



Academic and Employability Skills (BMSW4001)

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Introduction

In this essay I will explain the different academic and employability skills, the tools that we will need throughout our academic and work life. These skills will allow us to grow personally giving us more opportunities in any area of our life, many of them can be exchanged in the most convenient way.

I will start by talking about employability skills, what they are and why they are important in work and studies. I will analyze my own abilities, strengths and weaknesses using a SWOT. I will briefly explain what my Personal Development Plan is and what skills I need in order to be promoted at my workplace.

Finally, I will comment and make a simple explanation about academic skills that we have studied in class, the different techniques that we can use to avoid plagiarism and not make this mistake unconsciously.

Employability skills

When we talk about academic and employability skills, we are referring to a person's ability to carry out a task without trying too hard or spending a lot of time. Many of our abilities are innate, but there are others that we can improve and that is what we have been doing during the first months. Discovering our skills and how to improve them.

In our workplace we can find two different types of skills: hard and soft skills. A hard skill is what it takes to do a specific job. An example could be for an IT, they must have knowledge of software and hardware, computer programs for data analysis, graphic presentations, internal management of the company (schedules, payroll...). On the other hand, we find soft skills, they are the skills required in any job. Such as communication skills, problem solving, empathy, learning skills, time management, team work, leadership, honesty, punctuality, positivism, hard work... Some of the most important could be communication, time management and team working.

Communication is the ability to express your thoughts or your feelings being able to express in an effective way so that the other person can understand. It is important to have good communication in the workplace, so that all the instructions are understood and carried out correctly. In this way we will avoid delays or work twice. It will help improve teamwork, manage resources and time. I work in a hotel, as a waitress on the breakfast shift, at my workplace the oral communication is simple, direct instructions from the supervisor or manager; the written communication is done by emails, announcements in the common room, mobile application... the communication is comes from both sides, 80% of the times the feedback is received either by the employee or employer. Also, we have internal communication, such a staff phones located on each floor so it is easier for us to contact with different departments. Improving my communication skill will increase my capacity of learning and I would be able to work more efficient. A good communication can contribute to get a better performance at each task and a bigger personal growth as well, offering as result to achieve the goals previously marked. I need to be able to communicate with colleagues that I will work with, and teachers that will be the people who will provide me with instructions to improve my skill therefore pass my this first year at the University, and also to communicate with other workers of the University such as, receptionist, concierge, IT team among others.

A good **time management** will help to control how much time will be invested on each activity, making of this one more efficient and effective increasing the productivity. It is important to handle properly the time on the working area as this will make that each task of the work will be completed at the previously desired time with the best handle of resources but still achieving the highest results. It is important as well because it will help the capacity of concentration, making easier to achieve the goals on the short (daily or weekly) and long run (by semester or yearly).

Be able to accomplish the desired goals will provide the mind with more self-control and confidence this means that we will have more capacity at the moment of making decisions. I believe that we can apply this to the studies as well, managing properly the time, will help us to complete all the tasks required, and providing enough time to find and fix any mistake or maybe improve them. This will help to avoid stress, we know that stress affect the performance and we don't want that. It will help us on our private life, as we will have a determinate schedule to spend working on the projects or use the time to prepare any coming exam. Managing properly the time will allow us to control our personal and professional life.

Teamwork (for me) is the main and most important skill in a worker. It is the capacity of working in group (two or more persons) in order to achieve an objective or task in common efficiently. Working by teams helps us improving personal motivation, communication skills, making better decisions; it stimulates our creativity and get better at solving problems. Feeling part of a group helps enhancing the loyalty towards the company. For the digital skills project, my team consists of four students. The organization, the time management and the communication was easy at first during classes. When the coronavirus arrived and we had to start working from home it got harder. Communication was not the priority, which brought complications and made assigning tasks more difficult. Our team leader was not able to lead us, did not have the drive on the project and our time was not handled 100% at its best. Working in group was good, but it could've been better. We did not helped or resolved doubts among each other. I remember just talking about the project with one of my classmates.

SWOT

STRENGTHS • Communication skills. • Work experience in different sectors and countries. • Learning skills. I always want to learn something new. • I don't mind to do overtime if it is necessary. • Determination. I like to work hard and finish the task that I am doing.	OPPORTUNITIES • I can expand my education. • Possibly to be promoted. • Learn new tasks to improve my employability skills. • Improve my language skills. • To work and combine it with my studies. • Student loans.
WEAKNESS • Often late. • Language, my English is not perfect. • My education needs improvement. • Sometimes I don't remember everything that I have to do. • I am easily distracted.	THREATS • Coronavirus. • Many competitors. • Many jobs require previous experience. • Economy. • Racism.

Personal Development Plan

It is a detailed plan of the resources that we will need to achieve a specific objective that will help us in our personal growth. My goal is to be promoted to manager of the F&B (food and beverage) and C&E (conferences and events) departments at my workplace. For this I have created a personal development plan for the next three years.

OBJECTIVE	Improve my language, to be able to communicate better.	Improve my customer service and my management skills.	Pass my courses and get the diploma.
RESOURCES	- Practice writing, reading, speaking and listening. - Try to learn new words every day. - Watching TV in original version with subtitles. - Read books and newspapers.	- Asking my supervisor or manager which are my weaknesses and try to fix them. - Research advances by myself. - Watch lectures about it. - Talking with my colleagues to have another point of view.	- Attending all the classes. - Asking my doubts to my teachers. - Completing every task and assignment. - Improve my learning skills. - Use the library from the university, read articles, book, projects...
MEASUREMENT	- I won't use the translator. - I will be able to understand everything at the first time. - I will speak faster, I will have more vocabulary and it will help me to think in english.	- Work completed more efficiently, getting better at teamwork and organization. - Less complains. - Work will be easier. - Better performance.	- Passing my exams and assignments. - Increase my knowledge. - I will have the abilities to do other complex jobs.
DEADLINE	I expect to improve this skill at the end of this term. June 2020.	I would like to improve these skills during this year. I expect improve my performance at work at December 2020.	I expect to finish my academic courses in February 2023.

1. SHORT TERM GOALS (12 months): to complete my first year in the university and to improve my language.
2. MEDIUM TERM GOALS (next two or three years): finish my courses and graduate at the university to be promoted in my company.
3. LONGER TERM GOALS (+3 years): to extend my studies and to get a better job with more responsibilities and prestige.

This position requires a person with a high level of **management skills**, who is able to control a team in an orderly and authoritative way. **Good communication** between manager and workers will make the work more productive, for this, the manager must have a good **ability to listen**, to have **empathy** with the staff and to be able to **motivate** them in any circumstance. As it will be important whilst **training** new workers and **introducing** them to the team. By being a manager, they will need a good **power of conviction, leadership, goods skills in solving problems and making decisions**. They should have **administrative skills** to be able to take care of schedules, payroll, overtime...

Analysing my skills I think I have a good **communication skill** but I should improve the language, I can use my **learning skills** for that. I also have to improve my skills in **time management** and **punctuality**, sometimes I believe I will be on time. Another skill that I must work on is **problem solving**, I think I have leadership but I don't like problems.

Academic skills

Academic skills are those that will accompany us throughout our student life. They will help us to write essays and reports, to prepare tests and exams, to make presentations...

- **Plagiarism.** It is copying ideas, texts, quotes..., from another person without their consent. It is important to avoid this because it is considered ethically immoral, it can be sanctioned academically and criminally. We can avoid plagiarism by writing the information in our own words, writing the reference, and citing the author of the text.
- **Citation and referencing.** To make clear the origin and author of the information that we are using. Whenever we use something that is not ours, we must mention where we have collected the information and when.
- **Paraphrasing.** It is writing a concept, project or idea using your own words. There are three different techniques: using synonyms, changing word class and changing word order.
- **Summarising.** It is a brief description of a text with the main ideas in an orderly and concise way.
- **Presentation skills.** It is the ability to present a project in front of a group of people or a jury, which will evaluate the content of the presentation, developing the ideas in a logical order, showing an appropriate attitude and being clear enough so that there are as few doubts as possible.

Analysing these skills, I have the conclusion that I should improve my **presentation skills**, normally I have a hard time speaking in public if all the attention is on me. And I also have to improve my **citation and referencing skills**, I have done it before but in a different way, it creates confusion for me.

Conclusion

Finally, after researching the information on the different academic and employability skills, analysing my strengths and weaknesses I have realized what skills I have and what I don't. I also learned how to improve those that I already have and what I can do to learn new skills.

By doing SWOT I have been able to see that I have a good **communication skill** in spite of the language, I always find a way to understand and make myself understood. **Determination** and **learning skills** will help me to improve my job performance and make it easier for me when I have to learn a new skill. **Hard work** is another of my skills, working under pressure does not affect me but it does depend on my team.

The personal development made me realize which are the skills I need to succeed in my goal, and the things I can learn, or do in order to improve them. One of my priorities is learning the **leadership** and **decision making skills**. A good manager must be able to make decisions in difficult times and to have enough leadership so that the team loyally follows him. With this course I hope to improve my **administration** and **planning skills**, I want to be able to organize my team (schedule, payroll, overtime...) and programme the day effectively so that daily goals are done.

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