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CertHE Skills for the Workplace

Professional Career Development/ BMSW4005

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Section 1: Introduction

In this report I will describe my chosen Professional career. The report focuses on 'Current Skills' on 'Gap in Skills', 'Personal Development plan' and on the 'Role Play'. The first thing that motivated me to stop at the career I chose was the exercise we did at class about our own "lifeline". This exercise helped me to see my high and low points in my life so far. I chose to write this report with Kolb's reflective writing because my feelings were clear that Kolb's reflective writing would help me easily pass all the four stages of Kolb's cycle and to describe my feelings about the career I chose.

Before I describe my chosen career, I would like to highlight the 'Career Vision' exercise we did also in class. Answering a few questions in the test led me to my career choice. My chosen career is Teaching Assistant, teaching assistants help children with their learning and social development both in the classroom and in their personal lives. In the UK, teaching assistants in secondary schools are referred to as "learning support assistants". ([Teaching Assistant, n.d.](#))

The responsibility of this profession is different and varied in different schools. It can include:

- to prepare the classroom for the day ahead
- helping children with special needs who need extra support to complete their tasks.
- to assist teachers in preparing teaching materials.
- to help teachers with classroom discipline.
- to observe the children when they have work in groups and to listen to the children when they read books.
- to assist teachers and the school in extracurricular activities.

Most schools in UK prefer to employ teaching assistants who are assigned to a special field, such as:

- Special Education Needs (SEN).
- Music
- Creative Arts
- knowledge of two or more languages is an advantage because it is possible to work with children for whom English is not their first language.

It is important for schools that teaching assistants are specially trained, because from timeto-time teaching assistants with more advanced training may need to lead a lesson instead of the teacher. ([Roles in school, n.d.](#))

Section 2: Current Skills

Using the first stage of Kolb's reflective writing, "Concrete Experience" (feeling) I want to discuss about the skills currently possesses and how they fit into the profession that I chose, and it is Teaching Assistant.

([Kolb's learning cycle\(Expert Program management, n.d.\)](#))

Choosing this profession, my feeling about it was that this is the right job for me, because here I can show and apply all the knowledge, I have gained in child psychology. I have been doing psychology for a long time, but I am considering specialising specifically in child psychology because I think my personality is suitable for working with children. In the second stage Kolb said, "Reflective Observation" (watching). The other skill which I have, and which suits being a Teaching Assistant is painting (Creative Arts). My personality started painting as a hobby and now it is a permanent part of my daily life. I love painting and I think painting can help children a lot to distract themselves from the tough exams and relax their minds. Watching my own son draw, and how he "projects" his thoughts on a piece of paper, I saw how he had fun and relax.

This is exactly what the children at school will do, with whom we will paint and have fun. The third stage of Kolb's reflective writing is "Abstract Conceptualization" (thinking). Apart from these two skills that I have already mentioned, I am also a patient person, and this is an especially important skill when we talk about child development. Besides that, my personality is very hardworking and ready to devote as much time to work as is necessary for the good development of a child. With the great imagination that I possess, my thought is that I will handle the boring tasks for the children and make them more fun for them. In my opinion, the role of teaching assistant is varied and challenging. I have not had a job like this before, but my desire is to work in this field where I can help children and witness their positive change. My opinion is that the help coming from the assistant is as important as the help coming from the teacher himself.

Kolb's fourth and last stage of reflective writing is "Active Experimentation" (doing). With the knowledge that I have learnt so far, I'm feeling that I will be of great benefit to the teachers and to the students. Doing my best now I continue to learn and develop myself with new skills, to be able to start working where I really want to. My feelings about this position are strength and ability to do it. As a teaching assistant I must do many different things than what I have done so far in the previous jobs because in this field I will work with children, and they are our future. Making schools more fun for children will make them love school and come willingly, and this can be achieved by the joint work between the teacher and his/her assistant. (A Day in the Life of a Teaching Assistant(ND Education, n.d.)

Section 3: Gap in Skills

In this section, I will talk about the skills which I still need to learn to be good at the position I want to work in, which is Teaching assistant.

Kolb in his first stage said "Feeling". My feelings are that I need to learn more about children with special needs who needs more in-depth work with them. (Children with specila educational needs and disabilities(SEND), n.d.)

"Watching" is the second stage of Kolb's reflective writing. Watching and seeing how these children behave differently from normal children, I can say that it is clearly understood that these children want special care. When I look after children with such special needs, my understanding is that their teachers and assistants need to have additional knowledge and skills, as well as be more patient with them.

Stage three of Kolb's model of writing is "Thinking". My thoughts about these additional skills that I need to gain will be a positive assessment for my application as a teaching assistant. However, I also think that these skills will be quite difficult to learn.

The fourth Kolb's stage says "Doing". I did a research in how children with special needs need extra mental help. (Special Educational needs, n.d.) According to that, I had read a few books about the psyche of children with special needs, and how they think and see everything in a different way, but I think for these books reading is not enough information. I'm feeling that I need more knowledge in this area. Thinking that the patience and knowledge I have up to this stage are only for children with normal development. If my personality must take the next step in my development, it will be to get to know more about the psyche of children with special requirements, because these children are very special, and they need to learn too. I should be more patient when I'm working with these children because they need more time to express themselves and some children to show what they can do, because some of them cannot speak, even if they speak, they can express what they think or feel. (Parenta(2019), n.d.)

Section 4: Systematic Approach to Skills acquisition.

Personal Development Plan

In introducing you to my personal plan, I want first to explain my self-motivation about this career. My self-motivation is to pursue my dreams and goals and not to give up on them, feeling this as an incentive for action and development. My love for knowledge makes me pursue this field where I will also study and teach.

Using the first stage of Kolb's model of reflective writing I would like to describe my feelings about my personal plan and how it helped me to manage my time and organise my skills. My feelings were very confident after making my personal plan and I was able to see my strengths and weaknesses that my personality still needs to develop. (Putter(2021), n.d.)

Kolb in his second stage said, "Reflective Observation" (watching). The personal development plan, also known as PDP, is an action plan that shows us our individual goals and what we want to achieve, the areas that we need to improve and develop to achieve our goals quickly and consciously.

The personal plan consists of four stages that help us define our own:

- Strengths
- Opportunities
- Threats
- Weaknesses

Third stage of Kolb's reflective model of writing is "Abstract Conceptualisation" (thinking).

Thinking about my personal action plan I was able to see realistically what still must develop in myself to be a potentially good candidate in the job I have chosen.

In Kolb's fourth stage of reflective writing "Active Writing" (doing), I want to do my personal development plan of action.

My "Strengths" for this job are that I have the necessary qualifications for this position.

Second is my "Opportunities". I can work at any time and with different groups of children.

"Weaknesses" I must develop a new skill with the children who have a special need. The last stage is about "Threats". In my action plan, I found only one threat, and this is only the place that I needs to develop further, and if I don't do it, may myself turn out to be a weak candidate for this position. (Bussines(2021), n.d.)

My personal plan for the next 3 months looks like; first to finish my courses about child development, then I can apply for SEN (special educational need).

For the next 3 years my personal plan looks like; I want to start a job as a teaching assistant in my son's school and to develop myself into a headteacher in the same school. Well, with this personal plan I have described the stages which need to go through to achieve my goals and start working as a teaching assistant.

Figure 1 below for Personal Swot shows the personal plan I followed to describe my qualities and what I need to improve.

Personal SWOT

This is a sample text.
Insert your desired
text here.

This is a sample text.
Insert your desired
text here.



Figure 1

Section 5: Role Play

In his first stage Kolb said, “Concrete Experience” (feeling). In this section I would like to describe my feelings about the role play interview we had in the exam. As you can see so far, my role play interview was about a Teaching assistant. My feelings about this position are very clear and strong, preparing the questions and answers for the interview. I was sure that this is exactly what I want to work for in the future.

In the second stage of Kolb’s reflective writing, I would like to introduce you to the questions which my personality had at the role play interview for the profession of teaching assistant. Kolb’s second stage is “Reflective observation” (watching).

In my first question watching my roleplay partner ask me the first question I felt confident in what I should answer, my answer was clear and well thought out.

At the second question asked to me from my partner, my feelings were a little hesitant because knowing there are many better candidates than me, nevertheless my answers were confident that I am the right candidate for this position. At this point comes my hesitation as to what else I personally can and should develop in myself when I am getting this very question; maybe I should be more prepared and with a clear answer.

Looking at the face of my interviewer partner I thought that this question is very important and significant for any position related to teachers. However, I prepared my answer very well and talked about all the experiences I had with children so far.

For the Next question asked to me from my roleplay partner my answer was well chosen with the practice I had until now with the children.

The final question was "What would you do if a student was disruptive in class"? In my practice, I have never had problems with children breaking discipline in class, but this is a common situation in large schools and with young children. For this question my thoughts were carefully selected and yes, the answer was very clear to me describing exactly what I can do in such a situation. (Adam(2021), n.d.)

Kolb's reflective model of writing in the third stage says, "Abstract Conceptualisation" (thinking). Thinking that for my role play I was prepared very well, and my answers were clearly and specifically the questions that were asked by my interviewing partner for the role play. I'm thinking here are a few questions which can be prepared better or change the way to answer.

Fourth stage of Kolb's reflective writing is "Active Experimentation" (doing). The next step is to make my action plan to follow to answer the questions that are being asked. Also, to prepare thoughtful answers to two of the questions my roleplay partner asked me, because I know I can do it better.

Section 6: Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to highlight some of the important points in this report. I started by mentioning the skills I currently possess and those skills I need to improve and the first important point for me as a writer of this report is to see how well prepared, I am for the chosen profession and to clearly see the qualifications that I possess so far. Next, I wrote and created my personal plan. This personal plan helped me a lot in clearly seeing the things I need to develop in myself to be a truly successful candidate for the position I want and to see my strengths for the position. My next step in the future will be to follow this established plan and develop and to make it work better for me.

Finally, I wrote my feelings and experiences about the Role Play we had at the class. My plan for the future is to follow the report I wrote for teaching assistant because this report will help me a lot to improve myself when I apply for this position.

Section 7: References

Adam (2022) '*How to Answer 7 Common Teaching Assistant Interview Questions and Get the Job*', Stone bridge [blog]. 12 January. Available at: <https://www.stonebridge.uk.com/blog/education-teaching-and-coaching/teaching-assistantinterview-questions-and-answers/> (Accessed: 15 November 2022).

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Section 8: Appendix 1: Job application form

Application for [job title] - Teaching Assistant

Your details

Name: Ayten Tair

Education and training Please
give details:

Now I do a course about Skills for the Workplace at UWTSD and at the same time I do a course about GCSE (general certificate of secondary education) in Math and English at Redbridge Institute.
I have only like practitioner in the time when I studied at the University in Bulgaria.

Qualifications
Please give details:

Certificate Skills for the workplace level4.
Certificate GCSE- Math and English.

Employment history

Your current or most recent employer

Name of employer: Vladimir Todorov

Job title: End of tenancy cleaning

Length of time with employer:2 years

Reason for leaving: Improvement myself

Duties:

Cleaning the whole property and speaking with the customers.

Previous employers

Please tell us about other jobs you have done and about the skills you used or learned in those jobs.

Shop assistant- I learnt to be patient with other people and to listen for their needs. Printing house – I printed student's materials. I learnt how to work with printer.

Supporting statement

Please tell us why you applied for this job and why you think you are the best person for the job.

I applied for this job because I would like to develop my skills in children psychology, and I can bring my interests in the classroom. For example, I like painting. I can help children with good painting and I'm able to teach them on a basic level of professional natural drawing. Of course, and for the flexible working time.

I think I'm the right person for this position because I have training with little children, and I continue to improve my skills in child development. I know how to be patient with children when they are talking about their ideas and to make them to believe in themselves.

Right to work in the UK

Do you need a work permit to work in the UK? Yes

References

Please give the names and contact details of 2 people who we can ask to give you a reference. We may ask them before an employment offer is made. We will not ask your current employer until we get your permission.

Declaration

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information I have provided on this form is correct and I accept that providing deliberately false information could result in my dismissal.

Name: Ayten Tair

Signature:Ayten Tair

Date:29.11.2022

Section 9: Appendix 2: Role Play

Role Play

Module code: BMSW4005

Lecturer: Joanna Walsh

**Student's names: Ayten Tair- Job Applicant.
Shenay Ulanova-Employer.**

Teaching Assistant



Interview Questions:

Why do you want to be a teaching assistant?

Why do you think you are the best person for this job?

Can you tell me about a time you worked together with children?

What makes a good lesson?

What would you do if a pupil disruptive in class?



I would like to become a teaching assistant because I want to develop my skills in children psychology, and I can bring my interest in the classroom. For example, I like to do painting and I can teach children good painting, and I can teach them basic level of professional natural painting. And of course, for flexible working time.

I think I'm the best person for this position because I have training with little children, and I continue to improve myself with new skills for children development. I believe that children like me. I know how to be patient with them when they are talking about their ideas or dreams and to make them to believe in themselves.

Yes, I have worked with children when I was doing my last year study at University in Bulgaria. I worked with 6-year-old children; this was 10 years ago.

If the teacher and assistant are fully prepared for the lesson together, this will make one lesson successful and funny and easy understanding for little children.

As a teaching assistant it's important we work together with the teacher to calm down this child. In most cases I will follow the teacher rules; to move this child to different place or to have quite discussion with this child.

