

Name - GRETA NDUKA

Student Number – 1818633

Module Title – BMSW4001

**Assignment Title - ACADEMIC AND
EMPLOYBILITY SKILLS**

Module Lecturer's Name – NAVAMI LEENA

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Introduction

In this report I will be focusing on academic and employability skills by using in-class exercises and published literature. I will explain the importance of academic and

employability skills and I will give examples of how the skills learned in this course are used in an academic and professional environment. I will carry out a SWAT analysis of my own skills to understand how to improve them.

Academic and employability skills definition

Academic and employability skills are things which people are good at and use in an academic environment or at the workplace. (Morgan, 2017)

A list of academic and employability skills

Below is a list of academic and employability skills and an explanation for each one.

Time management is the ability to manage all the tasks in the time frame given. (Morgan, 2017)

Time management is important in an academic environment because often, students are given assignments and a deadline for them to be completed by. Most students tend to leave their assignments to the very last minute and the grade they receive for it are not what they expected as a result. For example, coursework assignments are given a deadline because that is when the exam board begins to mark them. If a student fails to turn their coursework in by the deadline it will not be marked. Students also have other responsibilities to juggle such as their social and family life or a job. If a student allocates too much time to their social life, they may not have enough time to use for completing their assigned school work.

It is also important in the work place as employees also have deadlines to meet a specific target. Companies are often assessed, and their budgets are determined based on their turn out. So, if the company needs more money in order to grow but are not making a good enough profit, they will not be given any money. That is why every employee is given a task and a deadline to complete it by to ensure that the company can develop. Outside of work, employees also have a family and social life and they have to ensure that it is not deterring them from meeting their targets.

Teamwork is the skill to be able to work well and efficiently with one person or a group of people. (Enciso, 2011)

Teamwork is important in an academic environment because group assignments are also given to students. They often need to work together to ensure that the assignment is completed and in order for it to be done at a high standard, the students must be able to work together and avoid altercations to minimise time wasting.

Companies are very often split into departments and teams, such as HR and IT departments. Every department is responsible for part of the company, for example, the IT team has to work with every other team to ensure that their essential devices are working properly. Effective teamwork must take place to make sure that everybody has working devices.

Problem solving is the ability of finding a resolution when there is a problem. (Morgan, 2017)

Students will sometimes encounter unexpected barriers when they are completing a task. They need to be able to recover from setbacks and to solve those problems so they can continue with completing their assigned task.

In the work place people can also encounter unexpected problems which they may not be prepared for and they need to be able to use their problem-solving skills to overcome them.

Leadership is when a person is taking in charge of group of people and the ability to guide them. (Kruse, 2013)

People need to have leadership skills in an academic and work-related environment so that when they are presented with a group project, they can guide the rest of the group to completing the allocated task efficiently and to a high enough standard.

Organising is planning ahead and making sure that the task is completed on time and in a specific way. (Morgan, 2017)

In order to complete tasks and meet targets, organisation is required. The most effective way to complete a task is to have a plan about which part is to be done and by which date. This will ensure that everything is finished, and nothing is left missing or undone. This is essential in both the academic and employment fields.

Ability to work under pressure is the skill to work efficiently when there is lots of stress, time frames, and difficult tasks. (Albrecht, Belnap and Dixon, 2010)

Students always feel pressure from school and at home to keep up with their school work. Their work load can sometimes accumulate and create even more pressure, they need to be able to stay motivated and calm, so they are able to focus and complete their tasks to a high enough standard.

In the work place employees need to be able to work under pressure because they have deadlines to meet and a large work load so they have to be able to overcome that.

Paraphrasing is when someone express certain information strictly mentioning all the facts but in a different way and using different words. (Moonie, 2005)
It is important for students to paraphrase information that they read so they can fully understand it, instead of just stating it word for word or copying and pasting. Paraphrasing the information means that they have processed it and have had to think about it. Also, some published literature such as books and journals may be copyrighted and if a student uses the information in it exactly for their dissertation or for a paper which they will publish, they could be sued by the original writer
I will attach the in-class exercise we had which helped me understand what paraphrasing is.

Summarising is an act of breaking down a story briefly to an actual fact. (Moonie, 2005)

Summarising is important in a professional environment because during meetings or briefings, many people will have information to present in a limited amount of time. It will also keep the audience more engaged as they are not being flooded with unnecessary information but only with vital points. The same is true for academics. Students often have a certain number of words which they can write so they cannot express unnecessary information in order to be able to complete the task.

Referencing is an act of identifying an actual source of a material. (Naville, 2016)

Referencing is important for students so they can prove that the information in their papers is accurate and not false. It is also important to show that they have done research for what they are writing about. It is also important for copyright issues, to make sure that the student does not get sued for any information they have used, they must give credit where it is due.

What is the importance of these skills?

The importance of academic and employment skills is that they can make a student graduate with a good grade. Having these skills will make a student more likely to overachieve because they can complete the tasks which they are given more effectively and to a higher standard. They can make employees seem desirable because employers are looking for people who will get the job done well and will ensure that the company meets their targets.

Skills I have

I used SWOT analysis to understand the skills that I have.

SWOT analysis

SWOT is an acronym for “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats”. Your strengths and weaknesses are things which you are good at. Your weaknesses are things which you are not good at. Opportunities are things outside of your control in the academic or employment world which may mean you are an asset. Threats are also things outside of your control in the academic or employment world that could deter you. (Sarsby, 2016)

My strengths I am organised and punctual. I am also a very fast learner so I can quickly adapt to the environment I am in.	My weaknesses: Time management one of the things I have to work on as not every time I manage to complete all my task in time. Sometimes knowing that there is a lot of tasks to be completed in a short space of time I have anxiety and panic and that does not help when I have to focus and rush so I definitely need to work on my stress management
Opportunities: My current job providing me with experience for the future job I want to have as a nurse. I am learning how to communicate with patients and the kind of assistance that they may be needing. This job will also provide me with new work opportunities because I can progress in the health sector to the nursing job I want to have in the future.	Threats: Pregnancy can be a threat because having more children would mean that I need to take time off of work. This can lead to me missing important developments in my workplace. It may also make my employer see me as an unreliable employee because I may be taking a lot of time off in order to have children. Health issues can be a threat because I may also have to take a lot time off of a work if I get in an accident or experience a different kind of health issue.

Improving skills and improvement plan:

PDP stands for personal development plan. It is used to acquire new skills or develop ones which you already have. (Heery and Noon, 2009)

My personal development plan helps me to organise and plan the goals which I can achieve and to do it in a given time frame. a short time frame refers to three to six months. These are small goals which are easily manageable and will easily be achieved. Mid-term frame are goals which I want to achieve in the next six months to two years. Long-term goals are ones which are achievable in no less than two to three years, they may require more resources and planning. I will also use my PDP to identify skills which I have to acquire in order to achieve my goals. I will be able to make a plan of the process of achieving my goals. This can include taking smaller steps towards achieving my goals. I have to also plan the resources which I will need to reach my goals. These do not have to me material things, they can be things such as free time or finance.it will also help me to make a time schedule, what I have to

achieve by when. I will also use it to set a realistic deadline for when I will have reached my ultimate goal.

Define Eisenhower method

A method to understand priorities by organising the tasks which have to be completed. (Sweeny, 2008)

It is important to use a method to understand priorities in order to know which tasks to complete first. It is important to know which stages are completely urgent and which ones can be dealt with later. This can help to decrease pressure as students and employees can be sure to complete the most vital tasks first.

Conclusion

This report has focused on academic and employability skills. I have explained the importance of some of the skills required in the academic and work fields. I have also defined the SWOT method and used it to identify my skills. I have defined what a personal development plan is and why it is useful for gaining new skills and developing ones which people already have.

Attachments:

Student Name: GRETA NDUKA Student ID: 1818633

Time allocated: 1 hour. Please return your paper to the lecturer upon completion. It will be returned to you at the next session. You will need to include a scanned copy of this exercise in the form of an appendix together with your Task 1 (part of the Assignment for this module).

Ex.1

Read the following text and make notes on the main ideas. You can do this on a separate piece of paper which you do not have to hand in.

The success of ALDI

The food retail industry is a highly competitive market. Aldi understands that its customers want value for money but do not want to compromise on quality. This case study will demonstrate how Aldi uses a lean approach to its business operations to offer its customers quality products at competitive prices. What distinguishes Aldi from its competitors is its competitive pricing strategy without reducing the quality of its products. In fact, in some cases Aldi's products are 30% cheaper than those offered by its competitors. Aldi can do this because the business operates so efficiently. The three core values of Aldi are simplicity, consistency and responsibility. Lean production ties in closely with these values. For example, Aldi stores are simple in design and all stores are very similar which creates consistency.

For Aldi operating efficiently involves reducing costs in all areas of the business. Some of the key areas where Aldi is able to minimise costs are by saving time, space, effort and energy. Aldi's approach to doing this is to run its business around the principles of lean thinking. Whereas other food retailers have elaborate displays, additional services and promotions that draw customers into the business, Aldi's core purpose is to 'provide value and quality to our customers by being fair and efficient in all we do'. The principles of lean production are planned and built into everything that Aldi does. This starts within its supply chain. For example, up to 60% of Aldi's fruit and vegetables are sourced locally where possible, reducing the need for long and costly delivery journeys.

The principles of time based management are also built into the training provided for Aldi's employees. Through training staff to do a variety of tasks around store Aldi can minimise its staff requirements. Staff costs can also be reduced as fewer staff are required if they can perform a variety of duties throughout the store. Aldi's 'no-nonsense' approach to retailing therefore leads to cost saving in numerous areas. These cost savings are passed on to customers in the form of lower prices, allowing the business to differentiate itself from its competitors in terms of price, as well as the quality of the products it has on offer.

Lecturer's signature: _____

Date: 14/8

Ex.2

This task is designed to see if you can **summarise** ideas from course materials in **your own words**.
Re-read the text 'The success of ALDI' on previous page. Now answer the following question in **your own words**: What factors contribute to ALDI's success? Write about 175 words.

This case study will help us understand how Aldi manage to be in the top places in the food retail industry by providing his customers low prices (sometimes 30% cheaper) but top quality products. Aldi has 3 values: simplicity, consistency and responsibility.

Aldi's main purpose is to 'provide value and quality to our customers by being efficient in all ways'. This company they and ~~not~~ ~~spend~~ ~~the~~ minimise spending money for unnecessary things. For example bigger chains have big displays different services in store where Aldi stick to simple, basic ~~and~~ displays and layouts. Another example for them saving money is: ~~using~~ more than have of their vegetables and fruits are provided by local businesses. By doing that they save from deliveries ~~cost~~.

Regarding the staff they have in store they ~~then~~ and have only few people on floor and if trainings everything is done there so staff can still provide customer service. By doing that Aldi saves a lot from "cutting staff" and using only the necessary.

Lecturer's comments:

good attempt -

Lecturer's signature:



Date:

14/8

Ex.2. Decide whether the paraphrased passages are acceptable or unacceptable by circling the correct answer and briefly explain why.

Original Source: A key factor in explaining the sad state of American education can be found in overbureaucratization, which is seen in the compulsion to consolidate our public schools into massive factories and to increase to mammoth size our universities even in underpopulated states. The problem with bureaucracies is that they have to work hard and long to keep from substituting self-serving survival and growth for their original primary objective. Few succeed. Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience. If there is a single stumbling block on the road to the future, it is the bureaucracy as we know it. Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture*, Anchor Publishing, 1977, p. 219

Paraphrase 1 - acceptable / ~~unacceptable~~

Reason: The information provided is not right.

American education is overly bureaucratic. This is manifest in the increasing size of educational institutions, even in small states. Bureaucracies are bad because they tend to work to promote their own survival and growth rather than that of the institution, as was their initial objective. Most bureaucracies fail because they have a conscience or a soul. I believe that bureaucracies are the biggest stumbling block on the road to the educational future.

Paraphrase 2 - ~~acceptable~~ / unacceptable

Reason: Most important information given in the source has been used.

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. Bureaucracies have to work long and hard to keep from promoting their own survival rather than the educational goals that were their primary objective.

Paraphrase 3 - ~~acceptable~~ / unacceptable

Reason: Short, and all the information from the source is used.

Bureaucratization has proved to be a major stumbling block on the road to our educational future. American institutions have become factories that are more conducive to the growth of bureaucratic procedures than to the growth of the students who attend them. This means that, as Edward T. Hall says in his book, *Beyond Culture*, today's educational institutions "have no soul, no memory, and no conscience".

Paraphrase 4 - ~~acceptable~~ / unacceptable

Reason: Because all the important things from the source have been mentioned.

In his book, *Beyond Culture*, Edward T. Hall discusses the problems posed by the increasing bureaucratization of American educational institutions. Hall maintains that overbureaucratization is one of the key factors governing the state of education in America today. He points to the tendency of bureaucracies to promote their own growth and survival first and foremost, and observes that few overcome that tendency. He believes that this is responsible for the fact that many public schools bear a closer resemblance to factories than to educational institutions. In Hall's words, "Bureaucracies have no soul, no memory, and no conscience."

Lecturer's signature: _____



Date: _____

17/07/19.

Time allocated: 1 hour. Please return your paper to the lecturer upon completion. It will be returned to you at the next session. You will need to include a scanned copy of this exercise in the form of an appendix together with you Task 1 (part of the Assignment for this module).

Student Name: GRETA NDUKA Student ID: 1818633

Ex.1

Write a paraphrase of the following passage

Mike Erwin never envisioned himself as a social entrepreneur or activist. While he was no stranger to leadership positions, his primary experience had been in large, structured organisations. He thrived in the highly regimented program offered by the school. Later, Erwin excelled in his assignments in the Army, winning multiple awards and medals. However, the founding and growth of Team RWB had none of the characteristics of his previous endeavours. Erwin's enthusiasm and the organisation's mission caught on rapidly and Team RWB attracted media attention disproportionate to its size. Very quickly, the organisation grew beyond anything that Erwin had anticipated. Without any intention to do so, Erwin accidentally became an entrepreneur.

Mike Erwin use to always work in a big successful companies. ~~He never had a dream~~ and he was most of the time placed in higher positions. He never had the dream or plan to become an entrepreneur. The school offered him a huge program in there and he was amazed. After some time he became excellent in his study works in the Army and he achieved plenty of awards, appreciations and medals. Erwin was very focused and doing his job with excellence and motivation that eventually his company mission was recognised by the media even tho the size of it. Surprisingly that institution became very big and successful which was never planned from Erwin. With all the job he has done and the effort he put he then to entrepreneur, even tho he never even thought of being.

Lecturer's signature: _____

Date: 17-07-19

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