

Professional Career Development

BMSW4005

Mihai-Cosmin Ilie:2020193

Lecture:Anita Nan

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Introduction

This paper aims to present in a way as detailed and professional as possible the analysis performed on my own career path and what I have to improve and achieve in order to achieve my career goals.

At the beginning of the report I will describe the role play experience and I will reflect on what it meant for me to work on its preparation but also how I managed to assimilate valuable information due to this practical experience.

In order to obtain appropriate data on personal traits, career opportunities and threats, how I see myself and how I am seen by others, I applied SWOT analysis and Johari Window model.

In addition, I have broken down my short and long term plans so that I can formulate achievable goals based on the SMART model and criteria.

Finally, I will gather all the data to draw up what is called a personal development plan, in which I will present the steps I have thought of.

Reflection on the role play

The role-playing experience was a new activity for me, so far I have not had the chance to work practically, as a student, on situations inspired by reality, which was a source of enthusiasm.

The experience was accompanied by challenges and unexpectedly, it was more difficult for me to ask questions as an employer than it was to answer as a candidate. Probably because so far, not being in the skin of an employer, I did not realize that behind the questions that were asked to me in the interviews I participated in was a whole recruitment strategy. They are not random questions thrown into discussion, they have a precise purpose, to obtain useful information for the employer. So the hardest part was to base my role on just five important

questions, not very long, not very short, but at the same time that could lead to generous information. I learned how important it is to know how to avoid wasting time and be efficient.

This simulation of putting in practice a job interview situation is a good example of „experiential learning”, concept which is built around the idea that each person must experiment on his own, not just execute orders, and mistakes are accepted, because they are part of the learning process.

Experiential learning is consacrated by Kolb. According to him, the theory of experiential learning is based on four pillars: concrete experience (based on active involvement), reflective observation (learners must have analytical skills to reflect on experience), abstract conceptualization (the student must be able to analyze experience, to draw conclusions and learn from it) and on active experimentation (participants plan and put into practice the notions learned, based on their own decisions). Learning happens when the learner goes through every stage of this cycle, no matter where he starts. In the case of my participation in role play, the point of entry into the cycle is concrete experience.

Starting from the learning cycle theory, Kolb also developed the theory of the 4 learning styles, different depending on the preferences that someone has for a certain way. The 4 styles are: diverging, assimilating, converging, accomodating. As for me, the characteristics of the convergent style apply to me. Specifically, it is important for me to look for practical applications of concepts and theories and I prefer to learn from activities where there are connections between knowledge and real life.

Simulating practical activities in the life of a company is a perfect way to learn, and the method as such did not expose me to a long line of concepts and theories, but made me put them into practice. Moreover, the sustained feedback crowned everything I learned.

The method brought me many benefits as a student because I ended up being much better prepared, unlike the situation in which I would have listened or read in the classical style.

Self Motivation

Self motivation is the vital energy that provides us with the strength to achieve the goals we have set for ourselves in life and to continue to plan for others to evolve.

I can say about myself that in terms of career I have some important sources of motivation, both internal and external.

The most important inner motivation is the desire to perform in line with the studies I pursued at the first faculty, engineering studies. Even though I have been working in other positions in recent years, the inner flame has always burned for the prospect that someday I might be able to reconnect with the field that has given me so much pleasure to explore.

On the other hand, I must admit that a strong effect in stimulating motivation is ensured by an external factor that I think is in each of us. Precisely, the desire and need to overcome myself and to guarantee myself that I am able to take care of myself, to obtain satisfactory financial rewards, to be able to support myself and eventually my family and to allow myself to obtain the things that give me psychic pleasure and comfort.

However, there are times when I feel overwhelmed by life and it happens that I lose much of my motivation. In this situation I try to stay calm and focus on relaxing and taking a break from life so I can come back with fresh strength. Each of us needs a break from time to time in this rush to get things done in life.

Learning Styles

Fulfilling a precise goal or passive evolution in life, especially in the profession, involves an implicit learning process. And if we want fast results it is in our interest to know ourselves well enough to be able to feed ourselves with information in the most appropriate form.

There are many theories formulated in relation to learning styles, and VAK is one of them. It refers to the fact that there are 3 predispositions to learn: by seeing, listening or touching (MacMillan, 2018).

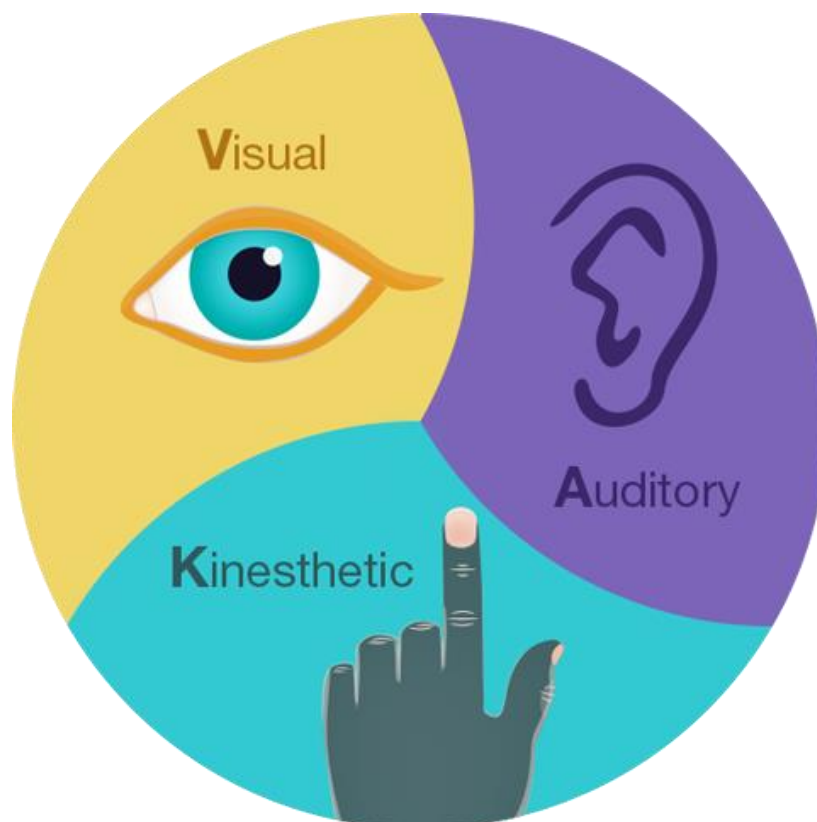


Fig. 1 VAK Learning Styles

In general, for me, the suitable way to learn involves physical experience, like touching, feeling, holding, doing, practical hands-on experiences, because my learning style is kinesthetic. I often like to experiment without looking at the instructions first.

However, there are cases when I need a blend of Kinesthetic and Visual type of learning because, depending on what I have to learn, I prefer in addition to kinesthetic techniques to observe, see demonstrations, pictures, films or to see someone else do it first to better understand.

SWOT Analysis

I conducted a SWOT Analysis to discover my personal traits that could affect my career path and also what external influences could affect it. All I will have to do next is to focus on leveraging strengths and opportunities to overcome weaknesses and threats.

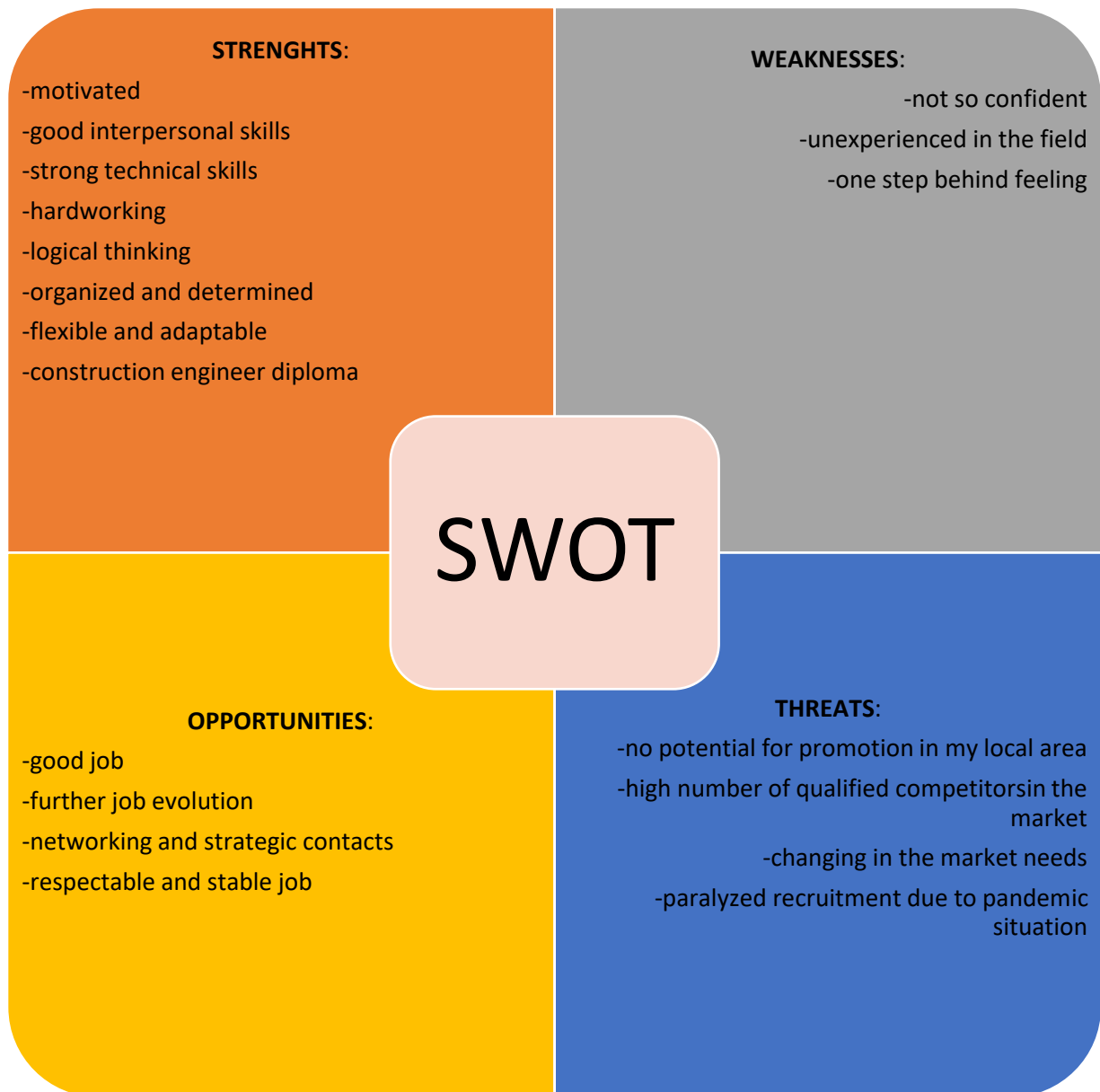


Fig. 2 SWOT Analysis

The fact that I have put on paper the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats helps me to realize much more clearly which are the areas where I have to work for improvement.

Johari Window

This model involves distributing a list of adjectives between 4 quadrants of a "window" depending on how they fit that position (Razetti, 2019):

- open arena: known by others and known to self;
- blind area: known by others and unknown to self;
- hidden area: unknown by others and known to self;
- unknown area: unknown by others and unknown to self.

The Johari window is a method of personal knowledge. Thus, we find out what others think about us and whether the image we have projected corresponds to that described by others. For this reason, I draw a personal Johari Window to find out if it would take a little more transparency on my part to be able to be consistent with the image I display of others.

OPEN AREA	BLIND AREA
Friendly Energetic Independent Organised Helpful Adaptable Able Calm	Trustworthy Confident Extroverted Spontaneous Cheerful Clever Accepting Mature
HIDDEN AREA	UNKNOWN AREA
Patient Kind Warm Caring Logical Happy Knowledgeable Intelligent Loving Brave Quiet Nervous Empathetic Self-conscious	Idealistic Wise Reflective Bold Complex Introverted Proud Tense Shy

Fig. 3 Personal Johari Window

SMART Objectives

Formulating SMART goals will help me plan, visualize, and track the steps I take to achieve them and it is an easy way to organize them according to urgency and logic.

SMART criteria is met when the objectives are specific, measurable, assignable, relevant and time based (Macleod, 2013).

SPECIFIC	Revise my resume	Search for job opportunities	Getting a construction engineer position
MEASURABLE	Write a detailed job resume for universal use online	Twice a week, for at least 30 minutes	Obtaining the job
ATTAINABLE	Creating the resume	Selecting and applying to them	Attending job interviews
RELEVANT	It is the tool with which I will try to get the job	It will broaden my prospects for success	I will apply for jobs online, I will create a LinkedIn profile for a better view
TIMELY	This week	Minimum twice a week	Until December 2022

What employers want

Surprisingly, in the field of construction, doing research on the main recruitment sites, I found out that employers are not particularly concerned only about technical skills, even stating that these will be developed once the training begins. So technical knowledge won't, by itself, get someone a job in the industry without being complemented by other qualities.

What interests them to the same extent or maybe even more is that the future employee has interpersonal qualities with which the employer should not bother to develop them, such

as problem solving mindset, strong communication skills, relationships building oriented, influencing skills, commercial awareness, organisation and time management, adaptability and flexibility.

Since the majority of students in a certain field complete similar coursework, employers largely differentiate job candidates based on the above mentioned skills.

Employment Goals

My short and long term goals have already been mentioned above, and to these is added the inner desire to increase professional knowledge and training. But for these to be achieved, sustained effort and rigorous planning are needed.

I will present in a structured way the steps I have planned, so as not to deviate from the goals set, in the next section, dedicated to my professional development plan.

Professional Development Plan

In the next week, I will write a strong resume and I will create a good, detailed and professional online profile for job searching in order to capture the employers' attention.

In the next 2 weeks I will identify the top employers in the construction field and I will set an alert for their names within job platforms.

In the next 2 weeks I will create a public profile on LinkedIn, where I will also join specialised groups in the field. In addition, I will update my Facebook informations on Facebook Jobs and I will set an alert.

In the next month I will contact my previous employers and I will ask for their written recommendations in order to add them at my resume.

In the next 5, up to 10 months I will spread the word among acquaintances, friends, family members and ask them to contact me about any opportunities or people I could get link to or build my network with.

Conclusion

Because the employment world is changing as we look at it, at a brisk pace, now more than ever we must prove that we are in steady position, we have self awareness and we can easily maximise our employability by identifying and demonstrating our skills, interest, internal motivation.

This self assessment carried out in the context of my personal career development did open my eyes to the progress I have to make by making me discover the opportunities available to me.

Moreover, because I can say that now I have a good understanding of the labour market, this assessment will definitely help me get professional satisfaction.

All the work on this report made me more capable of transferring my learning into strategic action.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Application form

Job application form

Application for Construction Engineer at SC PROJECT CON SRL

Your details

Name: Mihai Cosmin Ilie

Education and training

Please give details:

High school diploma

Construction engineer diploma

Qualifications

Please give details:

Public administration technician

PVC worker

Employment history

Your current or most recent employer

Name of employer: Best Cleaning Team Gold Ltd

Job title: Manager

Length of time with employer: 6 years

Reason for leaving: I wanted to work on something different

Duties:

Organizing the day to day tasks and duties to maintain a proper functioning of the activity

Permanent collaboration with customers and colleagues

Ensuring the supply of necessary products and materials

Issuing invoices for customers

Previous employers

Please tell us about other jobs you have done and about the skills you used or learned in those jobs.

At Oz Maraton, construction company and the last company I worked for in Romania, I took care of PVC complete assembly, handling and transport services.

First, this job helped me develop strong communication skills because I got in touch daily with clients from all categories.

Secondly, I have developed team work skills and I learned to organize my tasks so that I can meet the deadlines. My main job was to guide and lead the team that took care of installing the PVC doors and windows.

Thirdly, during my experience I managed to perfect my ability to perform activities that involve high degree of technical difficulty.

I did my job every time with good results

Supporting statement

Please tell us why you applied for this job and why you think you are the best person for the job.

I applied for this job because I consulted the market and I found that it could give me the experience I need and the work environment I am looking for.

I also talked to some people who already work for the company and they confirmed that there is indeed a pleasant collegiate atmosphere, they work with professionalism, they are well paid and on time.

What make me think I am the best person for this job is the internal drive to work in the same field as the studies I pursued, because I am passionate about engineering in the construction field.

Moreover, I consider that a plus would be the technical skills that I have developed working on previous jobs, I am already familiar with the field.

Right to work in the UK

Do you need a work permit to work in the UK? **Yes** / No

References

Please give the names and contact details of 2 people who we can ask to give you a reference. We may ask them before an employment offer is made. We will not ask your current employer until we get your permission.

John

Oz Maraton, Company director

Phone: 0123456789

Sonya

Oz Maraton, secretary

Phone: 9876543210

Declaration

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information I have provided on this form is correct and I accept that providing deliberately false information could result in my dismissal.

Name: Mihai Cosmin Ilie

Signature: M. C. I.

Date: December 1th, 2021

Appendix 2: Interview role-play questions

1. Can you please tell me about yourself?
2. Can you please tell me what are your strenghts and weaknesses?
3. Please tell me about the duties on your previous job.
4. Could you tell me why you applied for this job and why you think you are the best for this position?
5. Where do you see yourself professionally in the next few years?