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Submitted on:
04/01/2023

BA BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Assignment 2

Academic Skills (LCBB4006)

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Introduction

In a modern age, people have to constantly adapt and perfect their abilities to compete with the rising demands in fields such as academia, the workplace, the job market and even everyday life. The factors that can have an impact and be the difference between failure and success are many but a particular set of skills that serve as a foundation that will give a person a remarkable advantage are skills such as time management, teamwork, motivation, reflection, analytical and critical thinking, etc. By developing these skills and adapting them for the required task ahead the chance of success will improve exponentially.

In this report, most of these skills will be explored, analysed and backed by an example of their application in academia and the workplace.

Time Management

According to (Trentepohi, Waldeyer, et al. 2022, n.p.) “Time management can be defined as clusters of behavioural skills that are beneficial in the organization of the study and course load, and that help learners to facilitate their productivity to achieve their learning goals”. To improve and keep growing, a person in education must be able to manage their time well, particularly students who work and study at the same time.

Planning ahead is a necessary part of time management, but it may be challenging when deadlines are involved. One of the first things to do is to think strategically and make deliberate decisions rather than rash ones to get the most out of them. Everyone is expected to have a method for managing their workload, whether it be at home, at work, or in school. The pressure can be very intense if someone is not well-organized and prepared.

Time management in a working environment

Time management is crucial to the workplace and to a person's ability to complete activities with speed and efficiency. Everyone requires sound judgment and time management abilities, regardless of job type: in an office, a mall, or any place else. According to research, people may increase their productivity and time management by modifying specific behaviours that have an impact on their time estimation.

A while ago, Peter Cook starred in a skit concerning the likelihood of a nuclear war, where it was said that the early warning radar would provide four minutes' notice of any enemy missiles pointed our way, as stated by the author Forsyth, P. (2013).

“‘What can you do in four minutes?’, asked one character incredulously. ‘Some people’, came the reply, ‘can run a mile in four minutes!’ Though sadly inadequate for the task of escaping from annihilation, four minutes is still, well, four minutes, and it is an important principle of time management that even small periods of time can readily add up to a worthwhile amount”. (Forsyth, 2013, n.p.).

Usually, four minutes are nothing, but when added together, they may boost an action's efficiency, reduce monotony, and help with the completion of modest tasks or goals; in a year, that amounts to fourteen hours. When these four minutes are combined, they can create a circle of perseverance that produces pleasant outcomes.

Time management in an education environment

The use of time is crucial to students' academic life. Exams, projects, and coursework all have due dates, and since meeting these deadlines can be quite difficult, students must plan their entire lives in order to make it on time. A few pointers exist for effective time management:

- Think before you act.
- Prioritize.
- Make daily/weekly schedules.
- Develop the practice of looking forward and planning ahead.
- Make an accurate time estimate.

Everyone must learn time management skills and occasionally forgo attending social gatherings, or parties to finish their allocated assignments, because of the time restrictions put on pupils. To be able to manage his free time and the tasks assigned to him, the student must learn how to manage his time wisely from the very first year of his studies. But everyone needs downtime to unwind, spend with loved ones, and reload with new vigour. To succeed and find fulfilment in the future, one must be able to establish a balance between the two.

According to Trentepohl, S., et al. (2022), a study has been done to test students' skills in time management. It has been divided into two groups, the first one was to test the effects of intervention and provide information such as scheduling, planning, and prioritizing. The students have been given one session (half a day) of watching videos and doing some exercises as preparation.

The other time management group was approached differently, whether they were given self-training materials with information on improving their time skills for 5 weeks. Both groups reported almost identical time management strategies, indicating that strategy knowledge was generally stronger and less problematic for students. Their practical task involved drawing up a timetable for the week to support the completion of the tasks. The aim was to enable students to create realistic plans and gain experience in implementing them through their own plans and learning efforts.

Furthermore, we can conclude that time management is an important factor in human life, for academic purposes or work. The skill of effective time management will be useful for any person who wants to cope with the assigned tasks on time and achieve success. Planning is of great importance as it provides a prerequisite for an organization and supports the ultimate goal. It can be said that with a well-organized plan, no one can go wrong or fail as long as he has set his goal.

Teamwork

Hoag, (2006, pp. 45-50) concluded that in the twentieth-century teamwork began democratising and changing the way people use language at work. Moreover, according to Stacey, teamwork in most environments is something common nowadays, as many job advertisements point to the significance of teamwork (Stacey, 2009, pp. 15-30).

In addition, the author states that the term "team" was first used to describe a group of animals that are joined together to plough more effectively. By the sixteenth century, the meaning of the word became the definition for people working together to achieve a common objective.

Furthermore, Belbin,(1981, pp. 47-56) has redefined team roles. The author has identified different types of people with different personalities that fit differently in each role in a winning team. The author affirms that if a team is assembled just with intelligent and creative people, it does not mean that the job will be done, nor the team will get along. A team must be composed of people with a variety of attributes that will supplement each other.

Team Roles

According to Belbin, (1981, pp. 47-56), people have roles within a team:

- Co-ordinator – presides over the group and keeps it focused.
- Plant – creative and comes up with ideas and suggestions but is not interested in detail.
- Resource investigator – sociable and extroverted, liaising with others and bringing people together.
- Shaper – who likes to keep on task and brings people back when they go off track.
- Monitor evaluator – an analyser and dependable; looks at the detail.
- Team worker – supportive to others and uncompetitive; popular but often in the background.
- Company worker – a good organiser and administrator.
- Finisher – good at meeting deadlines and checking details (Belbin, 1981, pp. 47-56).

The author describes the identified roles within a team very clearly, as we can see an effective, strong team is made of people with different characters, and roles to play. Each and every one has an important role to play for the team to have success. Even if a member of the team does not bring anything to the table at a certain point, the members of the team

should be supportive of each other so they can effectively finish the task. However, some important factors make the team stable and strong. Adair, (1987, pp.36-40) concludes that a team has three main parts that must be nurtured and cared for. These are the following:

- The task – the goal that must be achieved
- The group – the bond between the team members must be maintained and looked after for the job to be carried out perfectly.
- The individual – being a member of a team does not mean that everyone is the same. Some people may need help, while others will carry on with the task by themselves.

Types of Teams

Moreover, Edgington, (2004, pp. 56-63) agrees that in the Early Years were the following three types of teams.

- Rigorous and challenging

A team that is never satisfied with the outcome and never stops to celebrate the success.

- Turbulent team

A team that seems to be perfectly balanced however on the inside there is an issue that is not solved.

- The cosy team

A team where members get along with each other, however, they cannot look at themselves constructively and are afraid of challenges and differences.

Importance of Teamwork

The importance of teamwork, as seen above, is imperative for the job to be done properly. When advertising a job, many companies highlight the importance of being a part of a team and look for employees who know how to work within a team. A clear example of the importance of teamwork is this group assignment. Made by five different people with different visions, ideas, and abilities. People that did not know each other came together and built a team. However, a team is not important just to getting the job done, it also creates strong relationships and friendships among its members. It is work efficient, and the members of a team can learn from each other.

Being part of a team within a workplace not only completes the task better and quicker but also creates effective relationships. Creating and maintaining good relationships in the workplace is imperative and healthy. Teamwork within an organisation is not just working with your colleagues, but with the customers as well. Being part of a team means that one gets to develop better, learn, and help others. The team is more effective, tasks are getting done and goals are achieved. A healthy relationship between the members of the team creates better services for the customers and the job is done impeccably.

Motivation

Motivation is the psychological process that gives meaning and intent to conduct; it explains why individuals behave as they do. There are many theories about what motivates people, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Alderfer's ERG Theory, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory or Two-Factor Theory, etc. (Papa, 2019). The next few paragraphs discuss the first of these.

Structure of Motivation

According to Maslow (1943), there are at least five sets of goals that are "basic requirements." In that order, these are self-actualization, self-worth, safety, love, and physiology. We are also driven by intellectual goals and the desire to achieve or keep the many things that give us these basic satisfactions. These basic goals are linked to each other and ranked by how important they are. So, the most important goal will be the only one you can think about, and it will naturally try to coordinate how the body's different abilities are used. Less important needs are ignored, downplayed, or even turned down. But since wants that are mostly met are not active motivators, the next prepotent (or "higher") need develops after the first one is mostly met. Then, this prepotent (or "higher") need takes over the conscious life and becomes the centre around which behaviour is organized.

- The physiological needs

The motivation theory starts with the so-called physiological urges. These physiological needs are, without a doubt, the most important ones. In other words, a person is more likely to be driven by physical needs than by other things if he or she misses out on everything in life to an extreme degree. A person who doesn't have food, safety, love, or self-respect would probably want food the most.

- The safety needs

If physiological needs are satisfied well enough, a person will begin to experience a new type of need - "safety needs", such as protection from danger and other risks.

- The love needs

If both the body's needs and the need for safety are met, then love, affection, and a sense of belonging will come up.

- The esteem needs

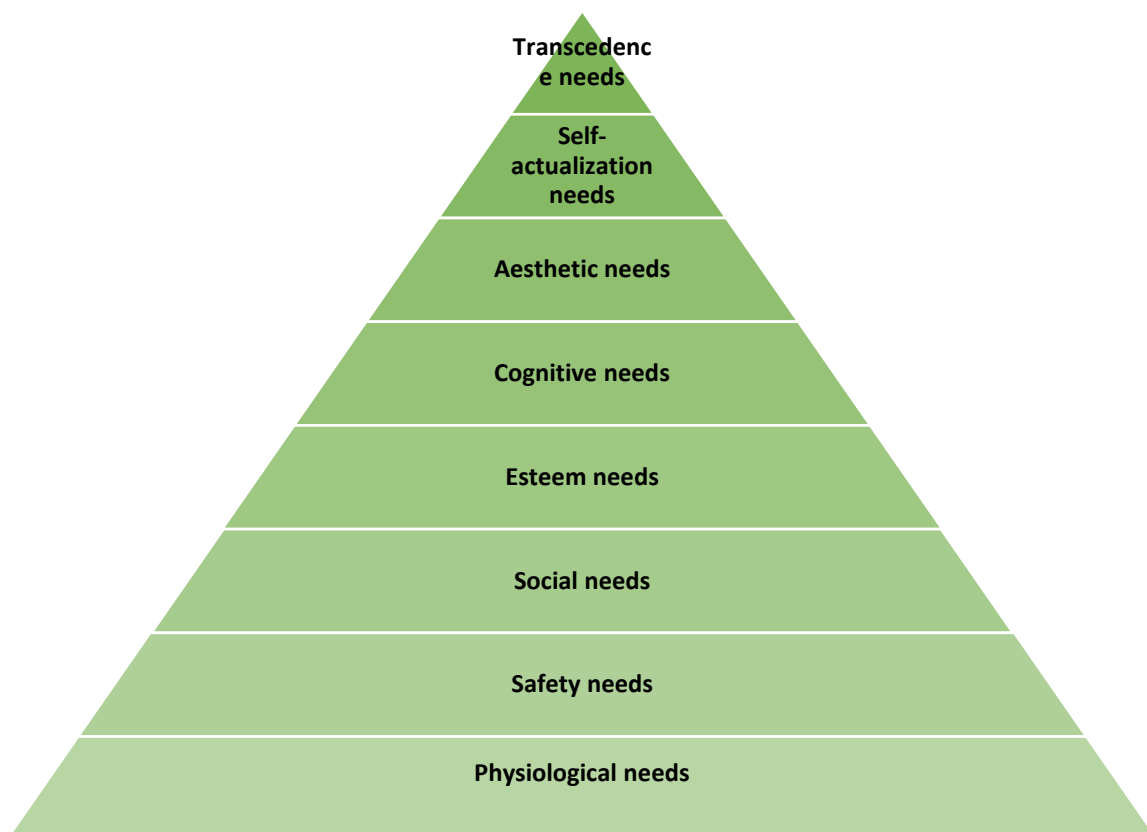
Satisfying the need for self-esteem gives a person a sense of self-confidence, worth, strength, and ability, and is valuable and important in the world. But denying these needs makes you feel bad about yourself, weak, and helpless.

- The need for self-actualization

Even if all these conditions are met, it is common for a person who is not doing what he is good at to become more unhappy and restless. One should be what one is capable of becoming. The highest level of human need that can be satisfied is self-actualization.

Maslow completed his theory between 1943 and 1954, including more stages.

- cognitive needs - knowledge and understanding,
- aesthetic needs - beauty, and harmony (Maslow, 1970a)
- transcendence needs – A person is driven by things that are bigger than themselves - values, religion, etc. (Maslow, 1970b).



(Mcleod, 2022)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is used in both business and education. For instance, students are eligible for several discounts and scholarships. This encourages them to work harder on their studies and assignments throughout the academic year. Furthermore, the university hosts a lot of group activities so that students may socialize and form friendships. Most companies provide free access to coffee and water so that employees can feel comfortable while working. Additionally, a lot of businesses conduct team-building exercises wherein little awards are given to raise the self-esteem of each team member. When provided, these things satisfy the 'physiological' and psychological needs of the student or employee and keep their motivation to improve themselves.

Reflection

Reflection can be referred to as the process that helps to have an insight into the professional practices of a person by thinking analytically about the element of it. The study will discuss the concept and the importance of reflection helpful in higher education and business.

According to Conway reflection can be defined as the process of looking back on what has been done and stressing it in order to extract learning lessons from the tasks they have been done (Alemi and Tajeddin, 2020, pp 41-53). On the other hand, according to Taylor reflection can be defined as a throwback for the “memories and thoughts in cognitive acts such as contemplation, meditation, thinking and any different form of attentive consideration that makes sense of them and to make contextually appropriate changes if they are required” (Valencia et al., 2019, pp.4-23).

Reflection in Higher Education

Many service-learning practitioners refer to Kolb’s experimental learning cycle which has four elements: concrete experience, reflection and observation about the experience, creation of abstract concepts by going through the analysis of the experiences and testing through these concepts in new situations. Students can enter an experimental learning cycle at any point in time by accommodating dynamic learning styles. In higher education reflection can be helpful in numerous ways such as:

- A high-quality reflection in learning helps to create an environment of education that supports the success of the students in high-context cultures.
- Reflection allows the learners to learn more about themselves and helps to develop their academic skills.
- Reflection helps to notice their tasks and identify the mistakes as well as the behaviours and the activities that help them to become successful as a vital part of learning experiences.
- Reflection allows the students to have an experience or sense of themselves and others and the condition that shapes the experiences and materials (Anthonysamy et al., 2020, pp.3677-3704).

- Reflection helps to create a pathway for the students to become a more holistic and creative person from a task-oriented being about their experiences at university and the larger world.

A good example is the reflecting assignments that are given to students which help them focus on what can be improved in the future and serves to motivate autonomy. It also helps them to reimagine their experiences for future social and personal benefits.

Reflection in Business

Self-reflection can benefit business organisations dynamically as it helps to reflect on the different aspects of business and identify the good and bad of the business operations and rectify them. In the digital world, there are a thousand notifications on demand issues and all of them are priorities. Reflection helps to go through the issues and prioritise them based on the issues and solve them. As the world is changing rapidly and becoming more tech-based with the rise of “machine learning”, “artificial intelligence”, and other business organisations are required people who have a “higher emotional intelligence” that can allow the companies to perform better in this environment as Elsey (2022) described in his article the reflection as a lesson on the importance of self-reflection in business. Moreover, finding emotionally intelligent workers also helps them to “navigate and outperform their peers” in situations where there is a lot of stress, and fear of job loss due to the integration of AI.

Self-reflection is also beneficial for managers as well as workers as it helps them to reflect on the way the team has worked so that the mistakes in the team formation and others can be identified and corrected for better team performance. Moreover, asking the employees to take a self-reflection also makes them go through recalling the events so that they can remember their feelings and discomfort in doing the tasks. It helps business organisations to address the fears of the employees and reduce their discomfort to improve the company culture.

An example of why reflection is good in the workplace is that people are asked to write a reflection report after they finished a report on their work, to describe how the process was and what has been improved because they reflected on the project and what can be improved in the future.

Conclusion

The goal of this report was to provide an in-depth look at the skills required for a person to maximise the possibility of success in places such as education, work or everyday life. Since it was a group project comprised of the work of five students it also serves as proof of the validity of the importance of the aforementioned skills. Since the skills of the members, all vary, knowing how to match each piece of the puzzle and use the right tool for the job a conclusion can be reached that if those skills were missing, this report would have never been finished and only through adapting and overcoming obstacles the team managed to operate like a well-oiled machine.

The process of perfecting oneself is nearly never-ending, but just like a sculptor when he starts chiselling away large pieces of marble to create a statue with a rough shape, at one point he has to concentrate on the finer details of the end goal which will transform a piece of unremarkable rock into a masterpiece.

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