

Qualification: CIPD Diploma in Applied Human Resources

Module Name: Developing Professional Practice in Human Resources

Activity 6

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By signing below, I confirm that the work/evidence presented is my own, unaided work. I understand the regulations pertaining to candidate malpractice and the action that may be taken as a result.

Signed: MGoldsworthy

Date: 22/05/2021

Developing Professional Practice

Please see below reflection within the tables below.

Development plan

NAME:	Melanie Goldsworthy	MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	55478711
COVERING THE PERIOD FROM:	November 2019	TO:	May 2021

Planned outcome

My aim is to be able to demonstrate my improvement and achievements in the identified development areas, and to be able to provide my organisation with robust advice, sound knowledge and the ability to reflect and learn new skills.

I have chosen the four development areas below as these were identified as my improvement areas in order to evolve into a HR professional.

What do I want/need to learn?	What will I do to achieve this?	What resources or support will I need?	What will my success criteria be?	Target dates for review and completion	Reflection of: -Performance against plan -Skills development -Knowledge & behaviors	Targets for future
Employee Relations	-Discuss with my manager current key issues for our organisation and how my role impacts these. -Attend external networking events and workshops relevant to my business and role. -Contribute to a new HR idea or initiative within my team.	-Have access to our HR strategy to see how issues within our organisation are linked to HR and my role in overcoming these issues. -Attend courses held by ACAS, CIPD and other local resources to gain knowledge including reading articles on the CIPD website. Gain more knowledge in employee law. -Regularly consult the HR and wider team on issues or obstacles within our team.	-See future strategies with fewer issues due to my contribution in resolving them. -To demonstrate what I have learnt and put this training into practice in my day to day role. -To have helped implement an idea that is proving to be a success within our team.	-1st Review - April 2020 -2nd Review – August 2020 -3rd Review – December 2020 -Completion – May 2021 -1st Review – April 2020 -2nd Review - August 2020 -3rd Review – December 2020 -Completion - May 2021 -1st Review – April 2020 -2nd Review – August 2020 -3rd Review - December 2020 - Completion – May 2021	I have attended various webinars and workshops such as 'diversity in recruitment' and employments law updates which have helped me towards this goal. I feel that I have contributed towards a couple of new HR ideas such as a 'manager portal' where managers can go online to get resources for HR related issues at any time. This helps managers to get clear, consistent guidance even when HR is	Continue to assess business needs in-line with HR strategy to find solutions through being proactive more than reactive. Continue to attend workshops & training sessions that assist me in my day to day role. Assess business needs in-line with HR strategy to implement initiatives that resolve issues or obstacles. Become more forward thinking in order to foresee

					not in work. My day to day role has developed since I started this course as I am now a HR Officer (progressing from administrator); it mostly involves employee relations issues and needs.	challenges.
Skilled Influencer	-Conduct a SWOT analysis on my own approach to influencing others at work. Think about where I am effective and how I can improve. -Observe others who successfully influence others and reflect on what it is about their approach and style that makes them convincing. Apply these styles to develop my own influencing style. -Gather feedback from my manager and others on how they view my working style and how it is different or the same as the rest of the team. Consider how the differences can be used as an advantage to me.	-Gather opinions of others who work closely with me to ensure my views on my strengths and improvement areas are true and accurate. Read CIPD Factsheet: 'Writing a persuasive business report' -Make time for observing these people in certain situations. Make notes on what it is that they have. Ensure I take the time to reflect and accommodate some of their styles to improve. -Openly receive and take onboard feedback with the aim to achieve a good personal awareness. Aim to utilise my strengths and improve on my weaknesses. Read CIPD Research: 'Using the hand and heart at work: a business case for soft skills'.	-Take onboard feedback and be proactive in developing and demonstrating these skills. - To demonstrate particular styles and skills influencing others in my day to day role. -Show good personal awareness and demonstrate working styles that are beneficial in my team. Some styles that I may already have and some that have been newly learnt.	-1st Review – May 2020 -2nd Review – October 2020 -Completion – March 2021 -1st Review – May 2020 -2nd Review – October 2020 -Completion – March 2021 -1st Review – May 2020 -2nd Review – October 2020 -Completion – March 2021	I have been receiving informal feedback from my manager about my approach to influencing others at work and where my strengths and weaknesses are. I have been making an effort to take onboard feedback and adjust my approach as needed. I have been observing our Organisational Development Director as she used to be the Director of HR and is an expert in her field. When I get the opportunity I ask questions that relate to my work and on occasion I have been able to sit in on meetings to observe how she deals with difficult situations. Since doing this I have been focusing on building these skills. I try to reflect and gain good personal awareness at work after meetings. I will explain a situation and talk through it with the manager to see if there is anything I did well or anything I could do better next time. I am open to feedback and take it on when I receive it.	Continue to receive feedback from my manager and others in the business. Reflect on my performance and practice new skills. Continue to shadow influencers in the business and apply their styles to my own ways of working. Request feedback where appropriate and develop my general knowledge in HR. Continue to develop my styles that work well for me through feedback and experience. Read more articles related to this to assist my development.
Personally Credible	-Gain feedback on my expertise within my workplace from managers and peers. Work to build up my expertise by reading, researching and building relationships with individuals who have experience in this area.	-Create an appropriate space for others to provide me with honest and constructive feedback. See where my expertise may be lacking and aim to gain further knowledge on this topic.	-Demonstrate sound knowledge in key areas in my day to day role.	-1st Review – April 2020 -2nd Review – August 2020 -Completion – December 2020	Since starting this course I have been able to demonstrate sound knowledge in particular aspects of my role; such as the disciplinary process. I have done this by considering feedback and practice in the process.	To do more reading in my own time on relevant topics to my role. Make an effort to fully understand information as opposed to having a general understanding or overview of a topic.

	-Discuss what I would like to achieve in the next 12-18months with my manager. Use this to identify areas where I may need to develop knowledge, skills and experience. - Set up regular times to share my skills with others and for them to share their skills with me. -Reflect on occasions where I have been less successful in providing guidance or advice in my area of expertise. Understand why and consider my own level of understanding of the issue as well as the practicality and objectivity of my own advice.	-Once we have established what I would like to achieve, put objectives in place to help aim and achieve these. -Create a space to openly discuss issues with co-workers and ask their opinion on how they would overcome these. Offer my opinion in return and take onboard different opinions. -Read 'Martin and Whiting, CIPD' book in HR Practice to gain further knowledge.	-To demonstrate the course of action I have taken to achieve my objectives and put them into practice in my role. -Demonstrate skills I have learnt from others to assist me in my role. -Demonstrate the ability to reflect on situations, have a good understanding of the issue and provide robust advice.	-1st Review – February 2020 -2nd Review – July 2020 -Completion – January 2021 -1st Review – March 2020 -2nd Review – October 2020 -Completion – May 2021 -1st Review – March 2020 -2nd Review – October 2020 -Completion – May 2021	There are other aspects that I am not so strong at where I still need to develop. I spoke with my manager and my achievements were to be able to deal with almost all issues at my level, within my current role as HR Officer. Whilst there are some circumstances where I feel I need to seek advice, generally I am capable of dealing with/resolving issues. I have been having a de-brief with managers after meetings (such as welfare or disciplinary meetings) to discuss what went well and what could be improved on. I find this task very useful as all managers see things differently and their opinions are valuable. There has been an occasion where a manager has called for advice and I am unable to assist there and then. Sometime I explain that I need to find out/look at a policy and get back to them. Usually this isn't an issue but sometimes there is a time restriction as they need accurate information quickly. As I continue my work, I will gain knowledge through experience and will be able to respond better to these questions in future.	Continue to work on my confidence and ability to deal with situations myself, and ask for advice when needed. Make an effort to have good knowledge in particular topics to reduce needing to ask for advice. Continue to de-brief with managers after meetings to share opinions and skills when dealing in particular situations. Continue to reflect on situations whether they have been successful or not. Consider what I want to change and how I could change it in future. Ask advice of others in my department on how they deal with this to get a good perspective on how I can improve this for myself.
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Development record

NAME:	Melanie Goldsworthy	MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	55478711
COVERING THE PERIOD FROM:	March 2019	TO:	May 2021

This record sheet is for your guidance only – you may present your development record in any other format.

Key dates	What did you do?	Why?	What did you learn from this?	How have/will you use this? Any further action?	Reflection
March 2019	'IOSH Managing Safely' course	As part of my previous role in a different department but can utilise this within HR.	How to identify H&S issues within the workplace and what the law says about these issues.	Have a general understanding of H&S and can assist with this in day to day operation.	Having an understanding of Health & Safety can help me when dealing with some employee relations cases. This is very useful.
May 2019	ACAS 'Disciplinary and Grievance' Module	As part of development in my role.	How to address issues and follow process for disciplinary and grievance complaints.	I have had the opportunity to be involved in disciplinary meetings and have an understanding of what is expected from a HR point of view.	This module was useful for me to complete as it gave me a foundation and an understanding of the process before I had be actively involved in the disciplinary and grievance process. I use this info in my day to day role.
June 2019	ACOP ACAS Module	As part of development in my role.	Learnt about codes of practice within ACAS and how to use them in my current role.	Use this daily in my role.	This has also been useful in my day to day role to understand codes of practice and to reference them when dealing with employee relations.
June 2019	ACAS 'Bullying and Harassment' Module	As part of development in my role.	How to define bullying and harassment in the workplace and how to deal with it according to ACAS.	I use this training when an issue relevant to it is addressed.	This has been useful in dealing with employee relations issues around bullying & harassment. This isn't a common issue I deal with but this has helped me in the rare cases where I have needed to use it.
June 2019	ACAS 'Change Management' Module	As part of development in my role.	How to manage change in the workplace including how employees can react negatively to change and how to overcome this.	Use this often as there are always changes.	There are always changes in the workplace and the biggest one by far has been the coronavirus pandemic. This module has helped me to cope with change and understand the process.

June 2019	ACAS 'Conflict Resolution' Module	As part of development in my role.	How best to resolve conflicts in work and different approaches to take.	I use this when I am dealing with any conflict.	This has been useful on a few occasions as conflict is something that happens often on a minor scale between employees. It has given me an understanding of how to deal with it professionally.
August 2019	'Mental Health First Aid (Wales)' course	As part of development in my role.	How to deal with poor mental health in the workplace and helpful resources.	I use this often as staff often has MH issues/worries.	Mental health has been a rising concern within work and having training in how to approach and assist people who are demonstrating poor mental health has been very useful for me in my role.
September 2019	Mock employment tribunal	As part of my development in my role and to understand what the process is like.	I learnt the tribunal process works and the obstacles that can occur.	Have utilized these skills in welfare meetings with some staff.	
October 2019	'Dealing with bullying and harassment in the workplace' from Morgan LaRoche solicitors.	To have a better understanding of how to deal with relevant issues effectively.	I learnt that bullying and harassment are defined differently despite how often they are used together and that bullying is much easier to define than harassment due to protected characteristics.	No further actions at this point. I haven't had to use this training as of yet but feel prepared if something similar arises in the future.	This training was very useful as we could ask questions and gain a better understanding of this topic and consider scenarios. Whilst this isn't an issue I deal with often I feel comfortable if I needed to.
November 2019	'Perils of Christmas in the workplace' delivered by Hannah Dahill, Morgan LaRoche.	This was relevant to that time of year and to prepare for any issues relevant that arise in our organisation.	How to prepare and brief teams prior to their Christmas parties to ensure things don't get out of hand. Understand the health and safety impact of decorations and trees etc...	I haven't had to deal with any implications yet but feel prepared now if I had to.	This was an interesting topic as Christmas parties are always going to happen and sometimes have issues arise as a result. This training gave some good advice on how to minimize issues arising.
November 2019	'Current employment law issues'	Relevant to my role and training.	I learnt about current issues and how to resolve them, and if we can't resolve them to seek advice from ACAS.	I haven't had to ask ACAS for advice on resolving any issues yet but feel confident if I had to.	Employment law issues are always good to know about as they may affect Bluestone. There was some useful advice and ways to overcome/resolve these issues if they were present.
January 2020	Realising the benefits of an ageing workforce.	To gain better knowledge of how older workers can benefit the business.	Older workers can often be very beneficial to a business as people are living longer and want further progression.	Haven't had to use this personally but I do have a better perception and understanding of the benefits of an older workforce.	I found this very enlightening and useful in my role. I haven't had to directly deal with anything relating to this but I often make positive suggestions/comments to managers during the recruitment process if they have had an older person apply for a role.
November 2020	ASIST Training	To better prepare me if someone at work was having suicidal thoughts and how to help them/signpost them	I learnt how to recognise suicidal behaviours and have the confidence to speak with that person in order to help	I have not used this skill in my role yet but I feel prepared if I ever need	This training, whilst being mentally challenging has been very useful and I feel confident in identifying

March 2021	Resilience Training	To help build resilience when dealing with difficult situations and dealing with difficult customers/staff	them. Tools I could use to keep calm including having a wellbeing partner to speak to after dealing with a difficult situation.	to. I have not used these tools yet but they will be useful when I am dealing with difficult staff situations.	someone who is having suicidal thoughts. I also feel confident if I had to deal with someone who is going through a crisis. This training was via Zoom and was mainly about dealing with difficult people/situations and how to recover from them to build a level of resilience. I found this useful personally and in a work sense.
March 2021	Diversity in recruitment webinar	To understand and ensure our knowledge is up to date when recruiting employees	I learnt (amongst a lot of other things) that when advertising for a job you have to ensure that it does not use working like 'she/her/him' in the advert as it could imply that we are looking for someone of a particular sex. It can also be off putting to those who don't identify as male/female.	During recruitment exercise I will ensure we are not discriminating intentionally or non-intentionally.	This training was useful as I felt like we at Bluestone do all of these things anyway to ensure we are diverse in our recruitment process. It was nice to be able to complete training without needed to make any drastic amendments due to current processes.
March 2021	Employment Law update through RedKite solicitors	To ensure we are fully compliant or are aware of any new employment law updates	I learnt about some changes to right to work docs due to brexit and changes due to case law. There was also info on the national minimum wage going up and IR35.	I will make relevant changes to process we currently have in place to reflect the changes.	Employment law updates are always very useful. The main point I took from this was regarding right to work documents as I had been completing an audit over the past year and collating any documents we didn't have on file for staff. It reassured me that I was following the right process. Other updates were also very useful and some actions have been implemented as a result.

Reflection

Reflective practice is key to professional practice for self awareness, evolution, creativity, openness, and creating space for deep thinking. Reflection is important for progression and to become better at what we do (Bayley and Koukpaki, 2020). Since starting this course I have learnt the benefits to reflection on activities I carry out in order to become better at them. This also helps to put things into perspective if something hasn't gone the way I would have liked and to be less hard on myself.

The way I approached the reflection for this activity was by using Gibb's Reflective Cycle. The experience of completing this course and developing my skills in line with this activity has been a massive challenge for me. At times I have felt completely overwhelmed and as though I wouldn't be able to complete the course and that I was failing at work due to my lack of knowledge and the pressure of both. At this point I am proud of my efforts and perseverance during this course and my role as HR Officer. The reality is that I have never completed a course like this and I was new in my role at work; with both of these new experiences happening at the same time I felt a lot of pressure to do well. I understand that most people probably feel the same way in a new job or completing a course. If I had this opportunity again I would put less pressure on myself and try to enjoy the experience a bit more. My knowledge has improved immensely throughout this course including in employee relations, becoming personally credible and being a skilled influencer. Whilst I have a lot more to learn I feel that I am making progression in the right direction. Once I have graduated from this course I intend on spending more time reading articles that relate more closely to my day to day role and dealing with employee relations cases. This will also help me towards becoming more personally credible and influential as I gain more knowledge in this area (Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, 2020).

Employee relations particularly interest me; it has been valuable to learn about throughout this course as my knowledge was limited when I started but through my course and gaining experiences at work, I have developed my knowledge especially in this area. I have learnt the importance of trust-based relationships between groups and individuals at work can improve business goals as well as the welfare of individuals though high levels of employee involvement, commitment and engagement - can improve business outcomes as well as contribute to employees' wellbeing (CIPD, 2018).

I feel that I have generally met or am working towards the targets I had set myself at the start of the course as I feel more confident in dealing with issues and knowing where to find answers if needed. It will be some time before I consider myself an expert and I will work towards this through reflecting, completing more courses and attending training sessions where possible. My targets are to focus on being more personally credible as this relates to my knowledge of particular topics; this is where I feel I still need the most improvement.

Through completing this programme it has taught me that I can find ways to overcome obstacles. I like that most of the modules have a lot of information on Moodle to get good resources and information in one area without having to question whether it is a good source. As for improvements, I find it hard to suggest as I have not completed a course like this before so I don't have anything to compare it to. If I had to suggest anything I would suggest that it would be easier to complete the work if assignments were due in before the next lesson for the next assignment took place. In the first year I often found it confusing when trying to work on one assignment and then completing a lesson for the next assignment. I understand that there is likely a reason for this though. I would recommend this course to a colleague as it has helped me understand HR more wholly. The main learning outcomes for me is that this course has helped me to underpin my knowledge and I feel that I have a much better all-rounded understanding of HR at different levels. My initial mark sheet for the Developing Professional Practice module had 10 referrals mainly due to lack of referencing and adequate information; since then I have made an effort to ensure I consider each question fully and include all relevant information. I still have a lot to learn and feel confident with reflective practice and continued development I will reach my goals.

Reference List

Bayley, D. and Koukpaki, D., 2020. *Learning from the NHS: Why we should adopt reflective practices - CMI*. [online] CMI. Available at: <<https://www.managers.org.uk/knowledge-and-insights/article/learning-from-the-nhs-why-we-should-adopt-reflective-practices/>> [Accessed 22 May 2021].

CIPD. 2020. *Employee Relations | Factsheets | CIPD*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/employees/factsheet>> [Accessed 22 May 2021].

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