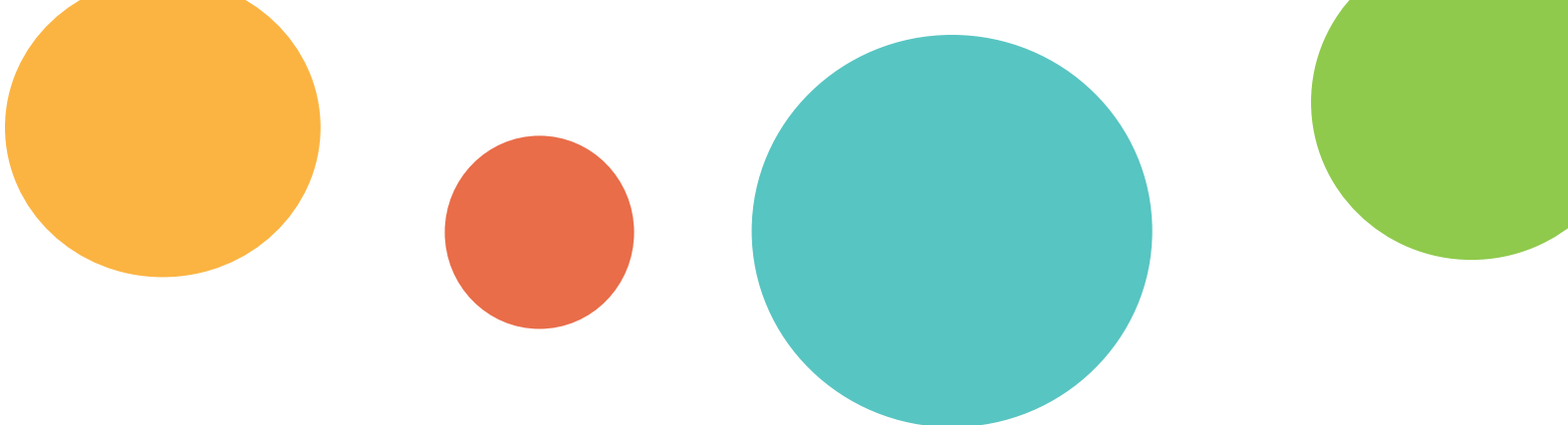




Report:

Analysis of my own Employability and Academic skills.

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Executive Summary

This report aims to outline what employability and academic skills are, which ones I possess, and how they are relevant to my current employment. Using SWOT analysis, I will explain which areas I am proficient in, and the areas in workplace, and how they affect someone's performance and productivity at work.

1. My understanding of Employability skills

Employability skills, also known as soft skills or foundational skills, are the basis of what makes someone appealing to employ. They help to improve a person's work performance, by giving them the best platform from which to conduct their work. These skills can come naturally to some (such as communication and problem solving), and others are developed over time, and through experience, such as expertise, knowledge, and mindset. They help a worker to minimize errors, encourage good relationships and collaboration with colleagues, and overall improve performance. A list with extremely valued employability skills, follows:

1.2 Communication

Communication can come in three forms, verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal.

Verbal communication is the act of speaking directly to someone. This can either be face to face, or over the telephone-video call. Para-verbal communication refers to how we use pitch, tone, and pace of our voices. Non-Verbal communication is any form which does not involve speaking. This can include web chat, SMS, email, etc. Effective communication is essential in every job and is possibly the most important employment skill. It is what allows us to express ourselves, and get our opinions understood. Without it, workers would be unable to speak to their customers, or their management, so any problems would go unsolved. There are five main elements to communication: The sender, the receiver, the message, the medium (platform), and feedback (response). Good communication helps a company to flow better and minimises mistakes and misunderstandings.

1.3 Teamwork

Teamwork is the ability to work with others on a shared project, or with a common goal. It is another of the most important skills you can have in the eyes of an employer. If you can work well in a team, then you can generally work well with all kinds of people, and this is vital for an employer, as they may require sudden group projects, and someone who can't get along with others would cause issues. In order to have good team work, an employee must be willing to not only work with others, but also take responsibility for any work they have completed as part of the group, and not afraid to contribute equally to any tasks being attempted.

1.4 Self-management

Self-Management is the ability to ensure tasks are carried out at a satisfactory level with minimal supervision. It is a highly sought-after skill, as it means that superiors can trust you to perform well without having to be checked on constantly and frees up time for others to complete separate tasks. It is also likely to lead to having less productivity issues, as staff are more able to overcome issues themselves, without a supervisor.

1.5 Positive attitude

Having a positive attitude is vital for most jobs in which someone works with others. Unlike teamwork, it does not directly impact your ability to work with other people on a joint goal but effects the overall feeling in a workplace. If someone has a negative attitude, it can rub on others, and lead to low morale, and therefore lower motivation. A positive attitude promotes an overall sense of positivity, and can help to pull up co-workers, and raise moral, which can in turn increase productivity.

1.6 Problem-solving

Problem solving is the ability to identify key issues, and what may happen if they are not fixed. It is also about having a good understanding of potential problems and being able to formulate effective solutions to them. If the problem is complicated, someone with good problem solving would be able to divide it in to small parts, that are much easier to comprehend, and manage. Problem solving is the kind of skill that can really set someone apart from other candidates, because it helps an employer to ensure high productivity, through lack of down time, and helps achieve goals more effectively.

1.7 Reliability

Reliability can be expressed through a range of means, including time keeping (making sure you are not late for work/meetings, and complete tasks punctually), responsiveness (replying to emails/SMS/phone calls promptly), and consistency of work level. It is equitable to trust. If you are more reliable, then your employer is more likely to trust you. This means that you will be given more important jobs/tasks and be put under less supervision. It can also be a good way to gain promotion, as it shows that you can be depended upon for important issues.

1.8 Technology

Having a good grasp of modern technologies is a vital skill in the modern world. Almost all companies now use technology, and many of those that do, rely on it to operate effectively. By having good technological skill, someone can help an employer stay ahead of competition by ensuring the latest technology is implemented correctly, to bring down costs, improve sales, and minimise errors.

2. My understanding of Academic Skills

Academic skills are what students use to help them learn, and take in new information, as well as retaining information. These skills include Note Taking, Paraphrasing, Summarising, and Referencing. These skills are important as they allow someone to learn more efficiently and can help to lower stress and anxiety in a learning environment. This is very helpful not only for students, but also for those in work, as it helps to maintain moral, and mental health.

2.1 Note Taking

Note taking may sound self-explanatory, however it is not just simply writing notes. It is the ability to write quickly, and concisely, as to not miss any information. Instead of writing what is being said/shown word for word, someone with good note taking skills can pick out the most useful information, and keep their notes short, to avoid getting left behind.

2.2 Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is the act of taking information from a source and changing it to be presented in your own words. Unlike copying, it requires some thought as to avoid plagiarism. It also shows that you have a good understanding of the point being made, for in order to alter it, you first must understand what it is saying.

2.3 Summarising

Summarising is similar to paraphrasing, in that it is taking information and changing the format or wording, however when summarising, the objective is to take the information and condense it into less or more concise wording, so that it can be taken in more easily.

2.4 Referencing

Referencing simply means to acknowledge (reference) where you got your information from. It is an essential academic skill, as it is the best tool with which to prevent plagiarism.

3. Methodology

To write this report, I first conducted research into what Employability Skills are, and why they are important. This involved finding out what Employers find most desirable. I did this throughout the term, both in and out of class through note taking and external research. I have looked at recruitment websites to find advice on which skills are considered most important by employers, what they mean, and how they manifest in the workplace. I have also carried out a SWOT Analysis on myself, to see which skills I possess, and to what extent. In class, I completed a paraphrasing exercise (see Appendix), in which I attempted to correctly select a correct paraphrased sentence, and also create some paraphrased sentences of my own.

4. Results

Below I have developed a SWOT analysis of my personal employment skills. This is a great way to easily outline what areas you are good at, and which need improving. Spending time thinking about these areas can often help when it comes to self-improvement.

4.1 SWOT Analysis



Created by the Author

5. Discussion

5.1 Strengths

I feel as though there are several areas of employment in which I excel. I have also been proud of my reliability, as I am never late for work, and always complete tasks in a satisfactory and timely manner. As a follow on, and resulting from, my reliability, I am very good at self-managing. My supervisors rarely have to focus on me and know that I can be left to finish a task without regular checks. This is due, in turn, to my ability to problem solve. I can think of solutions to problems without the help of others, any issues that arise while undertaking a task, are quickly overcome. I also have a good grasp of almost all modern technologies, and as a result, it takes me very little time to learn any new systems which are implemented. I always look at the positives and keep upbeat while working. This allows me to help my co-workers motivated and helps keep moral high.

5.2 Weaknesses

By conducting my SWOT analysis, I was able to see that I have a few areas in which I could improve. In my job at Tesco, it is vitally important to have good communication. Being face to face with customers every day means that if I am not clear in what I say, or if I do not understand them correctly, mistakes can be made, and false information spread. While I feel my written communication skills are quite good, speaking is still a slight issue for me. I sometimes find it difficult to get my point across, and I feel as though this stems from my introverted and shy nature. This also impacts my teamworking, as I struggle to have myself heard while working with loud or confident people. The fact that I like to ensure all tasks I undertake are performed to the highest standard is also a factor when it comes to my difficulty working in a team. Often I find that people are satisfied by the bare minimum outcome, and this does not fit with my personality. As a result of not trusting others work ethic, I find it difficult to delegate. As I do not believe that they will complete tasks to the standard I demand from myself, I will often just attempt it myself, which leads to being overworked, as I attempt too many things.

5.3 Opportunities

I am currently studying a university course which is focused on Workplace/Employment Skills. This is allowing me to develop the skills I currently have further, and to gain or improve the skills I do not currently possess. I really feel this is helping me in my career, as recently I have found myself being given more responsibilities at work, such as closing and shift running. These are great opportunities for me to further myself as an employee, and help me to overcome any weaknesses I may have,

5.4 Threats

There are three areas that are standing in the way of my improvement. It is difficult for me to improve my confidence as I am a naturally shy and introverted person. This means I find it difficult to make myself heard, and get my point across, as I am quite quiet, and in a busy work environment, often I am not heard. This can lead to me becoming overworked as I struggle to ask for assistance if I need it, which is not helped by my lack of trust in others to complete tasks satisfactorily.

My main barrier for self-improvement, I feel, is my lack of qualifications. The main reason I am completing my degree in workplace skills is to improve myself as an employee, so I can be a more effective worker, however there is a secondary reason, that of qualification. Employers see qualifications as a sign that someone can work hard and complete a long-term project, so getting this degree will aid me in finding better future employment.

6. Conclusion & Recommendation

The best way to improve my communication skills is to raise my confidence, by trying to communicate as much as possible. This will allow me to have more self-belief, so I will be better able to convey my message, by having belief that others will agree. Some ways I could do this are to talk to more people, either at work or at social gatherings, or to communicate more online, either through social media, or voice communication services.

Improving teamwork will be difficult, however it is possible by forcing myself to trust others. If I work in more groups, I can pass on my desire to complete all tasks well, and if that happens, then working with others will become less difficult.

To conclude, there are several areas in which I could improve some of my employability skills. My communication and teamwork skills are perhaps the areas which could most do with improvement. Delegation is something that will improve as teamwork does. There are also many areas in which I am doing well, such as Attitude, Self-managing, Problem solving, and Technology. This is encouraging as it shows I am on the right path to be an all-round good employee.

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Appendix: In-class Exercises / Homework during Term 1

Time management exercise

Activity	Time Required	Priority	Time	Action
Breakfast	30 mins	NO	7:00 AM	15 mins (not hungry)
Shower/Self-care	20 mins	YES	8:00 AM	✓
Complete homework	15 mins	YES	9:00 AM	45 minutes
Prepare lunchbox	1 hour	NO	10:00 AM	1:30 Kitchen was dirty
General house clean	1 hour	NO	11:00 AM	✓
Family call	30 mins	NO	12:00 PM	x NO TIME
Have lunch	15 mins	YES	1:00 PM	✓
Get ready for work	20 mins	YES	2:00 PM	✓
Start working	9 hours	YES	3:00 PM	✓
Fill up cigarettes	1h - 2h	NO	4:00 PM	x too many customers to serve
Clean Costa machine	25 mins	YES	5:00 PM	✓
			6:00 PM	
Start reduction on waste items	30 mins	YES	7:00 PM	55 mins (too many items to reduce)

Eisenhower table

Do first

Complete university assignment
Work handover
Take delivery

Schedule

☐ Tidying shop floor
☐ Prepare shifts for next week
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

Delegate

Cleaning coffee machine
Filling up shelves
Prepare dinner

Don't do

☒ Surf the internet
☒ Play games

Class GROUP B Name: KEELI BAGLIERI

Paraphrasing Exercises adapted from
<http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/~esl/paraphrasing1.htm>

Which sentences are closest in meaning to the five sentences below?

1. 25% of adolescents who have one baby have a second baby within two years of the first baby's birth.
a. 25% of babies are born to mothers who are adolescents. ☒ b. One out of four adolescent mothers has another baby before the first baby reaches his second birthday. c. A quarter of adolescent mothers gives birth when their first born is two. d. 25% of adolescent mothers become pregnant again when their first babies are two years old.
 2. It has been reported that the richest one percent of Americans own 40% of the country's wealth.
a. The richest 1% are 40 times as wealthy as the rest of Americans. b. If the gap between rich and poor continues to grow at the current rate, the richest one percent will soon own 40% of the country's wealth. ☒ c. 40% of the country's wealth is in the hands of only 1% of Americans. d. 99% of Americans own 40% as much as the richest 1%.
 3. The judge was relieved when the jury was finally ready to announce its verdict.
a. When the jury announced its verdict, the judge was relieved.
b. The judge asked the jury to arrive at a verdict. ☒ c. The judge welcomed the prospect of an imminent verdict. d. The jury welcomed the judge's relief.
 4. Research data suggest that girls who witnessed maternal abuse may tolerate abuse as adults more than girls who did not. a. Women who witnessed the abuse of their mother as teens are more likely to become abusive adults. ☒ b. Women who observed the abuse of their mothers when they were young are more likely to endure abuse themselves. c. Women who were abused as children are more likely to abuse their own children. d. Girls who testify about maternal abuse tolerate abuse as adults more readily.
 5. Martha thinks that the issue of adolescent problems is important to write about.
a. Martha thinks that adolescents like to write about their problems. ☒ b. Martha feels that writing about adolescent problems is worthwhile. c. Martha believes that the dream of most adolescents is to write something important. d. Martha thinks that adolescents can write about their problems.
-

Paraphrasing exercises – p.2

1. A local newspaper claims that 75% of all homeless people do not like homeless shelters and prefer to live

as they do now.

A local newspaper states that 75% of all homeless people prefer living as they do now because they dislike homeless shelters.

2. Ronny told his aunt that a bear had attacked him, which she found difficult to believe.

Ronny's aunt found it hard to believe when he told her a bear attacked him.

3. Anyone who has ever driven through the Mojave Desert knows that one should always carry a supply of

extra water. Carrying a supply of extra water is highly recommended by anybody who has travelled through the Mojave Desert.

4. Of the 138 million acres of land that Native Americans owned in 1887, 90 million acres were taken away

by whites by 1932. 90 million out of 138 million acres that Native Americans owned in 1887 were appropriated by whites in 1932.

5. A woman who was nominated by the president to head the department was quickly approved by the

board of trustees. The board of trustees swiftly approved the president's nomination for head of department.

Paraphrase the following sentences from student paragraphs to avoid plagiarism.

1. However, college students today are the first groups of students to need the Internet for

most of their schoolwork.

For the first time in history, the majority of college student's work requires the internet.

2. Chinese speculators are able to realize profits from this buy-and-sell practice as

property

prices are currently on the
upswing.

Rising property prices are allowing Chinese speculators to use buy and sell practices to maximise profits.

3. Researchers have found a strong association between computer and Internet use in

adolescents and engagement in multiple-risk behaviours (MRB), including illicit drug use, drunkenness and unprotected sex.

Multiple-risk behaviours (MRB) such as drug use, unsafe sex and alcohol abuse in adolescents are believed to be linked to computer and Internet usage by those researching the field.

4. Drug resistance remains a major problem in combating HIV infection, but a different

approach to drug development could be the answer.

A different method of drug development could be a solution to drug resistance being the main problem in combating HIV infection.

5. North China's Shanxi Province, the country's largest coal supplier and most polluted

region, has the dubious distinction of having 16 cities on the list. Neither Beijing nor Shanghai appear on the list. The report found that only 22.94 percent of sewage was treated adequately in the cities surveyed and less than 20 percent of household garbage met with proper handling. It said 178 cities examined had not

Paraphrasing exercises – p. 4

built any sewage treatment facilities and 130 cities had not been equipped with garbage disposal plants.

Being not only the country's largest coal supplier but also is now acting as the most polluted region, North China's Shanxi Province owns the uncertain distinction of having 16 cities on the list.

About 130 cities had not been equipped with garbage dumping plants and only 22.94% of sewage was treated adequately in the cities charted and less than 20% of domestic trash met with proper handling. However Beijing and Shanghai are not classified in the list.

Writing exercise

Style and Appropriateness

1. Written academic English will not normally contain the following:
 - a) Contractions (i.e. 'it did not' would be used instead of it didn't; 'they have' would be used and not they've.)
 - b) Hesitation Fillers (i.e. er, um, well, you know ... which might be common in spoken language are omitted.)
 - c) Familiar Language that would not be appropriate in the academic context. For example:

FORMAL	INFORMAL
conduct	carry out
discover	find out
investigate	look into

2. Personal pronouns I, you, we tend not to be used in more formal writing (except in letters etc.). Instead the style may be more impersonal. An introductory *it* or *there* may begin sentences; passive tenses may also be used.
 - a) Compare the following explanations or definitions of economics: the first informal and spoken, the second formal and written (from an economics textbook).

Informal/Spoken

Economics? ... Yes, well, um ... economics is, I suppose, about people trying to ... let me see ... match things that are scarce – you know – with things that they want, ... oh yes, and how these efforts have an effect on each other ... through exchange, I suppose.

Formal Written

Economics is the social science that studies how people attempt to accommodate scarcity to their wants and how these attempts interact through exchange.

Exercise

The following sentences are mixed formal and informal. Write F (formal) or I (informal) next to each sentence.

- a) The project will be completed next year. **F**
- b) I showed that his arguments did not hold water. **I**
- c) I wonder why he put up with those terrible conditions for so long. **I**
- d) Five more tests will be necessary before the experiment can be concluded. **F**
- e) It is possible to consider the results from a different viewpoint. **F**
- f) It has been proved that the arguments so far are without foundation. **F**
- g) He'll have to do another five tests before he can stop the experiment. **I**
- h) It is not clear why such terrible conditions were tolerated for so long. **I**
- i) There are a number of reasons why the questionnaire should be revised. **F**
- j) We'll finish the job next year. **I**