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**Programme: Certificate of Higher Education in Skills
for the Workplace**

Module Name: Academic and Employability Skills

Module Code: BMSW4001

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This module is from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD), it started this semester on the 15th of February.

We discussed about 10 different topics on this module. The topics are: **Time Management; Academic Writing; Paraphrasing; Summarising; Referencing; Reflection; CV Writing; Cover Letter Writing; Public Speaking and Giving Presentations; Online Learning Experience.**

Those 10 topics are really important and helpful, but there are SOME topics that I really liked and enjoyed doing and talking about during lessons.

The first topic that I want to write about is **Time Management:**

Definition of Time Management:



Time Management is the process of organising and planning how to divide your time between specific activities. Good Time Management enables us to work smarter, not harder. So we get more done in less time, even when time is tight and pressures are high. Failing to manage our time damages our effectiveness and cause stress.

(Mind Tools Content Team, 2019) **My**

Experience:

The first topic is **Time Management** because for me it is one of the most important things in my life because it changed it in a lot of different ways.

My first-time hearing about **Time Management** was in High School during a lesson when we started talking about it.

From that lesson I became very curious about **Time Management** because it can change your life.

After that lesson at school, I searched about **Time Management** to know more about it and searched the best ways to use it and how to use it.

When I searched about it and read about it, I thought that it is strange to make a schedule with all what you will do during a day or during an entire week. Because I was not used to schedule my day or my week. Indeed, the first time I used it I felt like a robot following orders, because for me was strange to write on a paper or something else what I will do. This happened because I made a mistake, I tried to change my whole life in one go and to write everything that I will do during the day and the week.

So, I started to do my schedule one by one instead of doing it all in one go and after a few weeks I felt very good, because I started doing it a little at a time and try to avoid wasting my time by not doing something useful. At first, I started using it to schedule the subjects that I had to study, then I started to put it in my life, but obviously it was not easy because maybe even if you try to respect the schedule you can have an unexpected event.

After getting a little used to it, I started to put the timetables for what to do and at what time (for example: do the housework, go to the gym, etc), I even used it to schedule my sleep.

The Second Topic that I want to write about **CV Writing:**

What is a CV:



“A **CV** is a document aimed at convincing an employer that who you are, your qualifications, work experience and your skills make it worthwhile for them to offer you either work experience or a chance to move forward in a formal selection process.”

(Morgan, 1997: 339) **My**

Experience:

The first time I heard about **CV** was in High School (like Time Management), the teachers told to me and my class group that the CV is one of important things in the world of work.

They told to me and my classmates to try to do the CV and to put on all our Personal Contact Details, Education, Qualifications, Work Experience, Knowledge, Skills and Hobbies.

In the Personal Contact Details, me and my class group had to put on: Name, Email Address and Contact Telephone.

In Education we had to put on: Title of Qualification and Date of Qualification.

In Work Experience we had to put on the internships that we did, the dates of all the periods of internships and what we did in the internship.

In the Knowledge they told us to put on all our knowledge (for example if we are bilingual).

In the Skills they told us to put on all our skills (for example the IT Skills).

In the Hobbies they told us to put on what we like to do in our free time (for example going to the gym, travel, etc)

The Third Topic that I want to talk about is **Public Speaking:**

What is Public Speaking:



Public Speaking is the process of communicating information to an audience. It is usually done before a large audience (for example: school, workplace and personal lives).

Study.com (2014)

My Experience:

In all my life I have always been a shy person.

When I was a kid, it created to me problems a lot of problems, because I was scared to ask someone something that I do not understand. Or if me and my class group were doing a group work, I was shy to talk about my ideas and to compare it with others. Thankfully growing out I have been less shy and started to talk more with people that I know, but when I am with someone I have never met before I feel more awkward than shy, so I don't too much with the people that I meet for the first time, but after many meetings with them I start to talk with them and feel less shy and awkward. Unfortunately, only the people that passed through this stage can feel and understand it.

Every day this is a weakness that I try to work on, because maybe one day I will have to talk n front of a lot of people.

The fourth topic that I wanted to talk about is **REFLECTIVE WRITING**

What is reflection:

Reflection is an activity where you analyse experiences, or your own practice/skills/responses, in order to learn and improve.

What is reflective writing:

Reflective writing is the evidence of reflective thinking.

Thinking reflectively involves:

Thinking about what was done. Analyse the event by thinking in depth from different perspectives. Use subject theory, reflective models and personal insight. The critical evaluation you make of your and others' actions should be applied to future events.

Thinking about what happened, what did and did not work, and what you think about it.

Critically evaluating what you would do differently in the future and explain why.

My Experience:

I do not have real experience with the reflective writing and the reflective thinking in the academic way. I only had the reflective thinking when I had to choose something to buy (for example: the computer, the laptop, the mobile phone, the food, the drinks and for the clothes). But the reflective writing I never experienced it, I only heard about it in this course. So, for me it is a new thing that I will have to learn. When we started to talk about it I found it really interesting and it can improve my way of writing and thinking, in my life and in the academic way.

This semester we talked about three different reflection cycle:

Gibb's 'Reflective Cycle' (1988)

Kolb's 'Experiential Learning Cycle' (1984) Driscoll's Model (1994,2000)

The teacher also told us that there are more reflective styles.

The first reflective style that I am going to talk about is **Gibb's Reflective Cycle**

GIBB'S REFLECTIVE CYCLE



The Gibb's Reflective Cycle is based on some steps to follow:

Description:

What happened? Do not make judgements yet or try to draw conclusions; simply describe.

Feelings:

What were your reactions and feelings? Again, don't move on to analysing these yet.

Evaluation:

What was good and bad about the experience? Make value judgements.

Analysis:

What sense can you make of the situation? Bring in ideas from outside the experience to help you. What was really going on? Were different people's experiences similar or different in important ways? **Conclusions (general):**

What can be concluded, in a general sense, from these experiences and the analyses you have undertaken?

Conclusions (specific):

What can be concluded about your own specific, unique, personal situation or way of working?

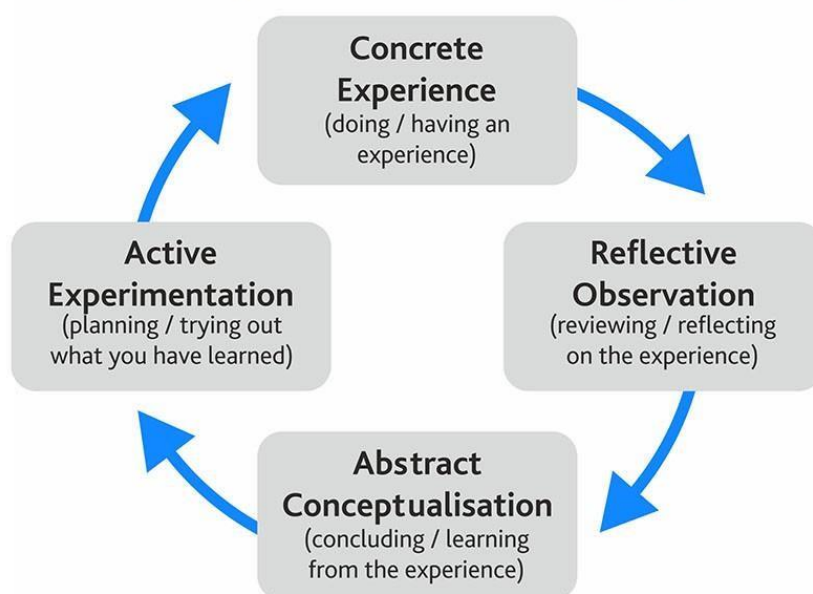
Personal action plans:

What are you going to do differently in this type of situation next time? What steps are you going to take on the basis of what you have learnt.

The second reflective style that I am going to talk about is

KOLB'S 'EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE'

The Experiential Learning Cycle



In Kolb's Experiential Learning, there are four steps to follow:

CONCRETE EXPERIENCE

A new experience of a situation is encountered, or a reinterpretation of existing experience.

Life is full of experiences we can learn from. Whether at home or at work or out and about, there are countless opportunities for us to 'kick-start' the learning cycle.

REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION

Reflective Observation of the new experience. Of particular importance are any inconsistencies between experience and understanding.

Reflection involves thinking about what we have done and experienced. Some people are naturally good at this. Others train themselves to be more deliberate about reviewing their experiences and recording them.

ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALISATION

Reflection gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept.

When we pass from thinking about our experiences to interpreting them, we enter into the realm of what Kolb termed 'conceptualization'. To conceptualize is to generate a hypothesis about the meaning of our experiences.

ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION

The learner applies them to the world around them to see what results.

In the active experimentation stage of the learning cycle, we effectively 'test' the hypotheses we have adopted. Our new experiences will either support or challenge these hypotheses.

To learn from our experiences, it is not sufficient just to have them. This will only take us into stage 1 of the cycle. Rather, any experience has the potential to yield learning, but only if we pass through all Kolb's stages by reflecting on our experiences, interpreting them and testing our interpretations.

Basically, in the first step I have to say: What happened?

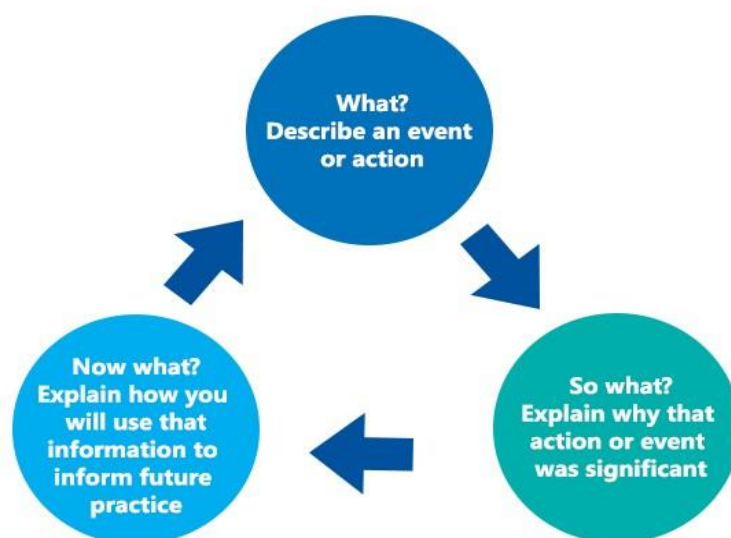
In the second step I have to say: What was my experience of it?

In the third step I have to say: Why did it happen and if there is a research that can improve my understanding?

In the fourth step I have to say: What I will do if or when it happens again?

The third reflective style that I want to talk about is:

Driscoll's Model (1994)



In Driscoll's Model there are three steps to follow:

1) What... is the purpose of

returning to the event?

happened? did you see? did you

do? was your reaction? did other

people do?

do you see as key aspects of this situation?

2) So, What... how did you feel at

the time?

how do you feel now? are there any differences?

why? were the effects of your actions? are the

positive aspects? troubles you? if anything?

were your experiences in comparison to your colleagues

etc.?

are the main reasons for feeling differently from your

colleagues etc.?

3) Now What...

are the implications for you, your colleagues, customers

etc.? needs to happen? are you going to do about it?

happens if you decide not to do anything? might you do

differently if faced with a similar experience? information /

skills do you need to face a similar experience?

are your key learning points from this experience and

reflection?

In conclusion, what I want to say is that this module helped me to improve and understand a lot of new things that I want to use in my life to improve it in the best way.

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