Employability Skills Module: Professional Career Development

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Part 1: Individual Reflection Certificate of Higher Education

After a long time trying to build my business and make it grow and also having the idea to open a new business in selling hair extensions in order to make an earning from selling a product rather then providing a service to earn money which also consists in working long hours, I decided to go to university with the hope that I can fulfil my dreams. Our lecturer Mohammed presented us the SMART GOAL. SMART goal stand for us, we need it, we want it, and we can achieve it. Ash (2019) said that moving towards results you need to be clear about your objective. For setting up better results we need to apply it in an intelligent way asking ourselves couple of questions which will give us a better understanding of it. Smart is shared in 5 sections: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

My smart objectives are the next:

Specific: My objective is to grow my current business which is a salon and try to build a brand in order to sell my hair extensions.

Measurable: For sure it will take me a long time, but it will give me a lot of satisfaction when I achieve this as it will improve my income ,reduce my working hours and it is particularly important for me as this will make me feel fulfilled.

Achievable: It is achievable as since starting this course I have found out a lot about skills which I did not know and never thought they were needed in order to be successful as a business owner now I have a better understanding of how business works it also gave me more ambition in dedicating my time into my ideas.

Realistic: My business idea is realistic as I already earn my income from it . However I need the time, effort and skills in order to extend it and earn more money from it.

Time bound: Every business require at least 2 years in order to achieve a profit. Within the first 2-3 years I may see a significant growth if I have a solid product and a good distributor and a strong marketing strategy.

Stein and Barton (2020) stated that having a goal is like dreaming about a destination you want to visit and what you need to go there it is commitment.

I find that in the University not only you learn about the business development skills but also you learn more about yourself. In one of the lectures we had, we learnt about SWOT analysis which helped me understand my internal Strengths and Weaknesses but also the external Opportunities and Threats. To apply all this on yourself you need to be honest and think it deeply. To apply such an analysis to us can be quite difficult

sometimes because you can be reluctant to admit weaknesses and may not have the confidence in order to analyse your strengths . It shows you on which level you are and the possibility to convert the weaknesses in strengths. Cottrel (2021) stated that the way for success it is the time you invest in it.

• Strengths:

-Communication

-Creative

-Quickly Learning new thing

• Weaknesses:

-Trying to please everyone

-Insecure

-Over-thinker

• Opportunities:

-To achieve my dreams and goals

-Having business skills

-Learning new strategies

• Threats:

-Not having courage

-Lack of confidence

-Employee with better qualifications

If I put in effort, time, and ambition I can change my weaknesses into strengths. I can do this by building a solid goal and challenging my negative thoughts. If I do this it will improve myself confidence and I courage me to achieve my goals without being held back by my thoughts.

Also one of my main weakness which is trying to please everyone, I can tackle this problem and change that into a strength by remembering that in fact I cannot please everyone and not everyone will like me and my work everyone is special in their way and can't please everybody I strongly believe that this course will help me tackle this problem.

In one of our lectures, we focused on mindset and resilience , and I understand why they are important on our career. Mindset is a mental attitude or approach you take toward life and challenges. It affects how you interpret situations and respond to them. There are two main mindsets , firstly it is the fixed mindset in which you believe your

abilities, intelligence, and talents are fixed traits and challenges or failure may be seen as a reflection of your limitations, leading to avoidance or giving up. Secondly it is the growth mindset with this mindset you believe that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort, learning, and persistence. Challenges are viewed as opportunities for growth, and failure is seen as part of the learning process. In this lesson I have learned that a growth mindset is essential for resilience because it encourages the belief that challenges and setbacks can be overcome with effort and adaptability. This mindset leads to perseverance even when things get tough this is the mindset I need to overcome my challenges.Until I attended this lesson I had fixed mindset which caused me to avoid challenges or give up more easily for example if I had a problem with a client I would panic and would make me want to give up.

In this lessson we have also learned the Johari Window which is a tool used on understanding and improving self-awareness and personal grow for us and others mostly for team working. With the help of Johari Window and the people around me, I managed to find out some lacks in myself which I was blind to it before. I was not well surprised to see that others see me as a very brave, successful and confident person which I strongly disagree with I never really have confidence in myself and always need reassurance .Before applying this tool I have never realised this and now I'm trying to be more confident in my ideas and be more happy with myself . To achieve self-development, Tomlinson (2004) stated that the main basis for a professional and personal development it is self-acceptance which is important on the way of success. Tomlinson also stated that having negative feeling about yourself it will make you less fruitfully.

On our third week we had to do two test on two different theories which I enjoyed and has shocked me as before doing them I had a different mindset about my personality which proved me wrong.

The first theory was Hollands career theory ,this theory is a highly known theory in career development, emphasizing the relationship between personality types and occupational environments.

Holland believes that individuals and work environments can be categorized into six types, which are:

1. **Realistic (R)**: Individuals who are practical, physically active, and prefer working with tools, machines. They tend to enjoy hands-on work and problem-solving.
2. **Investigative (I)**: Analytical, intellectual, and curious They tend to pursue careers in research, science, and technology.
3. **Artistic (A)**: Creative, imaginative, and expressive individuals who prefer working in unstructured environments and value self-expression. Careers in arts, design, and media are common fits for this type.

4. **Social (S)**: People-oriented, empathetic, and helpful individuals who prefer working with people and enjoy teaching, counselling, or providing services. Careers in education, healthcare, and social services align with this type.
5. **Enterprising (E)**: Persuasive, ambitious, and leadership-driven individuals who enjoy influencing others, taking risks, and managing projects. Careers in business, sales, and management are a good fit.
6. **Conventional (C)**: Detail-oriented, organised, and methodical individuals who enjoy structured tasks, data management. Careers I n administration, finance, and office management align with this type.

When we did this test I initially thought I was Artistic (A) due to working within the beauty industry and being passionate about it as beauty is an artistic domain however I discovered that I am Enterprising (E) . I have realised that when I started my business I started it as a hobby which would of categorised me as an Artistic (A) however over the years as I started it when I was 14 so it has been 5 years I have developed myself into trying to make my hobby a business therefore my mindset is set as Enterprising (E).

Secondly ,The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator which is a personality assessment tool based on Carl Jung's theory of psychological types. It categorizes individuals into one of 16 distinct personality types based on preferences in four areas:

1. Extraversion (E) vs. Introversion (I):
2. Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N):.
3. Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F):
4. Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P):

Before this test I thought my personality was E,S,F,P however it turns out I am I,S,F, J with the highest percentage(60%) Judging a person which is organised,systematic,achievement oriented and a planner , this has shocked me as I never really seen my self as this type of person due to my lack of confidence but now if I think about it it does describe me.

Overall this course has helped me gain confidence and gave me ambition into succeeding within my industry and I am now excited to see the outcome . It has given me new ideas and strategies to help my business grow. I have also put into place a giveaway for my salon as I had this idea from one of our group activities.