



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
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Employability Skills

Professional Career Development

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Personal Reflection

Certificate of Higher Education

Introduction

In this essay I will present my positive experience, related to Professional Career Development, a module that was introduced to me, by Professor Muhammad C. our lead and guide at “University of Wales Trinity Saint David,” as a student in my first term. Throughout this module, motivated and committed to progress, I realized the significant impact of different concepts such as **Honey & Mumford**, **Myers Briggs**, **SWOT** analysis and **SMART** goals, tools that helped me understand how to improve my learning and perspectives about my career development. In other words, it provided me with a framework and tools through which I can analyze myself and future choices that must come. Using (Rolfe et al.2001) reflective circle, I will reflect on my experiences related to this module and how I overcome challenges and obstacles during the development process.

“What?”

From the beginning, our lead introduced us to several concepts and theory models such as: **Honey & Mumford** (Yadav et al., 2020), framework that helps find how you can become more productive in learning. One of the best ways to absorb information is consciously, also called “implicit learning”, which refers to, deliberately putting the effort to acquire knowledge or skills, or unconsciously, also called “tacit learning”, which relates to absorbing information, without being fully aware of the process, when it happens automatically (Reber, 1989). The next model, also called **SWOT** analysis (Puyt, Lie and Wilderom, 2023), act more like a mirror that shows your (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), particularly useful because it gives you the overview of current stages, a clear understanding of the “*input*” where, based on that ,can analyze, the “*output*” strategically and have better decision making process Sammut-Bonnici and Galea (2015). As we progressed through lectures, team activities,

discussions and individual tasks, the pressure started to build, and I remember asking myself if I would effectively be able to apply those concepts and succeed. **Johari Window** theory model, Oliver and Duncan (2019), one of the best filters to improve relationships, by increasing Self-Awareness, therefore helpful in our module and on interpersonal communication level. Now the **SMART Goals** (one of my favorites) Conzemius and O'Neill (2009), "as smart as it sounds", can be implemented in different fields with various settings including personal, professional and business environments. Based on its own simple understanding and analytic approach, it relates directly to a variety of purposes, use cases and can be implemented in almost any area of activities. **Personal Development Plan**, a structured plan that focuses on improving skills in almost any field related to personal and professional development and helps build or gain knowledge on the subject or topic in a well-structured way. According to Cottrell (2021, p.3), "*PDP is the process that enables us to identify what we really want - our ambitions for ourselves - and what we need to do, in order to achieve that*". While my expectations were to achieve a clear understanding of those models (which I did), and use them correctly in my assignments, I realized that practically applying all the theory and concepts required more work and effort than I thought, especially from a reflective perspective. **RIASEC** or **Holland's** career theory (Zainudin et al., 2020) and **Myers Briggs**, both provide similar use cases and underline valuable insight related to career planning based on how you interpret the "outputs" of the test. The first one helps you choose the right career path based on 6 personality profiles and the second one shows 16 different profiles based on cognitive variation (Furham, 2020). **Personal branding**, according to Rachmad (2023, p.4) "*Is a powerful tool for career development and business growth*" especially if you are a public figure, or the face of a business brand. In my opinion, beneficial if you have an online presence. Finally, **Maslow's** motivation theory and **Ikigai**, provides solutions and tools that help you get motivation and find purpose in choosing your goals, also helps overcome obstacles and challenges along the way. Acquah et al. (2021) states that "*Motivation can be defined as those forces within an individual that push or propel him to satisfy basic needs or wants*". And based on Japanese literature and Sartore et al. (2023) "*Ikigai defines a feeling obtained by a person who is doing something useful for someone else or society and consequently, feels that life is worth living*".

"So what?"

Even though I was confident in absorbing all those theories, reflecting on practical exercises and my assignments, felt frustrating and I was overwhelmed about how or where to start. Loads of doubts in my mind created questions, which, at the time, I was not able to answer. According to Cottrell S. (2021) the best way to overcome stress and find yourself in a comfortable position while staying, is by improving your technique or approach on your tasks, activities or interactions, therefore everything becomes more effective and easier to follow. The value and knowledge gained throughout every session made me feel confident and motivated to “*go the extra mile*” in researching and learning new skills for my own development and for my future. Following my insights from models like **Honey & Mumford**, **Holland's** career theory and **Myers Briggs**, I began to improve my structure framework and increase my skills in self-awareness, a moment where I understood why often I need time before engaging in a conversation. This new understanding includes not just the theoretical aspects of my career planning but also practical insights into my learning style and time-management challenges. I realized that the tendency to procrastinate, revealed through self-reflection exercises, was impacting my ability to fully engage with the information. This new understanding includes not just the theoretical aspects of career development but also practical insights into my learning style. **SMART** goals, a “5 steps” planning tool, focused on setting and achieving goals, helped me gain valuable insights about skills that I must improve and develop actionable plans accordingly Worden J.M. (2014). This provided a clear structured approach and possible feedback to my own career planning, by transforming a general issue, such as “time management” or “procrastination” into specific, measurable goals with clear timelines and evaluation criteria. My confidence and commitment started to grow gradually and even though I had to overcome “time management” and “procrastination”, I felt that this journey transformed my entire perception and outlook about personal and professional career development. Throughout the learning process, answers and solutions that came from questioning myself in the beginning, shaped my approach and at the same time, my thinking became more structured, by analyzing (“*pros*” and “*cons*”) and by breaking down complex tasks into smaller, manageable one. I had to grow my emotional intelligence and my patience step by step, therefore I developed competency in the ability to handle situations more efficiently and with a higher level of confidence.

“Now What?”

Moving forward, my plan is to add more useful tools and futures to my toolbox, in order to become more efficient in absorbing information and I will research more to find better way to upgrade my existing skills. As I discovered some “lack-efficiency”, into my area of “time management”, I Will use **Eisenhower Matrix** to improve my productivity by approaching every task in a more sensible and structured way, based on Importance and deadlines, prioritizing those that are more relevant Mfondoum et al. (2019). I have identified as well that I learn more effectively through a combination of theory, reflection and practical application. This valuable insight will help me in the future to choose the right approach to different learning opportunities, both in formal and professional education. **SMART** goals, being one of my favorite models, has become an important part of my planning process, therefore I will keep implementing it into my personal and professional development. For example, applying this framework model to develop a structured plan relating to those areas where I know myself struggling, such a “Procrastinations”:

Specific	• create a task manager (journal template) for each module • classify the task in chronologic order based on deadlines • Add specific details/information related to each task • Break down the task into smaller requirements • Incorporate in class notes/sources
Measurable	• Work out time limit, each task / module. • Work out personal time allowance. • Use a task tracker or planner to log completed tasks daily. • Complete assignments at least 3 days before the deadline.

Achievable	• Set realistic weekly/daily goals (10hrs/week, 3hrs/day). • Use relative apps or template sheets. • Journal start /end of the session. • Summarize and Analyze the data.
Relevant	• Overcoming it will improve efficiency. • create better work habits. • Work performance reduces stress.
Time Bond	• Implement the plan monthly and evaluate weekly. • Analyze the strategy weekly /manages the adjustments.

Based on **Johari Window** and **Myers Briggs** frameworks, I improved my knowledge and understanding related to self-awareness and I will continue to upgrade my communication skills. I am now aware that my personality plays a significant role in the conversational and communication level, therefore with a better approach and more exercise I believe that I can become more efficient in this field.

Conclusion

PCD Module, has given me the necessary tools, resources and training to progress on both, personal and professional level. Even when I faced difficulties, the general knowledge and understanding of the module demonstrate the advantages and value of such experience. Looking ahead, I feel confident about the ongoing process, I'm committed to upgrading and improving these tools to progress and achieve better results. This reflection shows that Professional Career Development is not only about setting a goal or target, but is more about the journey, the continuous process of learning and growing your skills.

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