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UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID

PROJECT PATHWAYS 2
BUSINESS PLAN
REFLECTIVE REPORT

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While in the third term of my first year, I would often wonder if what I was learning was really practical and most importantly how I would be able to tell the difference between important data from what I was coming across in the journals, and articles that I read during my research about business planning and the feedback or the content I received from my team members. I often came across student papers while doing my research and based on feedback from my tutors, I learnt not to depend on them though some of my group members would find it easy to believe the information in them because it was often easier to analyse compared to some journal articles which sometimes proved to be so advanced. It was sometimes even harder to ascertain the sources of the data that my group members presented.

“It is not sufficient to have an experience in order to learn. Without reflecting on this experience, it may quickly be forgotten, or its learning potential lost.” (Gibbs, 1988, p9). This made me realise that it is imperative of me to take time to reflect up what I have learnt throughout the whole and try to understand its relevance in my life. But developing a business plan can give different experiences to different people. Developing it as the as the owners, I realized that it could be used as a means to get funding. A good business plan sells an investors products and services. In a way, it can sell the whole company to prospects and suppliers. Furthermore, a plan can serve as a means to communicate a business' visions, goals and objectives.

Now the main thing for me was to learn to develop business plans as part of my university project pathways 2 program. What are the experiences to be gained from numerous experimentation of business plans as a student. Apart from writing to gain marks and grade points, several personal skills and experiences abound to be learned and improved upon such as: problem solving skills, employability skills, learning to work as a team, people management, research and data analysis as well as the smart use of technology.

Basically, one of the biggest experience I got from developing business plans as part of my project pathway 2 is the positive sharpening of my problem solving skills. Problems are at the center of what many people experience in their daily activities. Whether you intend working with a team that solves problems for clients, or that in one way or the other support people that are solving problems, discovering and solving large or small scale problem will certainly be your routine, especially in business-like situations According to Nelson (1999), group problem solving is part of the natural and most common situation for society to accomplish work tasks.

What preparing business plans during my project Pathway 2 did to me is that it placed me in a position to think like a manager, playing the role of finding ways to solve sudden problems that may arise during business lifetime I found myself agreeing with Belbin (2004) that for any group to be effective, it is inevitable that it has the right mix of members. Being a confident problem solver is really important to my long term success. Most of the confidence came from the ability to develop good processes to use when approaching a problem.

With this ability that my project pathway 2 created gave me a chance to learn how to solve business related problems quickly and effectively. Without this ability, in the long run, there was a possibility of getting stuck when certain problems arise, leading me to sometimes suffer some painful consequences.

As a student, gaining employability skills were some of the basic knowledge to pursue after, especially since in the reality of our world, my ability to get employed after university may

entire depend on how I sharpen my employability skills. There will always be job specific skills that most employers look out for during the process of employment. Most employers will also look out for some generic skills in potential employees. These general job skills are what is in many places referred to as "employability skills"

Most of the general skills employers look for are often unconsciously built in students when they undertake university classroom business plan works. Having employability skills helped me gain competitive advantage in the labor market. This can also help me to retain my job eventually and work my way to the top of the organization I chose to work with. When I go for a job interview, there is a very strong possibility that I would be asked questions based on My employability skills.

The employability skills that working on the supreme coffee business plan built in me include: Quick learning, ability to solve team problems, improved communication skills, use of smart technology, better planning and work scheduling. The ability to work with a team is sharpened with years of working together with people. If I missed getting this ability as a university student, chances are that I may live to seek it with hard labor.

Now teamwork ability simply means having an ability to work and interact with people - both people I work with and others that I will probably come across during my time in any organization.

Working with groups and teams during university days especially to undertake technical classroom tasks like creating a business plan was one of the most effective sharpeners of my teamwork ability. Working within my group to develop a business plan was like joining a sports team. We all had to work together to achieve a common goal if one failed to do their part, we all failed.

The advantages of having the ability to work with a team abound in many areas, especially if in the future when I start seeking for a professional career. One thing is sure, the employment market out there is competitive and having a decent team work skill could help place me at a competitive advantage in the job search market.

Having a healthy CV with the necessary qualifications will land me a job, but it is not always just enough as teamwork ability is part of what employers look out for before employment. During this time when I was working with the team I realized that spending time researching the right material for the presentation of a business plan really has a long term positive effect on me.

It is every student's dream to one day find a favorable employment. Whether in an office, or with a team that handles a project, chances exist that one day I will find myself leading the team. This where it gets interesting, there are many simple skills that I learnt could help me to qualify such as lead with precision and get results. These skills I will continue to build overtime, depending on what capacity building activities one engages in. As a student, part of what pitching in with a team to prepare a business plan does for me is to sharpen an already inborn leadership ability.

During the employment process, part of the skills that employers look out for would be my leadership ability. Most of the knowledge I gain during my days of preparing business plans as my university work is bound to consciously or unconsciously teach me how to clearly explain organizational goals to employees and motivate them into accomplishing specific tasks

I will go on to master different forms and parts of communication, especially the part that involves listening to specifics and working with them for efficiency in an organizational work chain.

We often fail to recognize the important things that gaining certain skills do to our lives in the long run. Belonging to a university team that has the task to prepare a business plan irrespective of the economic sector that the plan is focused in, meant that I had to learn to make research. Making research, whether online or offline on the go requires the use of smart technology. Smart technology can be in a form of either smart phones or computers. Using these sources to gather information broadly required that I gain proficient knowledge on how they are used. Although these skills will eventually be beneficial to me in the long run, learning to apply it to solve smallest research problems are important ways to help me test my knowledge and skills in the use of smart technology.

Although there is barely anybody that does not have basic technology skills in our generation, making informed researches helped me to get to understand how some other aspects of these smart technologies work.

A typical example is having to master how to create a spreadsheet because it was an important tool in business plan preparation especially when we had to present market analysis and statistics. These little additions to my knowledge will have a way of standing me out in the long run.

Research and data analysis is in fact one of the most valuable skill that got built in me during the process of undertaking the task of preparing a business plan in university.

Overtime, this skill has become a valuable tool for growing and improving a business. This skill revolves around having the ability to research the market, and customer needs so that I can invent new and improved product and services to fit the needs.

The complete process of writing a business plan gives them enough training, sufficient to demonstrate a high standard of research practice.

Conclusion

Overall, although researching may seem stressful especially to on some parts, its usefulness to the can not be emphasized more. I received first class problem solving skills when our team had disagreement and we would sit down and critically analyze the problem and see how to go about it. This equipped me with critical thinking skills as well as problem solving skills and both these skills are the back bone of most people management practices. It has prepared me for both the employment world and also for the world of self-employment. Next time I would like to see my self lead the team even better and deliver results on time. I do believe that the skill I have learnt this time will very beneficial in my life. I have been able to set both short and long-term goals with this experience to be able to lead my life in the direction I feel appropriate to follow,

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