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Introduction

This reflective report shows my learning experience during the academic skills module, focusing on two main areas which are time management and paraphrasing. The aim of this report is to reflect on my strengths, impact of my engagement with these topics and areas for improvement while also pinpointing aspects where I can further enhance my skills. I will highlight classroom tasks, exercises that contributed to my comprehension. As a student these experiences have played a crucial role in boosting my efficiency and confidence, improving my capacity to meeting deadlines and articulate ideas more precisely through effective paraphrasing methods that will help me.

Description of experiences

Paraphrasing skill

In the classroom the lecture started with explaining what paraphrasing is and why it's important and relevant for academic writing. Paraphrasing is when rewriting information that you got from a source and convey it into your own way and not changing the original meaning of it and its important because it demonstrates understanding, integrating multiple sources while avoiding plagiarism. Plagiarism is important because Carroll & Sutherland-Smith, forthcoming; Clegg,(2007) states that universities are under constant criticism for their plagiarism management techniques, policies and processes and suggests that plagiarism will undermine all efforts to rebuild academic honesty is higher education because Jenny C.(2013) suggests tips for avoiding plagiarism and one of them is to restate someone else's ideas using your own language and to be sure to include both and in-text citation and a full reference entry. Paraphrasing is one of my most enjoyable and impactful experiences in the classroom because we did an activity, which was a paraphrasing exercise, where my lecture gave us sentences and asked us to rephrase them in our own way without changing the original meaning of them. His detailed discussion of techniques such as utilizing synonyms and sentence structuring helped me understand the different sentence structures, vocabulary and writing skills.

Time management skill

Another impactful classroom experience during this module was our session on time management. Jackson K. (2019), states that efficient time management involves strategic organization and planning of how to allocate your time across various tasks and that this approach enables you to work more intelligently rather than exerting excessive effort, allowing for increased productivity within a shorter timeframe. It is a skill frequently observed in individuals who excel in their fields. My lecture explained several reasons why time management is important and the reasons to why is that you can endear yourself to people, reduce stress, stay focused and you can achieve better work and studies life balance. He encouraged us to reflect on which reason was resonated the most with us which opened a meaningful class discussion that helped me understand how my classmates handle their time and what tools and apps they use which added a particular value as I discovered new resources from my classmates such as the Pomodoro effect that was discussed. The first activity we did was a weekly planner template which our lecture handed that gave me a structured approach to organising my time effectively. We were introduced to several effective time management strategies including the 4D strategy, the Pomodoro technique and the Eisenhower method which are very effective time management strategies. These methods were explained in detail, and we explored how they can be considered to our individual needs. The next exercise we did helped me visualize my workload more clearly and thought me how to distinguish between tasks that are urgent and those who are distractions because we were given an Eisenhower Matrix template to prioritize my daily tasks based on importance and urgency. Motivation is an important aspect to achieving high in your studies. Maslow, A. H. (1943) emphasises that the significance of motivation in understanding human behaviour as it is driven by hierarchical need that guide actions toward fulfilling higher-level goals.

Analysis and personal reflection

Throughout the academic skills module my learning experience has been both challenging and enriching, especially when it comes to time management and paraphrasing. By analysing these experiences, I was able to identify what strategies were effective, which have encountered difficulties and how they have improved my academic skill set. Evaluating these two focal points has not only offered me opportunities for development but has also challenged my approach.

Paraphrasing skill

In terms of paraphrasing, I found the classroom exercise particularly effective especially the task we were given from our lecture requiring us to paraphrase sentences in our own words without altering their meanings, deepened my understanding of paraphrasing techniques and because of the lecture's explanations on the use of synonyms, the importance of sticking with the original meaning and sentence restructuring, clarified many points I have missed or overlooked. What went well is that I was extremely pleased with my ability to participate in the activity because I gained more confidence, and I recognised the significance of paraphrasing as a tool to avoid plagiarism and strengthen my academic integrity which I was confident with. However, I also faced challenges maintaining the original meaning on rewording more complex sentences as some words there, I didn't know the meaning of. This exposed a gap in my vocabulary and the ability of sentence constructions, that I am now consciously working to improve on expanding my academic vocabulary by noting unfamiliar words then find out the meaning of them using a dictionary and then I practise how to use them in my own writing. I also use online tools such building vocabulary apps to improve my language and literature in English. By doing this regularly I have and will even more develop greater flexibility in how I structure my sentences and ideas. I also seek feedback from my lecture to ensure that my paraphrasing work remains accurate within academic integrity.

Time management skill

Time management lessons was a valuable part of this module. I was introduced to practical strategies like the Eisenhower Matrix, Pomodoro Techniques and 4D strategy which helped me manage my workload in a less stressful way and organise tasks more effectively. The Eisenhower Matrix method stood out the most to me because it taught me to separate tasks by importance and urgency which was helpful as a student as I also work and study. Before this I often did everything at once which led to missed deadlines, being late, confused and stressed by using this it gave me a clear structure to how to prioritize tasks.

One challenged I faced was staying consistent with it, especially during busy days and weeks where I had to go to work and school. All of the methods were useful but another strategy that caught my eye was the Pomodoro Technique which was also useful to overall enhance my quality of work during productive days by working for a set amount of time, taking a short break and then repeating the same structure of processes because Zantal-Wiener, A. (2016) states that the Pomodoro technique is founded on the premises that we can concentrate and work efficiently for 25min as a time and a short break should be scheduled between 25 minutes work sessions and that every fourth break should be a more

extended one. Although at first I struggled with stopping during breaks because I was focused but eventually I found and got a rhythm that worked well with me. Another These exercises showed me how important time management is and that goes not only for school and work but for personal development too. They helped me better understand the modules on self-management and productivity. One of my strengths that I have found is planning, structuring and organising when I have the right tools and in my case the tools I have used are a digital Eisenhower Matrix and the Pomodoro timers to support my work and study routine. However I still need to improve on my consistency and to work on this I started tracking my time more carefully and started to review my goals more often but overall I have become more confident, I feel more in control of my time, life and less stressed and anxious about deadlines. This module has helped me gain and develop habits that I can use and carry forward throughout my life including studies, work and personal life.

Conclusion

In conclusion this report explored two key areas for this academic skills module which were Paraphrasing and time-management. The sections where I have written about paraphrasing highlighted how the classroom activities we did, deepened my understanding of rewording sentences without losing the original meaning of it which strengthened my academic integrity, language, literature and writing. Eisenhower Matrix, Pomodoro Technique and the 4D strategy as mentioned are time management strategies that were equally impactful to help me prioritize tasks, stay organised and manage balancing school, work and personal life more efficiently. Reflecting on the overall impact, this module has transformed my learning journey because I have not only improved my academic skills but have also boosted my motivation and confidence removing any stress or pressure. These skills will serve me well in both my studies and future career as I've gained more of a clearer structure to manage my time and have developed strategies to improve my consistency and productivity. As a final Insight, I have come to realise that achieving success in academics and life requires not just knowledge but also self-awareness, planning, trying hard to work on factors that impact me and on-going reflection. This module has provided me with valuable tools to help me grow and has orientated my mindset that I will continue to apply and further enhance my effectiveness and resilience as a learner.

References

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