

Self-reflection Report

BMSW4005_LON

Ana Gorbatenchi

1914097

JOANNA WALSH

Table of Contents

Reflection	3
Having an experience.....	3
Review of the experience	4
Conclusions from the experience	4
Planning the next steps.....	5
Conclusion.....	7
References	8

Reflection

The aim of this report is to conduct a personal reflection on the role play and career development planning, considering the skills and knowledge that help us to work effectively. I will conduct a brief SWOT analysis of my skills and knowledge, reflecting upon my readiness of employment, in order to understand what my strengths and areas of development are. After this, I will create SMART objectives suitable for my employment goals and develop a personal development plan. In my reflection, I will guide myself from Honey and Mumford's (1986) learning plan, because I find it more suitable to help in the process. According to this process, there are four stages of learning: have an experience, review the experience, conclude from the experience, and plan the next steps. This is how the reflection report is structured, as per the stages of learning from Honey and Mumford (1986).

Honey & Mumford (1986):

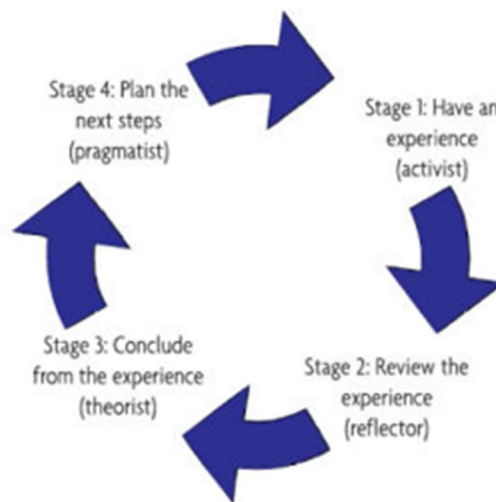


Figure 1: Honey and Mumford (1986) learning cycle

Having an experience

The experience from which I learnt was a role play exercise we had to prepare for the module, in which, together with a colleague, I was required to conduct a professional interview. Both me and my colleague had to roleplay, first as an interviewer and then as an interviewee. In my role as an interviewer I had to ask my colleague key question about her professional skills and career development plans. I asked her to formulate objectives. After that I had to answer similar questions about my job. My answers needed to reflect how the job was fitting with my career goals, whether or not I had the skills for the position, and why I thought I was the right candidate for the position. At the same time, I was required to formulate a SMART objective. This experience has enabled me to think about the manor in which employment works in the 21st century. It is now my opinion that the CV can only provide a brief presentation of a person's experience and skills, however employers are looking for people who can demonstrate knowledge, skills, and the desire for continuing development. Cottrell (2010) argues that occasionally employers tend to focus more on

values, behaviours and attitude instead of skills and experience, especially in the case of people who are at the beginning of their career. I do not feel the role play activity helped me to fully understand this, which is why I decided to further research the matter.

Review of the experience

This experience has thought me three major aspects relating to employability: even though the interview is the most important part of the employment activity, this does not mean we need to treat the CV as being unimportant because it acts as a business card for ourselves, we need to demonstrate awareness of our own strengths and weaknesses during an interview, and we need to demonstrate we have set for ourselves clear goals and a clear career path. When I first considered this activity, I thought it to be too easy for graduate task. But when I researched more, I realised I had no idea about procedures, policies and employment legislation. For example, due to employment acts, procedures, and policies meant to protect employee rights and prevent discrimination, interviewers must avoid questions relating to ethnic and nation origin, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status, being pregnant or in maternity leave, gender reassignment, etc. According to the H.R. and legislation experts at Williams Kent (2020) employees need to be aware of these types of legislation, procedures and policies in order to have the ability to protect themselves from discriminatory behaviours directed at them during the interview. Also, I realised I was wrongly afraid to ask questions at the end of the interview because potential employees have the right to ask questions about the company and the job role just as much as the employers have the right to ask them about their skills.

In preparation of this interview I also learned that the way in which interviewers ask questions can sometimes be rehearsed. Cameron (2008) indicated that interviewers are now trained to ask questions such as “Can you tell us about a time when ...?” (p. 414), which enables them to obtain from the interviewee a more detailed answer than they would have if they asked a yes or no question. This information made me consider my reaction when I receive such questions. It is now clear to me that the interviewer is trying to get as much information as possible from me about my attitude in a situation or my approach to solve a problem which means I cannot afford to provide a brief answer, leaving out details that I may think are not important.

Conclusions from the experience

This experience has determined me to evaluate my employability skills in order to devise a personal development plan with SMART objectives. Among the self awareness tools that I have learned about during this module is the personal SWOT analysis. I have learned in this module that such an exercise can help me put my plans into perspective and increase my self motivation, which was described in the course as the force that pushes us to go on. I particularly liked this description because I sometimes feel I lack direction, and this makes me feel demotivated. I know that the SWOT analysis is generally used in business but in my internet research I found that Sammut-Bonnici and Galea (2015) conducted a study that argued that SWOT is a tool for internal analysis which is why is so valuable both for business internal analysis and for personal analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The below table represents my personal analysis:

Table 1: Personal SWOT analysis

<u>Strengths:</u> -enthusiastic -hard working nature -good communicator -work well in teams -good at following instructions	<u>Weaknesses:</u> -lack of management skills -lack of leadership skills -sometimes feel I lack motivation -sometimes feel like I am procrastinating
<u>Opportunities:</u> -learn new skills at a job -be part of a team in which I am valued -hierarchical growth -career development	<u>Threats:</u> -not being able to learn procedures as fast as it is expected of me -not having sufficient intrinsic motivation to do a good job - handling work and school at the same time

This analysis helps me to have perspective on my employability skills. When I first started this course, I considered I was only aware of my strengths, thinking that they were enough to help me get any job that I want. But now after doing this SWOT analysis I feel that I have to be honest with myself and admit my weaknesses. For instance, I have to admit to myself that sometimes when I am very tired or very stressed, I lack the motivation to go on. This is why I liked so much the definition of self-motivation that I saw in this course. Now I know that there are certain techniques to increase my self-motivation. For example, Schroeder and Fishbach (2015) have written an article in which they reviewed common motivation strategies determining their rate of success. They found that using immediate incentives instead of delayed incentives generally have a higher rate of success because immediate rewards are more attractive to individuals. Of course, immediate incentives are not always preferred, and self control is often used in order to help the individuals select the delayed reward. Schroeder and Fishbach (2015) give the example of skipping work in order to sleep in late while there is the immediate reward of more sleep at the cost of keeping a job or getting promoted in the long run. Self control will determine the individual to refuse the immediate reward. On the other hand, individuals may choose to leave a job in which a pay increase is probable after several months for another job that pays more, thus selecting the immediate incentive.

Planning the next steps

Awareness about my strengths and weaknesses can now help me to create SMART objectives for my Personal Development Plan (PDP). SMART is an acronym which stands for Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Timely. This should be the main attributes for any objective that I formulate in personal development plan. As per the definition I learned in this course a PDP is a tool that enables us to take charge of our own learning process. In this way learning becomes proactive and reactive and we can prioritise our activities to support both immediate needs and long term ambitions. In the below table I conducted my PDP:

Table 2: Personal Development Plan

	Short-Term Time Frame	Mid-Term Time Frame	Long-Term Time Frame
	What do I want to accomplish in the next three to six months?	What do I want to accomplish in the next six months to two years?	What do I want to accomplish in the next two to three years?
Section 1 - My Goals What are my overall goals that I want to accomplish in this time period?	To achieve better self motivation I will practice self awareness so I can manage to finish my work in school in 75% of the time allotted for each assignment, in the following of three to six months.	To achieve my goal of having a leadership position I will study more leadership theories in school and observe the leaders at work so I can have the qualifications necessary to apply to a leadership that would be available to my current job, in the following six months to two years.	To achieve my goal to have a successful career in business I will continuously improve my performance at work in order to gain at least three promotion to higher hierarchal positions within the company in the next two to three years.
Section 2 - Skills and Knowledge to be Learned What specifically do I need to learn? What project do I need to work on?	-self awareness techniques -efficient learning techniques -research skills	-knowledge about leadership models -engage in a shadowing or mentorship program at work	-engage in projects that aim at improving operational processes in order to have good knowledge of enterprise operations -engage in projects that aim in simplified procedures
Section 3 - Next Steps How am I going to acquire the skills and knowledge? How am I going to do this project?	The first step would be to research self awareness techniques and determine which one is the best for me to keep my motivation. Secondly, I would research learning techniques similar to Honey and Mumford (1986) because I consider this process to be more appropriate to my learning style.	The first step is to engage in available courses at the university which can help me gain the knowledge about leadership theories and leadership styles. Secondly, I will show my interest at work to become included in different mentorship programs that the company is offering.	First I will show my interest and availability to learn about organizational procedures and operations at my current job. I will also become as involved as possible in any project that the company conducts in order to improve and simplify operations.

Conclusion

This module has helped me through all courses completed so far and through the roleplay exercise to better assess my employability skills and become more aware of what my strengths are but more importantly of which areas I need to improve. I also learned about employment legislations, the importance of the CV but also of what employers seek and how they conduct themselves during the interview. The roleplay exercise also helped me to see the mistakes I am making in an interview and I now feel more prepared to give appropriate responses in a real life situation. This self reflection has determined me to devise clear objectives for my career and I will use the PDP I have created in order to guide myself in my future development.

References

- Cameron, S. (2008) *The Business Student's Handbook: Learning Skills for Study and Employment*. 4th edn. Edimburgh: Pearson Education Limited.
- Cottrell, S. (2010) *Skills for Success: The Personal Development Planning Handbook*. 2nd edn. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Honey, P. and Mumford, A. (1986) *Manual of Learning Styles*. London: P Honey.
- Sammut-Bonnici, T. and Galea, D. (2015) "SWOT Analysis", *Wiley Encyclopedia of Management*, 12, pp. 1-8. doi: 10.1002/9781118785317.weom120103.
- Schroeder, J. and Fishbach, A. (2015) "How to motivate yourself and others? Intended and unintended consequences", *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 35, pp. 123-141. doi: 10.1016/j.riob.2015.09.001.
- Williams Kent (2020) *Conducting Interviews: The Importance of Employment Law Knowledge*, Williams Kent. Available at: <https://www.williams-kent.com/importance-employment-law-in-interviews/> (Accessed: 22 December 2020).