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Introduction

With the ever changing world of technologies,academic and employment skills are very important for every one in employment or seeking one .The competition between companies is getting greater which makes them not only look for graduates but more on their employability skills .These skills are necessary for the employee to fulfill many different roles as required .

In order to make ourselves be more competitive in the job market we need to find out the necessary skill set required and acquire them for future employment.These requires not only academic training but among others skills training , doing self analysis (SWOT) and make action plan to improve ourselves .

Definition

Employability skills can be defined as skills required not only to gain employment,but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully enterprises strategic directors (DEST 2000).

Despite the fact that employers are ever asking for more skills apart from the academic skills ,there is no uniform set of skills for everyone. The set of skills one needs depends more on the company and the position one is appointed to serve.

However , there are few basic set of employability skills that most employers need .These include but not limited to the following 8 skills:

0. Communication skills
2. Teamwork skills
0. Problem solving skills
0. Self management skills
0. Planning and organizing skills
0. Technology skills
0. Life-long learning skills
0. Initiative and enterprise skills.

1. Communication skills

Communication is a very important skill that every company needs and is applicable in all circumstances. It can be verbal /oral , written or using sign language. Having an effective communication skill can make us have good relationship with colleagues and managers thus making a good working environment and help us complete the work more efficiently.

It can also make the existing customers satisfied and remain happy with the services / products which may encourage other new customers to join with the result of an increase in customers .

2. Teamwork skills

Working in a team across the board is very important in modern day business . More and more business encourage working in a group to be able to complete the work in time with an excellent product / service .

Working together can speed up the work and encourages different ideas to join tolerate with n excellent finished product or service. The ability to work as part of s group enables individuals to grow from their "shell" and share , exchange or learn from others thereby enhancing productivity in both the individual as well as the product / service .

3. Problem solving skills

Every company will from time to time will occasionally be faced with a problem or undergo some difficulties which require both immediate or long term solutions . The ability of an individual to solve problems is an essential skill that modern companies need at all levels. It requires quick thinking and on the spot solution being rendered .

The advantage of this is many fold including and not limited to increased productivity, invention of new or better product / services , dealing with difficult customers/enquiries or emergencies . It is no wonder companies nowadays use quick problem solving techniques during recruitment procedures to get the best candidate .

4. Self -management skills

Managing One's work load on your own without being micro- managed independently is considered an essential skill . It allows one to work on their own and coordinating with others with each doing their part as part of a chain . This has the advantage of developing oneself and aim to compete with others In a challenging environment.

It also allows managers to focus on other important matters rather than directly supervising an individual.

5.Planning and organizing skills

In order to organize the the resources of the company and make good use of both resources and manpower within good time , planning is essential. Every company need people who are organized and can plan well .It is a skill that enhance the productivity of both good and services and therefore a skill which is required at all levels .

6.Technology skills

Using of technology is essential for modern companies to even exit and continue operations successfully. The use of modern technological instruments such as computers ,tablets or other telecommunication systems enhance work operations .A person with excellent skills in using these systems is really needed to manage modern trends in technology. Information systems are really needed to be managed well as well .

7.Life-long learning skills.

Employee continues learning of new acquired skills also helps the company to keep abreast with the latest technological developments. Sometimes called "learning on the job" is a necessary skill for all employees to climb the ladder in self development as well as maintain consistency and continuity in the company 's efforts to adapt to ever changing world of technology and competition. It's therefore crucial for all employees to have the necessary skill to be able to continue learning at work .

8.Initiative and enterprise skills

It is important for employees to have very good initiative and enterprise skills which makes them be more flexible and adapt easily . An initiative is important as it helps one to think outside the box and look for better ways in developing new products /services .These in turn makes enterprises to develop new areas of operation for better quality products / services .Many companies do move employees to different areas of operation to enhance their initiative skills . So it's very important for employees to be able to adjust to change and have the necessary skills to do so .

Personal SWOT analysis

After analyzing the above 8 needed skills for employability on top of the academic skills I will now try and analyze my own SWOT analysis. This is based on actual experience of working in the Health and Social care sector for over 10 years and reading through different guidelines found through class lectures and further reading .

1.(S)...Strength

I have good communication skills which involves verbal communication, written and sign languages . These enable me to communicate with the service providers , colleagues and other sector users as a support worker for learning disabilities. In my experience of working with a wide range of people I found good communication to be essential as it helps one to listen , talk , encourage and assist all concerned .

With teamwork I tend to adapt well in a team by working together with colleagues and other service providers as a team . I work daily in a team which involves other support workers , nurses , managers and other professionals such as Doctors, social workers and inspectors as well as managers and directors .

I have very good self management skills usually involving the use of my diary /calendar at work . This means I can well work on my own schedule that means doing different things during my shift such as giving out medicine , talking the clients for various activities and assisting with all necessary works before handing over to my colleagues in the next shift.

When it comes to technology I am very good in using all the necessary tools at work . This involves the use of computers for sending emails , diary checkin/updates, and writing reports . I am now improving on my specialized computer softwares packages to help me in some decision making in the future .

I have very good initiative and enquiring mind to do new things to help improve the work I am involved in . We do regular meetings with management as well as within the team where all ideas are discussed and agreed . I do plan my own schedule especially with activities involving the service providers such as cooking, day outing and other activities.

In terms of learning new skills I have a good appetite to learn new skills and improve on my job. I do this by going through different courses relevant to my work . When I started my work I was employed as a care assistant and I attended different course such as Health and safety, report writing and even took a year course completing my level 2 Diploma in Health and social care . I then did a course in team management and later raise through the ranks to be a senior support worker .I intend to finish this course to develop my skills even further .

(W)Weaknesses

My technological skills especially with computers is limited and I need to learn more on that side as am slow in adapting to the latest technology. I still do my Rota using the pen and paper instead of a computer .

I also weakness in solving problems especially emergencies as I tend to be panicky and fear the worst .

My enterprising skills need a lot to be improved as well especially in developing new initiatives or programs . I tend to think in improving existing policies or procedures rather than create new enhanced ones .

I also feel scared or panicky when communicating with senior managers or strangers for fear of making a mistake .These usually happens when new people come to visit us or on inspections such as the Care Quality Commission.

(O) Opportunities

I have worked as a care assistant and made my way to become a support worker. With my experience of 10 years and over as a support worker plus the trainings I have many companies who are willing to employ .

Once I have completed this course I am confident that I will get a job as a senior support worker .My next target is to continue to do nursing or care home manager.

(T)Threats

There are many people doing different courses on Health and social care and that has made the competition harder. Many young graduates are entering the field of Health and Social Care .

Many specialist areas are being created which means for one to survive a lot of further training is needed .

Also many young graduates are very good in technology especially special packages which makes them easily employed by companies.

Personal Action Plan

Following the completion of my SWOT analysis of myself I have decided to do a personal action plan to help me improve on my weakness and maintain my strengths in order to help me improve much better. I have outlined skills that need to be improved as follows:

1. Communication skills

I plan to improve my computer skills doing different packages relevant to my area of work such as care plans ,excel and other necessary packages .

I want to participate in a lot of groups relating to Health and Social care and improve my report writing skills to build my confidence.

2. Problem solving skills

I intend participate more in management meetings and helping in solving some problems at work .

I would encourage my managers to let me join courses to build my confidence in solving problems .

I will also be volunteering in group simulations of things like fire emergency or floods etc.

3. Teamwork skills

I will continue with working in a team and join more team activities.

I will also join groups at work for a variety of activities to benefit my team work skills .This summer we plan to go on an outdoor trip to wales for a "team bonding adventure " and I am ready to join .

4. Self -Management skills

I plan to do more courses on managing my own time and work load .

I will use my calendar and work diary very well and share my diary with all at work so I can easily log into all activities and plan ahead of time

I will also be at work much earlier so I can plan my day well ahead and deal with any emergencies.

5. Learning and technology skills

I will specifically continue with all courses relevant to my area of work involving Health and social care .

I will improve my computer learning and learn some specific packages relating to my work .

Conclusion

It is very vital that getting an academic qualification is a very necessary foundation for acquiring the skill set for employment in Health and social care . Academic training and qualifications will definitely make a person get the necessary knowledge to understand the theory of the work in Health and social care .so it is vital one take all necessary courses to be qualified.

However , getting an academic qualification alone will not make one have all the necessary skills for a job in Health and social care .It is important that one acquires a good skill set of others including ,communication ,teamwork enterprise skills ,self planning and enterprise plus learning skills to be able to do well in today's world of competition between companies .

According to CIPD/KPMG quarterly Labor market outlook on a survey of over 1400 companies the main key skills needed for accepting new graduate employees is based on the following:

Communication skills...40%

Work ethics.....39%

Personality 32%

I have made my own personal SWOT analysis and after discussing my strengths and weaknesses I explained my own plans to improve and develop my skills further .I intend to follow all my personal plan of action and do my best to complete this course to the end .My aim has been and is still is to do well and improve myself in my work to be able to fit and succeed in the ever changing and challenging world of competition especially in Health and social care area of work.

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