

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID

MODULE:
ACADEMIC AND EMPLOYABILITY
SKILLS

REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

This report is based on some academic and employability skills and how they reflected to my own skills. This report provides descriptions to three topics: Academic writing, CV writing and Cover letter writing. These three topics were chosen, because they are very important and very useful. Every person needs to know how to write correctly in academic style, to write good CV and cover letter, as they are very helpful in any career development. Reflections for each of the topics, explain how the newly learned skills reflected to me personally and how the new knowledge will be used in the future. Reflection on my individual Power Point presentation also is included in this report and explains my personal changes from the lessons learned in the module Academic and Employability skills. For explaining reflections, I used Gib's reflection cycle, which also is described in this report.

GIB'S REFLECTIVE CYCLE

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle was created by Graham Gibbs in 1988 and provides structure to learning from experiences. It contains 6 steps: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. Every step should answer to a few questions:

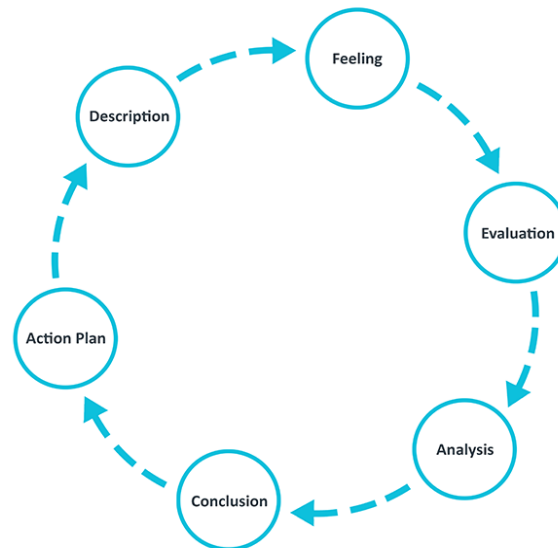
- Description (What happened? When and where the situation was happened? Who was present?)
- Feeling (What were the feelings during the situation? What was the feeling before and after the situation?)
- Evaluation (What was good or bad about that experience? What went well?

What didn't go so well?)

- Analysis (Why did things go well or not? What sense and knowledge can be taken from the situation?)
- Conclusion (What are the lessons from that situation?)
- Action plan (If the situation repeated, what would be differently?)

(The University of Edinburgh, 2020)

The following diagram represents the Gib's reflective cycle.



(The University of Edinburgh, 2020)

ACADEMIC WRITING

Academic writing is a formal style of writing used in schools and universities. The academic writing could be found in student's essays, reports, dissertation, journal articles, books on academic topics, etc. Academic writing has specific content, structure and style, which make it different than other types of texts. Academic writing is:

- Formal and unbiased- Academic writing aims to transmit information in an unbiased way. The arguments should be explained on the evidence under consideration, not the author's hypotheses. All arguments should be supported with relevant evidence.
- Clear and precise- It is important to be used clear and precise language to ensure that the reader understand exactly what the author means.
- Focused and well structured- Streamlined structure is vital to organize author's ideas. Three important things should be observed: the structure of the whole text, the paragraph structure and the sentence structure.
- Well sourced- Academic writing includes sources to support its allegations. Sources are other texts that the author analyses or uses as evidence. It is important to remember which sources are reliable and suitable to use in academic writing (academic books and databases, university library, etc.).

- Correct and consistent- Academic writing always follows the rules of grammar, punctuation and citation.

It is important to be known that the academic writing should not be personal, long-winded, emotive or grandiose. (Scribbr)

REFLECTION ON ACADEMIC WRITING

Before starting the module Academic and Employability skills I did not know a lot about the academic writing. In the beginning it was not easy for me to understand everything, and I was feeling confused. Listening carefully the lessons of the teacher and sharing experience with other students, I started gradually to understand more and more. Plenty of activity during the lessons also was very helpful to understand in practice how the things must be done for better results. Academic writing is very important and one of the first things which every student should learned. Academic writing gives good opportunity for personal and career development. Now, after finishing this module I have good knowledge and skills in academic writing and can use them to improve and develop my personal skills and career.

CV WRITING

A CV is a short summary of the personal skills and work experience which refers to the role that the person applies. It is a great opportunity for self- promoting to an employer. A good CV provides good chance for invitation to an interview. There are different CV styles:

- Traditional CV- based on previous work and education history, starting with the most recent
- Targeted CV – based on job-linked skills and personal characteristics
- Technical CV – used in professions like IT and engineering
- Creative CV – used in creative and digital arts and can link to an online portfolio
- Academic CV – used for teaching and research careers

What a CV must include:

- Contacts details- Every CV needs to provide contact details, so the employers can use them to offer an interview to the applicant. Contact details should include the name, telephone number and email of the person who applied. A link to professional networking profile, like LinkedIn could be provided as well. It should not include the age or date of birth, marital status or nationality.

- Personal profile- This includes abstract of the personal skills. It is good to meet the employer's criteria, which could be found in the job descriptions.
- Education history- This part could be written after the personal profile if the person is in beginning of his career and has not much work experience. This part needs to include the names of qualifications, school, college, or university of studied and dates of attendance.
- Work history- In this part should be described every jobs, internships, and volunteering, which the applicant has, starting from the most recent first. It is important to be included the employer's details, the job title, the dates of working there, duties and responsibilities. Some examples could be given, using the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method.
- Gaps in the CV- In case of any gaps in the work history is good to be explain what the reason for that is. Examples of skills developed during the times out of work and how they were gained, also is good to be included in the CV.
- Hobbies, interests, or achievements- This part of a CV is useful if the person has not much work experience. In that case the person should shows the skills gained from hobbies and interests and how these skills are compatible to the job.
- References- Details of the references could be left on the end of the CV, or mention that with: 'References are available on request'.

A CV must be in the right CV style, not longer than two sides of A4, be clear and to the point and match the words to the keywords in the job description.

A good written CV provides better opportunities in finding of good job.(National careers service)

REFLECTION ON CV WRITING

When I started this course, I did not know a lot about how to write good CV. Of course, I have written some CV before, as I needed it many times in my life when I was looking for a job. Every time, when I needed to present my CV, I always used my previous CV, to which I just added my last job. I was not sure is that correct or not. I did not know how to do that better. During the module Academic and Employability skills I learned a lot about CV writing. I learned that there are different types of CVs, and there are some rules to write a good CV. I learned some very important things which can make my CV more noticeable for the employer, for example using some keywords from the job descriptions. I understood that a

good written CV could give me better opportunity in finding a good job. I shall use the lessons learned in this module when I write my next CV.

COVER LETTER WRITING

The cover letter is a very important part in applying for a job. The cover letter should support every CV or application form. The cover letter is a short introduction (3 to 5 paragraph) of the applicant's personal skills. Writing a good cover letter is essential an applicant to be spotted.

How to write an effective cover letter?

First thing that everyone should does is to make own research about the company, which job vacancy applying to. Good knowledge about the company, their products, and services, is essential for further career. Checking the feedbacks from people who work or worked there, also give good knowledge about the company, where the person intends to work.

The cover letter should include the details of the person to who it should be send. The cover letter starts with their name and preferred title (Dr, Mr, Mrs, Ms), their job title, the right company's name, and address, including a postcode. If it is not possible to find a name, then the cover letter should start with, 'Dear Sir/ Madam'.

Next step is a personal introducing and describes how/ where this advertised job was found. Could be mentioned the job title, or reference number, if there is one.

The cover letter continuous with explaining the personal skills and knowledges and how they meet the job description. In this part the applicant should convince the potential employer that he/she is the right person for that job.

As the cover letter supports the CV, the applicant could invite the employer to take more details from it. On the end is important to be written, that the applicant is looking forward to hearing from the employer and to leave contact details.

If the cover letter is written to a named person should be sign off with 'Yours sincerely'. If it started with 'Dear Sir or Madam', then it's 'Yours faithfully'. (National careers service)

REFLECTION ON COVER LETTER WRITING

Many times, in my life I needed to write a cover letter, when I had applied for a new job. I did not understand the role of the cover letter, and what I must write in it. So, to be honest many times I just ignored it, when it was possible. During the module Academic and Employability

skills I learned how important is the cover letter and how to write it. The cover letter gives more opportunity to introduce myself in best possible way. Writing a good cover letter could give me a great chance to find my dream job. In future, when I am applying for a new job, I shall always write a cover letter, using the lessons, learned in this module.

REFLECTIONS ON INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION

First task in my assessment to the module Academic and Employability skills was to make an individual Power Point presentation. The topic of the presentation was “What I want to do?” My idea for the future is to open an own cleaning company. As I have great experience in cleaning industry, I think it is time for new step in my life. I had this idea for a long time, but I did not know how to make it real. I always felt that something is missing, and I have not enough knowledge and skills to do that (which is the main reason to start this course). Explaining some of the learned academic skills in the presentation, helped me to formulate the skills, which I need to realize that idea. The SWOT analyses helped me to recognise my strengths and my weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and the threads of the career I had choose. The Personal Development Plan gave me a clear vision about that what I must do in the future. First thing I need to do is to finish this course, which will help me to improve my skills, and to take new knowledge and new skill from all modules. Then I can use the learned in my further plans. The presentation could be found below in Appendix 1.

CONCLUSION

Academic and Employability skills are very important and bring many benefits to everyone's future. From this module could be learned many things, such as writing correctly in academic style, managing, and organising time and duties better, analysing, paraphrasing, CV and cover letter writing, etc. Academic and Employability Skills module was very helpful in improving my skills, such as speaking and writing in English better, also critical thinking, note taking, research, effective team working, etc. All these skills and knowledge are very helpful and provide great opportunities for personal and career development.

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APPENDIX 1: INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION



INTRODUCTION

Academic and Employability skills encourage students to become more effective learners.

Academic and Employability skills:

- Time management
- Academic writing
 - Note taking
 - Research
 - Analysis

Academic skills are very important for prosperity of any career.

MANAGE OWN BUSINESS

Skills required:

- Communication skills
- Organising skills
- Leaderships skills
- Digital skills
- Financial Literacy

SWOT ANALYSES

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
- Time management - Communication skills - Loyalty	- Difficulty to find customers or employees - Demotivation of the employees	- Improve my experience - Develop own business	- High level of competition - Changes in the stability of national economic (inflation, currency exchange rate, strikes, etc.)
- High quality of service - Strong relationship with the customers and employees		- Improve leaderships skills - New contacts	- Pandemics/ Lockdowns - Unhappy customers

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

What are my main goals?	To learn as more as I can from this course
What skills I need to improve?	Communication skills, Leadership skills, Organising skills
What I need to realize my goals?	Take best skills and knowledge from all modules in this course
What I have to do first?	Finish this course
What obstacles might get in my way	Not good time management, loss motivation, healthy issues
Where can I find a support?	In the University, Internet, friends
Benefits	Development personal and professional skills

CONCLUSION

Academic and Employability skills are very important and bring many benefits to everyone's future. The benefits of these skills are that once you learn them, they would be with you in all of your life. Learning of the academic and employability skills provide great opportunities for personal and career development.

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