

Title Page:

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Academic & Employability Skills – Task 2

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Introduction

Effective learning is one of the most useful skills worth developing. Regardless of age, we learn all our lives. We should constantly learn and develop in order to be up to date. For many of us, learning never ends. There are many ways to enrich our knowledge.

The aim of this report is to demonstrate my understanding of what I have learned so far during the study of Academic and Employability Skills module. I want to present and reflect on my gained knowledge on the topics we have covered this term and details of my progress and development. I can confidently say that the learning objectives have been achieved for this module and I conclude this learning experience as a successful outcome. Below are a few topics we covered this term.

Time Management

Time management is the process of effective planning activities. It increases productivity, efficiency and helps prioritise tasks wisely. Good time management skills form the right habits and is therefore essential for all health and social careers. (Psychology Today, 2022)

Time management is vital in ensuring success in all aspects of life. Good time management means working smarter, but definitely not harder; being able to get a lot more done thanks to a consistent plan. The best way is to have a visual representation in the form of a diary. Time is scarce these days and pressures are high, but by working smarter we can focus on ticking away our to do list and seeing fast results.

Being a parent is the biggest aspect of my life. I must keep track of appointments, deliveries and many more. These aspects would be useful to also keep in a physical diary, but a lot of the time, parents set themselves mental timers, which helps them to stay on top of things; myself included. I am constantly making lists in my head.

In class we learned how to eat an elephant; the answer is one bit at a time. I had an elephant recently, it was sorting out all my home documents. Appointment letters, bills, bank statements, you name it... It was incredibly overwhelming at first. I decided to use the method learned in class and put it to the test. Just ten minutes daily allowed me to put everything into order, and even gave me the motivation to carry on with other tasks, which were also piling away shamelessly.

For me, the number one benefit of good time management is less stress. With less stress in my life, I don't feel overwhelmed and anxious. Instead, I feel more productive and confident to face the many tasks life throws at me. My mind is more free and as a result, I feel more confident and happy. I am even able to reward myself with some free time, allowing my hard working brain to cool down and relax. Free time also teaches my brain that it is okay to relax and do nothing sometimes, as this is a healthy need in everybody's life. The more tasks ticked off my list, the more peaceful my free time is. A bit of procrastination and good sleep allows us to regenerate and restore.

If I can stay on top of my to-do list and create a healthy balance in life, then I can feel worthy of helping other people with theirs, which is what I want to do in life. Helping others gives me tremendous satisfaction, and if I can keep my life on track, then I can point others in the right direction too!

Good time management skills was the most interesting subject for me this term, as it's something I work on everyday.

Academic Writing

Academic writing is concise and supported by hard facts. Its aim is to feed the reader's understanding, without using complex vocabulary. The style remains formal, but the structure is clear and focused.

Writing in an academic tone is professional. It allows me to share my thoughts in a clear and effective manner at my workplace, without the need for further questions or clarification. Academic writing is good for brain development, as it makes you focus and analyze ideas and information and demonstrates your point of view effectively. It helps to have a criteria such as clarity and purpose.

The structure usually remains the same, introduction, main body and conclusion. The introduction should clearly allow the reader to identify the purpose of the writing and give the writing the intended flow. In the main body ideas are elaborated on in detail, developed and explored. Information is of high quality and all ideas are combined in grouped paragraphs, with evidence to support your points; always keeping to a logical and clear order. The conclusion will bring forward the main points and highlight what the writer wanted the reader to take away from the piece of writing.

Academic writing generally tries to avoid overly personal statements. Information about the author may appear in some places – for example, in acknowledgments or in personal reflection, but for the most part the text should focus on the research itself.

An academic text is not the same as a literary, journalistic or marketing text. Although you're still trying to be convincing, many of the techniques from these styles aren't appropriate in an academic context. In particular, appeals to emotions and inflated claims should be avoided.

“Writing is a skill, not a talent, and this difference is important because a skill can be improved by practice”.

(Robert Stacy McCain)

Referencing

In class Anita Nan taught us the high importance of referencing. Including references assists us by supporting our claims and guarantees us plagiarism avoidance. Plagiarism is something all students want to avoid, as it is a form of academic misconduct. The referencing method we used in class was Harvard Style, which is the most common method used in UK universities, and is also the style we are expected to use at University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

Harvard referencing example

In – text citation

(Jenkins, 2011)

Referencing list

Jenkins, S. (2011) Methodical analysis. 2nd ed. London: Lion

We quote constantly. In school papers, during exams, in bachelor's, master's, on blogs, in social media. Referencing is one of the most important elements of written work. Referencing has a positive impact not only on the quality of the author's work, but also on his image.

We love quotes. They often move us, change our reflection, and sometimes entertain us and make us smile. We reach for the words of others constantly, we use them as dedications and wishes. Sometimes we use them at work and in everyday life.

Referencing is important because it shows the depth of your research and you are able to show the validity of your work. You are also acknowledging the work of other writers/journalists, while giving them the proper credit and respect they deserve for their excellent work, which YOU decided to use! You can even refer back to your references to find those sources again if need be.

Two examples of references

Website: Bloggers Passion. 2021. Top 20 Most Famous Entrepreneurs in the World/ What to learn from Them [2021 Updated list]. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://bloggerspassion.com/famous-entrepreneurs/>. [Accessed 9 November 2021]

Book: McCraw, T., 2009. Prophet of innovation. 1st ed. United States: Harvard University Press

Public Speaking

Public speaking is for people who are courageous. We all think of public speakers as people who are confident and bold, and that's exactly what they want us to believe, but in my opinion public speakers are people who possess leadership traits and are great actors with wonderful ideas. Public speakers are intelligent individuals with bright and pure ideas, often big enough to revolutionise and transform the world into something better and bigger, but only if their great minds allow them to speak as loud as their concept and stay as silent as their fear of the world rejecting them. We all may feel small and unimportant if the world rejects us, but how many of us think about how big we may feel if the world approves and agrees with us and we actually succeed? People brave enough and confident enough to think this way are able to sell their ideas through public speaking and presenting and they deserve to be called life winners. So, I call great public speakers "congratulations" as they are winners.

I acknowledge the fact that public speakers aren't always good people, but they are definitely powerful. They have the ability to manipulate people in a good or bad way, people who desperately want to believe. Adolf Hitler was able to dictate and persuade people into choosing the wrong path and obeying his commands. Public speakers are born leaders and they have the ability to direct followers into the good or bad route. We all have a choice which path we decide to take.

A good public speaker is certain about what they believe to be right. They believe in what they are saying and therefore have the power to make listeners think the same. People like to believe in something, it's a sense of comfort. Let that be, religion, politics or dictators. It allows people to feel excused for their actions and allows them to feel vulnerable, work towards something or blame something/someone else.

When we covered public speaking in class, I thought a lot about what I wanted to show the world and how I wanted to be read by others. I have come to the conclusion that people will always interpret our words in their own way. There is no wrong way of interpreting words, only the right way of interpreting words for each individual and what suits them or what their mind allows them to interpret at the time; what they are ready to hear. I believe in people, I live to analyse people in a

non judgemental way. I want to help people in life, but not everyone is ready to acknowledge that they need help or ready to ask for it. Good “public speakers” are also great listeners - maybe a close friend or maybe a good social worker or non judgemental psychologist, or maybe me or you, will help people come to terms with their troubles and as a result not be ashamed to reach out for help. I would like to remind people that it is ok to have negative traits; it is perfectly fine and normal to have negative traits! It’s satisfying for me to help people identify them and work on them to become better people.

Conclusion

Gaining knowledge is very important and plays a huge role in human life. It has many fields that are constantly improving the world, but learning and knowledge are not only about new discovery or inventions. Knowledge is primarily the ability to be human, the ability to live and help others.

Some people think that "being human" is a very simple thing and does not require any learning, but it is not. "To be human" is, above all, to understand what it means. Well, it means the ability to respect others, help others and tolerance towards others.

What motivates me in life? Growth... Seeing myself, my family and others progress and grow in life. To be a part of that growth is even more rewarding, which is why I have chosen to pursue a career in the health sector. To reflect on my learning so far, I can say I am more motivated. I will take all of these new skills gained and grow as a person and move forward in my career and life. It has been intellectually stimulating to be able to express myself in a more articulate way and put my thoughts and views on paper and share with you.

References

skillsyouneed.com 2011-2021. 2022. Time Management Skills | SkillsYouNeed. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/time-management.html>. [Accessed 02 January 2022].

Psychology Today. 2022. Time Management | Psychology Today. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/time-management>. [Accessed 03 January 2022].