

Academic and Employability Skills

Name: Alexandra Minodora Tuvene

Student ID: 2030628

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Introduction

The purpose of the following report is to reflect the learnings which have been covered during the sessions in this module. By preparing this report, the usefulness of the learnings will be reflected and how these learnings will be worked as a beacon in professional life will be also explained. For analysing the topics which have been covered in the module, some remarkable published literature will be taken into consideration. However, this is a reflection report that's why one of the prominent reflection models will be applied in each of the topics discussed here.

A Reflection on the learning in this module, using a recognised model of reflection

In academic life, a reflection report holds significant importance because it provides an opportunity for the students to think about the achieved learnings deeply. Through a reflection report, a student becomes able to make a connection between his thinking and the actual learning (Gould and Taylor, 2017). Similarly, in this module, there are some sessions where different important topics have been covered such as time management, academic writing, public speaking and giving presentations, CV writing, etc. which are mainly some academic and employability skills.

Time management

In the first session of the module, some important lessons have been taught about time management skills or organizing study which is very crucial for achieving success in academic life. Previously, I was not very aware of maintaining time and organizing my study schedule, but this session was very impactful for me as I had some lacking in this area. Effective time management is very important for the students because it allows them to complete their activities like assignments, reports, projects, study material, etc. in a timely, the attention of the students must be focused on their core activities and must avoid the distractions like social media (Chase et al., 2013). Good time management skills help the students to utilize their full capacity for which they can enjoy the satisfaction of accomplishment. The key topic of this learning session was how can the students achieve the time management skills and apply them in their practical life. I got benefitted through the entire session as I became able to learn new and interesting time management skills. The session was very impactful as the teacher had used different practical examples. I was struggling to organize my study because of maintaining the classes, part-time job, online lessons, personal activities, etc. but through this useful session, I learned how can I keep a balance between all of these. The learnings from this session of the module can be analysed through a famous reflective model named Gibbs reflective cycle in which six stages are depicted so that people cannot jump to conclusions too quickly (Adeani et al., 2020). For example, in the description stage, we are instructed to place our problems, I faced a problem organizing my study and complete it within the deadline. The next stage is feeling where we need to think about the learnings. For example, we were taught different types of time management skills like goalsetting, planning, stress management, organization, etc. (Sainz et al., 2019). The third stage is an evaluation that means we must evaluate our experience about the learning, either good or bad. From my perspective, the whole experience was appreciable. To reflect the analysis stage,

it should be mentioned that things were going great because of the cooperative attitude of the teacher as well as the learners. The conclusion stage defines the overall learning and the skills which are needed to be further improved (Adeani et al., 2020). From my experience, I have realized that I have overcome the weakness of organizing my study, but still, I need to improve my stress management skill. The action plan is all about utilizing my gathered knowledge or learnings in my practical life. I will ensure it by managing my time effectively from this semester so that I can complete my required courses timely.

Academic Writing Skills

The next topic of the session in this module was how to improve the academic writing skill which is another important skill for developing the career of the students. At the very first of the session, we were taught that academic writing is one of the excellent tools for communication because the level of assimilation regarding any specific topic can be reflected through it (Ariyanti, 2016). Previously, I was not very much concentrated on my academic writing skill and I was unaware about the actual purposes of it. The main purposes of developing academic writing are to inform, explain, narrate, and persuade. In this session, the teacher had informed us that if we can develop our academic writing skills, then our professional writing skills will be also improved. I became very fascinated by this learning and pay full attention because, soon, it will help me to showcase research and expertise in any specific area. In this session, some essential tips were provided by the teacher to enhance academic writing. For example, they had encouraged us to use online editing and proofreading resources (Chin et al., 2013). Though I was somehow acknowledged about the tools, I did not know the application of the tools. As a part of the module, the teacher had instructed us that how can we easily apply these tools in our writing to avoid mistakes. However, the teacher had strictly instructed us to create a plan and structure before starting our writing. As I was unaware of this, so previously I made so many mistakes to showcase my writing to attract the audience. It is very important to gather as much information as before writing so that the content can be useful. Apart from that, it is also crucial to take into consideration the needs or requirements of the audience (Sajid and Siddiqui, 2015). I had learned about this through this module because sometimes the information can be irrelevant for which the whole content can be useless. To apply the Gibbs reflective cycle in this context, it can be said that my overall experience was very good, and I can apply it in my upcoming days. I can reflect on my achieved learnings continuously because the online course works have largely relied on reports and assignments. From the experience which I have gathered in this session, I will utilize it in my next action plan that means in my research paper in Universities.

CV Writing

The next topic of this module was CV writing which works as a first impression before entering professional life. A curriculum vita can be defined as a written overview of the skills, education, work experience of the candidates, mostly use for sending to prospective employers while looking for a job (Scott et al., 2019). The main objective of this session was to improve the skill of CV writing and I had no experience regarding this topic, that's why this session is one of the most useful sessions of this entire module for me. At the very first of the session, our teachers had told us that writing a good and attractive CV helps us to make a good impression on a potential employer (Maher, 2010). For achieving my goal to become a multinational employee, it is the first chance to create a good impression in front of the employers of reputed companies. Throughout the session, the teachers had given the most priority to writing an attractive CV. For example, the teachers have provided some basic information like the CV should not exceed two pages as it will create boredom for the readers, the CV should be concise and accurate, the candidates must include the relevant skills, knowledge, qualification, experiences, etc. (Tran, 2017). Most importantly, our teachers have encouraged us to provide information about referees while preparing our CVs because it will create validity and reliability for the employer to make decisions (Adeani et al., 2020). However, in this learning session, I became able to acknowledge that we should include academic achievements or any professional degree or certificate, especially if those are relevant to the applied position. The overall experience of the session can be discussed through the context of Gibbs's reflective cycle. For example, in the descriptive stage, I was not very much confident about writing my CV because I was unaware of the writing tactics. In the feeling stage, I came to experience different things like our teachers have shown us some CV writing tools and applications to make them look attractive (Scott et al., 2019). My personal experience was very good because the teachers were very supportive, and I gave some trials to find out my lacking. To conclude the overall experience, I have found some problems in writing the cover letter which is an integral part of a CV. That's why my action plan will be to improve the skill of cover letter writing.

Public Speaking and Giving Presentation

Public speaking and giving presentations are the next topics of this module which stood so much beneficial for me. If the student can develop public speaking and presentation skills in academic life, it will provide intense career growth opportunities in professional life (Andrews and Russell, 2012). Developing public speaking and presentation is such an important skill that can be included in the CV and can attract the potential employer. Specifically, it was very helpful for me because I want to develop my career as a marketing specialist and for getting success in this position, it is very important to enhance my public speaking skill as I need to convince the stakeholders like customers, I also need to make an attractive and eye-catching presentation to attract the parties (Wilton, 2011). Without developing these skills, it is quite impossible to reflect the thoughts and ideas accurately. Throughout the session, our teachers had taught so many skills to improve the quality of public speaking and presentation. For example, they have clearly instructed us that we must keep a clear articulation which means there will be fewer grammatical errors, speaking loudly enough, etc. (Saunders and Zuzel, 2010). Here, memorizing is not mandatory but if the presenter thinks that he can stumble in some cases, it can be appropriate there (Lowden et al., 2011). The presentation style must be engaging to catch the attraction of the audience including facial expressions, body language, vocal tone, timing, etc. Though all the public speakers don't need PowerPoint slides, to satisfy the clients in professional life, we got familiar with some useful tools to make attractive slides. Besides, maintaining eye contact with the audience, assessing the needs of the potential audience, organizing logical flow to speech, etc. are the main learning outcomes of the session (Saunders and Zuzel, 2010). Reflecting on my experience with the Gibbs reflective learning cycle, I have realized that I have a stage fear issue which is the main obstacle behind developing my public speaking skill. Throughout the session, I was given opportunities to present my thinking and learnings in front of my classmates and teachers, which was very beneficial and impactful for me. In the concluding stage of this learning cycle, the overall experience was very useful for me which I can utilize in the next action plan that is to develop myself as a skilled presenter.

Conclusion

To conclude this reflection report about the learnings throughout the module, it can be said that the overall experience was good because some important academic and employability skills have been achieved. For example, developing CV writing and presentation skill is important for entering and stepping forward in professional life. In the same way, developing time management skills will help me in both my academic and professional life. The entire session of the module was practical and impactful for me due to covering some important aspects.

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