

Academic and Employability skills (ACE)

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1. Reflective practice to improve performance

In my current role I use reflective practice in order to evaluate learning and development activities as well as seeking 360⁰ feedback from colleagues in order to improve skills, knowledge and own performance to improve my personal professional development. It is important to acknowledge both successful outcomes as well as negative outcomes under our duty of candour. I feel as a manager that it is important to investigate and learn from any mistakes, using this as a positive learning experience in order to improve either personal or organisational performance. There are a variety of resources that I am able to access in order to review best practice, these include resources from the CQC and Health and Safety Executive via e bulletins as well as resources provided through the Skills for Care, an example of how this information has led to best practice is in the formulation of the risk assessment for paraffin based emollients attached.

As well as reflecting on what works, it is important to learn from mistakes, this process starts with us receiving either a complaint or safeguarding referral. Under our duty of candour, we as an organisation will investigate and report all incidents that come under the umbrella of reportable incidents, such as missed or late medication, allegations of abuse. All incidents and complaints are fully investigated either internally or via the safeguarding adults board process. In every case there will be recommendations made on how to stop the incident reoccurring, the recommendations could be either process based or additional training for staff amongst other actions to be taken.

2. Time Management

Time management is a vital aspect for academic success. By managing my time more efficiently I can become less stressed, finish projects and assignments on time, and put an end to procrastination. Time management is not just about rearranging my time, its about rearranging my entire thought process.

The first step in effective time management is setting goals. "Self-discipline is a valuable skill that helps me influence different aspects of my life whereas a lack of self-discipline keeps me from setting and achieving meaningful goals."(Newman, Floyd) When it comes to making goals there is a method that was created by George Doran, which was published in the November 1981 issue of the Management Review. This method is called the S.M.A.R.T method.(Scott, S.J.) This is an acronym that stands for: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound.

"Specific goals answer your six "W" questions: who, what, where, when, which and why." (Scott, S.J, (p. 12) When we can break down the long term goals into a subset of short term goals, I'll be more able to identify exactly what steps I am going to need to take to reach your goal. Each short term goal should have a specific outcome.

Once I have a specific outcome I am looking for, I need to ensure it is measurable. Measurable goals are goals with clear attainable outcomes. Both long term and short term goals should have some point of reference to see if I am making progress. This means that each goal should have a specific deadline that I am reaching for. The third step in the S.M.A.R.T model is making goals attainable. I should be able to achieve goals, but they should not be so easy that they are easily within reach. I should challenge myself to reach goals. Make the goal seem a little out of reach, so even if I fail, you still have accomplished something significant. The fourth step is to make goals relevant. I need to make sure that goals are relevant to my life, that they are what I really want or need. If I have goals at school, my career, and my personal life, it is helpful to integrate them. By integrating goals into all aspects of my life, it gives me more drive to reach for them. It lets me know that each component of my life works together to help me succeed to the best of my ability. "[Goals should be] in harmony with everything that is important in your life, from success in your career to happiness with the people you love."(Scott, S.J., pp. 13-14, Kindle edition) The final step is time bound. Every goal should have a very clear time line. I can set this time line anyway I want, whether I want to be accomplished today, tomorrow, next week, or in a year from now. The key to creating any time line for goals is that I set the time and work backward, marking concise benchmarks along the way. This way I know

when the goal needs to be complete, and where I should be in the process of success.

3. Organising Study

Now that I know what my goals are, it is important to set priorities. Decide what is important and what is not. Make a list of these priorities and put them in order of what needs to be done first, second, third, and so on. Once I understand what my priorities are, it is important to plan out a schedule for the whole semester/period as a whole.

The second step in effective time management is scheduling. Making a schedule for the whole semester will help me understand where my priorities stand, and what should be worked on and when. Calendars are one tool that is imperative to the time management process. I will begin by looking at each class syllabus and block in all learning times. Secondly, I will block in all standing commitments such as work, meetings and so on. Next it is important to highlight all exams and project due dates. This will help me break down my academic routine for homework and study days. Look at my calendar and work backward from exams and papers. This will help me determine when to start working on my papers or study for exams. Beginning every week, I will spend roughly thirty minutes looking at my calendar and mapping out the week. Remember to ask myself questions about the week. What are my expectations? What do I plan to accomplish during the week? What tasks are more important than others? What will I have to do to reach my goals? How much time will each activity take? When will I do each activity? Remember to keep goals realistic, there's only twenty-four hours in a day, and I need to rest some of that time. It is also thought that if I study at the same time each day, it will condition my brain to know that it is study time, this makes studying a habit. It is also thought that dividing study time into fifty minute blocks, followed by a ten minute break, will help me retain information better, and will set me up for higher success. As part of the scheduling process it is important to revisit and revise my schedule. I will take an inventory of how I am choosing to spend my time. Was there any time that was wasted? What did I accomplish? What didn't get done? What changes need to be made to my weekly schedule to help me succeed? Am I sticking to my plans and goals? Is procrastination an issue? These questions can aid me in understanding where my time is being spent, what changes do or do not need to be changed, and help me take an inventory of myself. Once I will take an inventory of how my schedule is

going, it will help me to be able to understand more of what I have to do to be successful in my goals.

Public Speaking

I prepared and delivered a presentation on the topic of "Starting Up My Own domiciliary Agency".

The presentation constituted of 09 slides where I highlighted my existing skills and knowledge of working as care manager and care coordinator in my most recent jobs. Then I explained what requires to establish the business and what steps I have to take to manage the business to achieve breakeven/profitability.

I did mentioned that I will require to hire other professional's services to bridge the gap of my skills. I did explained the structure of my business and importance of working in partnerships with my colleagues.

The presentation went well and audiences remained attentive to what I was presenting. The ingredients of my presentation and my effective delivery engaged everyone in attendance.

Question and answer session was lengthy which indicated that I was able to generate enough interest among the participants.

Overall I was happy with my effort and was able to acquire extra confidence in my public speaking ability.