

SWOT analysis

Introduction

In this piece, I plan to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of my Harvard referencing skills. I will demonstrate how I plan to achieve my goal of adequately Harvard referencing throughout my academic career. I aim to do this whilst critiquing my current skills and assessing how I can improve in the future.

Strengths -

One notable strength in the students academic development is their motivation to succeed. The student was able to acknowledge that despite not being able to attend classes physically, they remain motivated academically because they are able to access the resources from home which enabled them to keep up with course expectations. Motivation plays a crucial role in academic performance. As Dweck (2006, p. 6) notes, *"Effort is what ignites ability and turns it into accomplishment."* This resolve demonstrates the student's dedication to personal development and offers a solid basis for learning challenging academic techniques like Harvard referencing.

Motivation is also beneficial beyond their university course and is also a transferable skill that the student can develop through their academic career and use in their future nursing career that they are aiming towards. Nursing demands resilience, self-motivation and the ability to persevere. Orem (1995) emphasises that *"self-motivation and self-care are foundational to sustaining professional competence."* This skill will help them in their nursing career as it is important for nurses to be motivated as the role can be stressful and requires an individual that is willing to persevere. The mindset the student demonstrates currently is of high quality and will be very valuable in their future in professional practice.

Another key strength I have been able to identify is the learners determination and motivation shown, despite being able to attend class in person the individual still used their time wisely and accessed the course content available to them to understand and keep up with what was being taught. They actively make use of the available online resources and materials to remain informed. This aligns with Race's (2015) *"a learner's willingness and ability to take responsibility for their own learning"* (p. 42). Because Harvard referencing demands constant verification, attention to detail, and effort, the student's independent learning skills notably supports their progress in this area.

Weakness -

Despite their strengths, the student faces several weaknesses that affect their Harvard referencing skill development. One of those weaknesses being a persistent

issue is the students inability to attend their lectures which could cause the student to miss out on the chance for them to clarify a confusion or inquiry with their lecturer and peers real time. To ask a question in the presence of other learners would prevent a misunderstanding from the possibility of worsening. The student has acknowledged that their physical presence can create a higher level of accountability and focus, keeping the learner's engagement active which has the potential to increase motivation and inspiration fresh in their mind. Classroom learning provides significant benefits that cannot be fully replicated through independent learning. Vygotsky (1978) argued that "*learning is socially mediated; understanding grows through interaction with others*" (p. 57). Because of the absence from class the student often misses the opportunity for real time clarification to increase understanding, interactive discussions with lecturer and peers and immediate feedback which is a crucial element when learning a skill that is rule based like referencing.

Another weakness is procrastination. When studying independently at home, the student occasionally puts off beginning assignments and finds it difficult to stay focused. This practice shortens the amount of time available for thorough referencing, which frequently leads to hurried labour and preventable errors. Procrastination is "*a self-regulatory failure that undermines the completion of important tasks,*" according to Steel (2010) (p. 35). Procrastination significantly impairs a student's performance since referencing demands accuracy and regularity. Identifying these weaknesses the individual is able to recognise the deficiency in their skillset, often leading to a decreased attention span and the retention of some of the information needed to progress as effectively as they aspire to.

A benefit that would support the student in their learning would be for them to attend and be able to participate in group discussions and interactive learning within the classroom that would help accentuate the individual's learning and take it to another level and help them understand how to do Harvard referencing better. Being able to inquire about the topic directly with the lecturer.

Anxiety also contributes to the students' weaknesses. When they do get the chance to attend class they sometimes experience their anxiety preventing them from asking questions in front of their peers' presence in the classroom, seeking clarification and understanding, or participating in discussions with peers. Williams (2016) explains that "*anxiety in learning settings can lead to avoidance, reduced task engagement, and lowered academic performance*" (p. 89). Because there are a lot of technical rules involved in referencing, not clearing up any questions can cause mistakes to happen over and over again and lower trust.

Opportunities -

The student has many opportunities to strengthen their Harvard referencing skills. One big opportunity is the range of academic support services provided by UWTSD. The lecturers feedback, workshops, student support services and online resources. Engaging with these support services and content can accelerate progress. *Cottrell (2019) states that "students who actively seek academic support develop skills more quickly and with greater confidence" (p. 114).* If the student took advantage of these services, the individual could improve their Harvard referencing skill, accuracy and confidence in the skill.

There are also digital referencing tools that the student could use to support the progress of this skill by using the universities online resources available to them.

Better attendance also opens up a great deal of opportunities and growth possibilities for the student. The learner would have access to peer learning, practical referencing examples, and conversations by attending more classes. By asking questions in class, students can clear up misunderstandings before they become ingrained. Frequent practice offers an additional chance. The student will progressively gain accuracy and confidence if they practise referring on a regular basis, concentrating on one sort of source at a time. According to *Race (2015), "learning becomes embedded through repeated, active practice" (p. 57).*

The learner will also have the opportunity to master anxiety-management skills. Grounding exercises, time management tools, and study preparation are all effective ways to minimise stress and boost confidence. Williams (2016) highlights "anxiety can be reduced by structured strategies that help students feel more in control of their learning" (p. 112). Reducing anxiety can allow the student to participate more completely in class and seek assistance when necessary.

Threats -

However, there are a number of risks that could hold back the student's advancement. A significant risk is the potential for ongoing absences from class, which could exacerbate comprehension gaps. Anxiety may rise if they fall farther behind, making it more challenging to catch up.

Relying on unreliable or irregular instances of web referencing poses another risk. "Students should ensure they follow their institution's version of Harvard rather than generic online examples," warn Pears and Shields (2019) (p. 4). The performance of assessments may be impacted and negative behaviours may be reinforced by using inaccurate web sources.

Anxiety is still an intense and lasting concern. If uncontrolled, it could prevent the student from seeking clarification or asking questions in class, which would limit their ability to learn.

Variations in Harvard referencing present an additional risk. Because of the fact that Harvard is not a single, universal system, slight differences among institutions may lead to misunderstandings. Even if the reference is largely accurate, the student runs a chance of losing points if they use the incorrect version.

Procrastination also poses a threat to the students learning if not addressed. Seeking help would do the student a lot of good. If they continue to be unorganized and leave assignments to the last minute they may rush and make careless referencing errors and reduced learning.

Conclusion -

In conclusion, the student's Harvard referencing abilities clearly have room for improvement and are backed by a strong sense of drive, resolve, and optimism. Weaknesses including poor attendance, procrastination, nervousness, and confusion can be addressed with organised help, increased attendance, and regular practice. The academic resources, workshops, and online tools offered by UWTSD offer a solid basis for skill development. Threats including persistent absences, reliance on erroneous internet examples, and persistent fear may impede progress, but the student can effectively develop accuracy and confidence by actively participating in available support and routinely practicing reference. The student is well-positioned to advance and become an expert in Harvard referencing throughout their academic career with dedication and the appropriate techniques.

References -

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