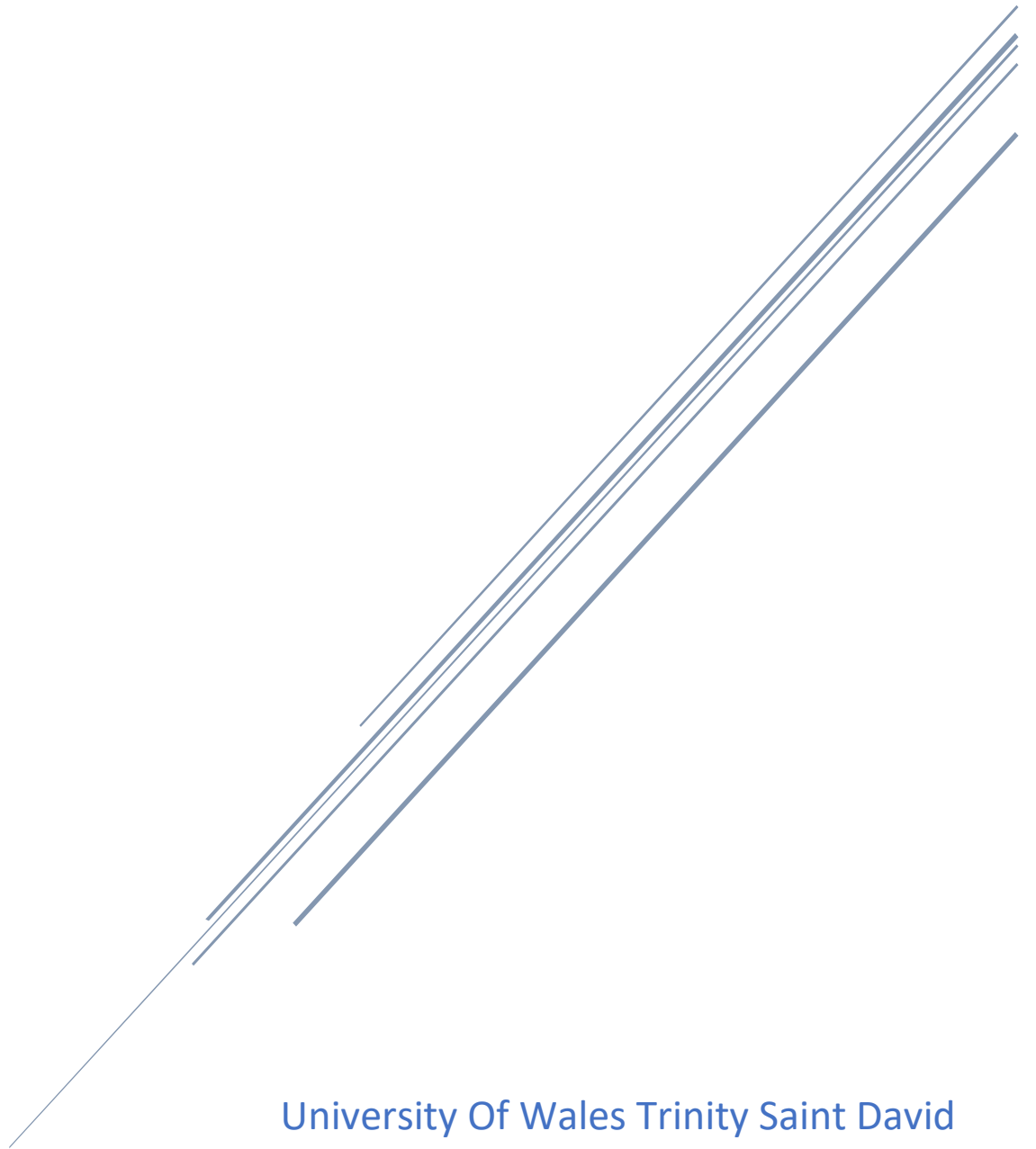


Personal Development Plan

by

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University Of Wales Trinity Saint David
BCs Cloud Computing – Level 4

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INTRODUCTION

Personal overview

My name is Gherasim Iuliana Maria, I am 26 years old. Born and raised in Romania until I was 22 years old, when I decided to take matters into my own hands and move abroad for better opportunities. Due to a continuous improvement of the field, to create a personal development plan regarding my professional accomplishments it is quite difficult and challenging but it sustains my self-awareness.

My path was very different, until I decided to move to Great Britain. It was an option which I will never regret since it brought me only success from a professional point of view. As mentioned earlier, I was born and raised in Romania, in a kind environment, where I had a chance to develop my personality and aptitudes, but unfortunately not my career.

I successfully accomplished philology profile in High School, which is a completely different field, but either way, as known, our experiences help us to become the persons we are today, and I am very grateful for that. I want to believe that from school I acknowledged the skills required for my future goals, such as perseverance and the pleasure of learning. I do believe that we need to constantly nurture our knowledge and prove the best we can in any situation.

My short-term goal is to be postgraduate of 'University of Wales Trinity Saint David' with Bachelor of Science Cloud Computing Degree. If somebody would have asked me few years ago, if I would have seen myself working in IT field, my answer would have been 'no'. However, only because I was not sure of what path should I follow in life and what I am capable of. I realize that achieving this goal will be tough, but I believe that with patience and devotement everything is possible.

Previously, I worked in an oil factory, that also was not related to my actual perspective. My responsibilities were multiple, such as taking samples of sunflower or soya beans from trailers and find out if they are in the correct parameters to determine if should be accepted or not. My position is known as analyst and I was the only one who had the authority to decide if the factory is working properly or not. Fact that helped me gather more knowledge, improve my confidence, the ability of working under pressure and making decision. I consider this job and essential part of my shaping personality.

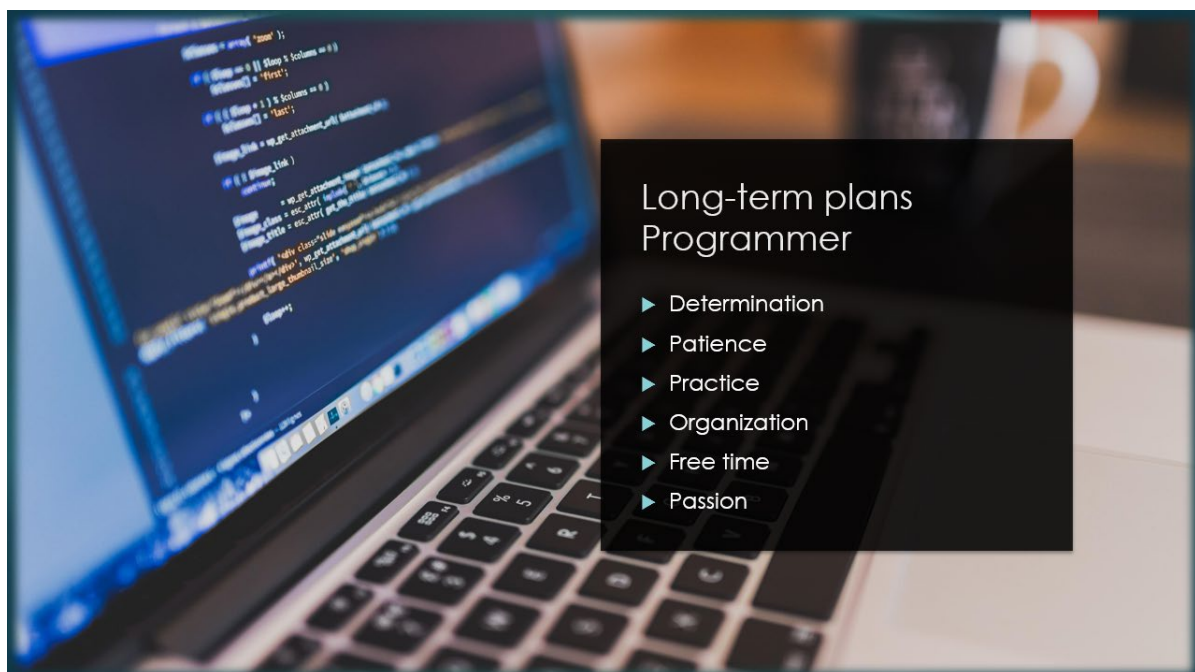
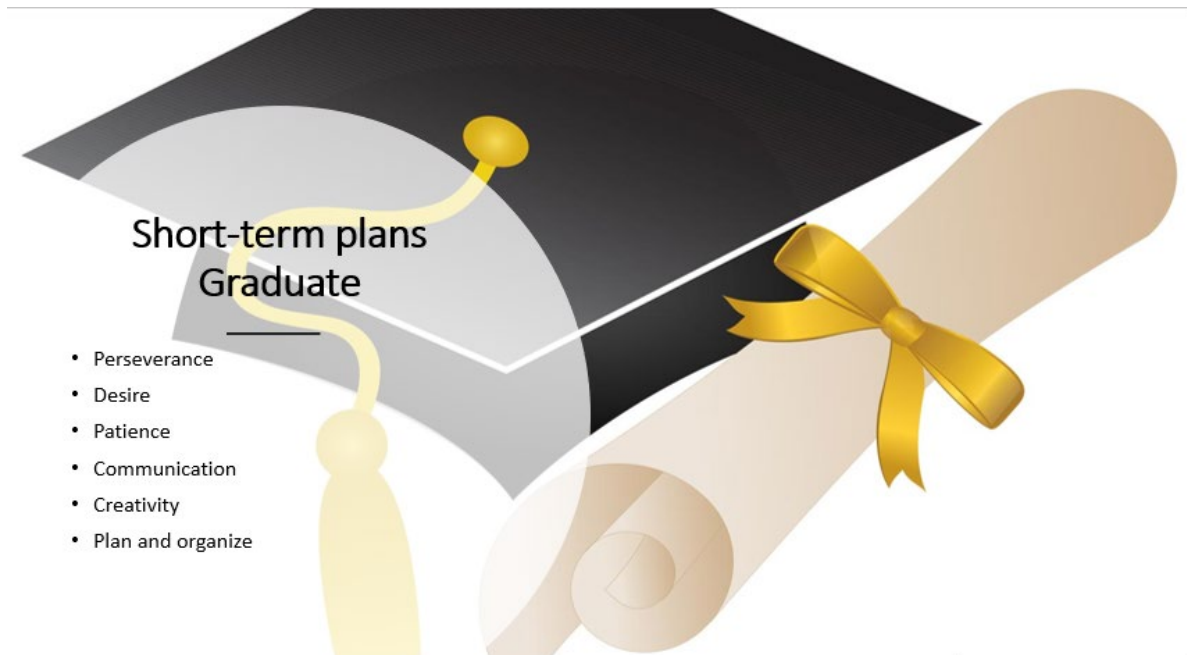
Nevertheless, ever since I moved in United Kingdom and I have been promoted as First Line Manager at Clipper Logistics Ltd and run two teams of 20 people each, I improved my leadership skills and my knowledge because, as it is stated, the leaders should answer all the time to question why (Adair, 2013). But the most important thing is that I had the opportunity to discover how many options and resources we have, to make our life easier. And this is how my journey started.

As an explanation of my previous words, I will give an example from my current job. As a company, we are using JDA System and for the employee it is essential to accumulate the basic aptitude of using it. Yet, as part of the management, being empowered to more access, I allowed myself to find out a lot more functions that stunned me. Honestly, I was amazed how

much time I can save as a result of the complexity of the system, compared to doing the task physically.

Today, I am eager to learn and unearth new challenges. My long-term goal is to become a programmer, able to build applications or systems which can support smaller companies in developing themselves. It brings me tremendous satisfaction if my task has a positive impact for other people and I am 100% sure that I will make it happen.





SKILLS EVALUATION

Mind Tool method for evaluation of own skills

Evaluate your own skills might be difficult, either if you are aware of your strength or not. The appropriate method approached this time was Mind Tool online skill tests. I completed more questionnaires which are connected and required from my point of view to the desired field. Those types of tests are beneficial for any human being for identifying the weaknesses

which requires improvements, but also identifying qualities that were not assumed and help by improving the confidence.

The relevant answers have been compiled into the following rows categorised by skills.

- **Self-Confidence** (Questions 2, 8)

"2. I doubt myself and my ability to succeed.

8. I am highly motivated because I know I have what it takes to be successful."

Your score is 8 out of 10

"Self-confidence is built by mastering significant skills and situations, and by knowing that you can add real value by the work you do. One of the best ways to improve your confidence is to become aware of all of the things you've already achieved ." (Tools, n.d.)

- **Leadership and Management** (Questions 5, 7, 12)

"5. Team development is an area I admit to cutting back on when time and resources are limited.

7. When I want to motivate people, I try to use the same approach with each person.

12. I'm aware of the differences between leadership and management."

Your score is 12 out of 15

"Whether you are in a formal leadership position or not, you need good leadership and management skills if you are going to make best use of the opportunities open to you. (After all, you can get much, much more done when you have the help of other people.) The good news is that you can learn how to lead and manage effectively!" (Tool, n.d.)

- **Problem Solving and Decision Making** (Questions 2, 10, 14)

"2. When I have to make a decision, I pick the first good solution I find.

10. When I encounter a problem, I immediately begin looking for potential solutions.

14. When I encounter a setback, I have difficulty focusing on the situation positively and objectively."

Your score is 8 out of 15

"Problem solving, and decision making are two areas where you will need to excel to be a success in your career. Like leadership and management, these two areas are closely related." (Tool, n.d.)

- **Communication Skills** (Questions 9, 11, 13)

"9. I'm able to communicate my needs, and I make sure that my message is heard and understood.

11. When there's conflict, I use my communication skills to find solutions and work things through.

13. When discussing an issue with someone, I try to stay one step ahead in the conversation, and I actively think about what I'm going to say next."

Your score is 14 out of 15

"The ability to communicate clearly is key to your success, whatever role you are in. Also, make sure that you know how to plan your communications effectively." (Tool, n.d.)

Survey

To be more accurate on my skills evaluation, I have created a survey to discover another point of view from my current colleagues. The questions have been built to allow me to create a bigger picture about weaknesses on different skills such as leadership (1,2,3), organizational skills (4,5,6), communication (7,8) and problem solving (9,10).

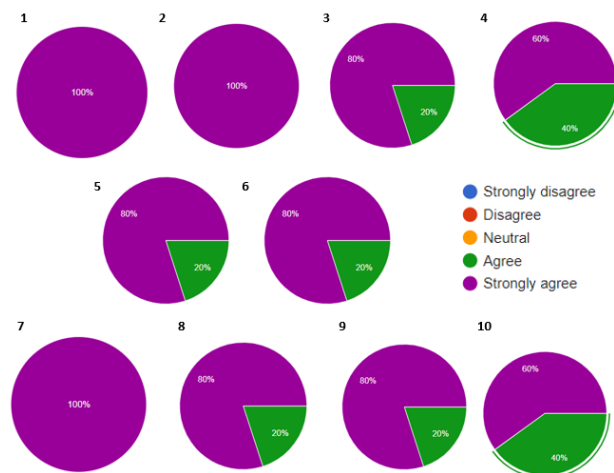
SELF EVALUATION

Questions

1. Am I able to delegate responsibilities efficiently?
2. Am I able to collaborate with others and accept new ideas?
3. Am I dealing correctly with conflict between team members?
4. Do I priorities my tasks and finish everything on time?
5. Can I equally organise the tasks for each member of the team?
6. Am I able to ovtake new tasks during daily activity?
7. Am I delivering clear information to all member of the team?
8. Am I able to communicate with everyone successfully, regardless their position?
9. Do I always find solutions to complete a work-related problem?
10. Am I able to support all members of the team?

- 5 people completed the survey -

Answers



(The picture and survey are created by author)

Based on both methods used previously, it became more easier for me to identify what need to be improved and to create an action plan that will sustain my objective and help me rise. The discrepancies between the two methods made me aware of how many opinions are out there and analyse what I need to improve in order of achieving my goal.

I chose to reflect more about what I consider as key skills required for the opted field, such as becoming a programmer.

- **Communication** - both verbal and written, is the most appropriate skill which a person should be good at, since it relates us on all levels and predicts job success. (MTD, 2012) Luckily, I am confident that my ability to communicate with people is one of my finest points.
- **Leadership and management skills** – this two, into the Cloud Computing field, along with the flexibility as personal attribute, can have a significant impact if we stay focused and know our goal. Due to the experience gained up to this moment, I do believe that I am on the right path, but I am also aware that I need improvements.

- **Organisational skills** – the route of organising our time is crucial and I consider this skill as the crucial way to distinct or sort people, professionally speaking. However, depends on everyone how is accustom.
- **Problem solving** – as above observed, this category is my low point and regardless of my efforts, I am still struggling about finding the correct path to improve my abilities.

GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Long-term and short-term plan

While the plan has been set up and the aspiration is achievable, nothing shall stop anyone. Believing in your power, is the greatest gift that someone can have, because everything else will gather at the right time if are pursued. As it is said “The road to success is always under construction” (VanBellinghen, 2017)

Short-term goals	Long-term goals
Graduate University – BCs Cloud Computing	Become a Programmer
• Listen to the teachers • Learn from external resources • Practice a lot in own time • Be focused • Improve my skills • Improve language • Ask questions	• Be patience • Improve confidence • Try to gain experience from University • Practice the essential modules • Overtake all opportunities • Build applications and try to improve them

- **Short-term goal** – the bullet points listed above are my aces. Listening to my teachers might bring me the understanding and knowledge to see the path to my dream and try to become possible. However, it is impossible to happen if I am not working hard every day.
- **Long-term goal** – the greatest dream, become a programmer. I am confident that the journey will be beautiful and nothing from the road will be able to scare me. The biggest motivation is the thought of the outcome, the idea of what I will be able to create with my own hands. Building an application, it is a goal quite far away for the moment, being in the first term of my journey, but not impossible. Patience and focus are my best companions.

SWOT Analysis

Being aware of your strengths and weaknesses can boost you on top and make you a fierce competitor. Since you know what your attributes are, automatically know your opportunities and threats. These criteria are valid for any domain, without exception. SWOT analysis it is a significant technique, with growth purpose.

In life, with time, it is beneficial to develop professionally and self-awareness is essential.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Good communicator Experienced leader Well organised Attention to details Fast learner	Impatient Lack of confidence Self-criticism Lose interest fast
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Able to make quick decisions Management opportunities Good understanding of IT tools Work experience	Problem solving need improvement Fear of rejection Impulsive

Personal development plan presentation analysis

The personal development plan it is a lifelong process of improving your technical and personal skill, a process of proving your effectiveness to ensure the ongoing employability. Apart from the fact that in this world are billions of competitors, the knowledge which we gain as individual cannot be compared or stolen.

Along with the above two methods of self-evaluation and SWOT analysis, I have the confidence that I managed to identify my disadvantages and advantages and created an accurate presentation of my next actions, such as improving my problem solving skills or practice more for my goal.

However, creating a presentation about self it is crucial to achieve your target. If the thoughts are well organised, the path is easier and enjoyable. The PDP creates a link between past, present and the future for the individual, but it is useful to be concretised for a small team as well. (Patel, 2013)

To create the presentation, I used the example provided by the teacher and followed the steps required.

	Short-Term Time Frame	Mid-Term Time Frame	Long-Term Time Frame
	What do I want to accomplish in the next three to six months?	What do I want to accomplish in the next six months to two years?	What do I want to accomplish in the next two to three years?
Section 1 - My Goals What are my overall goals that I want to accomplish in this time period?	The desire is to accumulate as much knowledge as possible and to find a way to improve the technical skills required.	Becoming confident in using any programming language and platform without any help. Also, improve my personal skills.	Graduate the University and find the perfect job as a programmer, where I can enjoy going and always learn new things.
Section 2 - Skills and Knowledge to be Learned What specifically do I need to learn? What project do I need to work on?	I must focus on all lectures to create a bigger and clearer picture, but on my own free time I am practicing more Packet Tracer activities or familiarise with Visio or StarUML.	Java Python C++ JavaScript	It is compulsory to pass the exams from every module which I will study on Cloud Computing course, to obtain the diploma.
Section 3 - Next Steps How am I going to acquire the skills and knowledge? How am I going to do this project?	Study hard from all resources- Online/courses/books, etc.	Perseverance and practice, along with the desire of knowing more, are the key point to success.	Become a Postgraduate and catch all the opportunities that shall come, with patience. Get out of my comfort zone.
Section 4 - Resources What resources do I need?	Free time, desire, days off from work, books, programs.	Free time, better laptop, money to invest, more patience and big dreams.	Money, courage
Section 5 - Time Schedule What is my time schedule?	If I am not at work, I will study most of the time.	Practice is what will make the difference. Every day!	All day looking for a better future.
When will I start?	Already started.	Already started.	After the first or second year of Cloud Computing, when I will be confident of my knowledge.
When do I expect to finish?	3 to 6 months.	Start of second year	On the 3 rd year of my profile

(Template found on Moodle and adapted by the author) (Moodle, n.d.)

DATA PROTECTION

Nowadays, in our continuous changing era it is very tricky to believe that our data is safe. Anyhow, we should find all the resources to safeguard the important information such as personal details, reports, pictures and everything else that has the potential to harm our identity and our work. We must be aware even if today exists a lot of tools such as firewalls or network security tools, nothing can stop the hackers to attack your data. (Elisa Bertino, 2012)

Personally, to protect my computer and my data from different malwares, I am using a strong antivirus, which I believe it is the best investment to do. Do not use the first you see, without researching more about it and ensure it is 100% safe.

Also, I keep all my important data in more different types of storage. I have an iCloud Drive account where I save everything related to school, work or personal details and the password used it is very strong. The data stored on my laptop, some of it is encrypted and the other part I left it on the antivirus guard, which I believe it is safe. The third way of keeping my data safe, is by saving all my pictures, essays, projects, etc on an external hard drive.

TIME MANAGEMENT

The steps followed in order to allow myself more time to study, but also to complete all my targets are very simple. First, I had to priorities my tasks prior to significance and by doing that I created a list, physically with pen and paper, and wrote everything, by hours, including deadlines. Because I am a well organised individual, it is not difficult for me to arrange my time and to focus on the tasks. Secondly, I started to avoid any distractions such as interacting with other people by texts or in person, so I have created my own room for work and study which has proven very beneficial. My work now is more accurate, and I can accumulate faster more information.

CONCLUSION

To summarise, it is very brainstorming to create a report about yourself, plans and desires, but once it is completed the satisfaction it is tremendous. The self-awareness it is beneficial for each human being and being aware of the minuses and pluses it motivates yourself to do your best and to prove your worth.

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