
PERSONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Student Number: 1807330

Name of the Student: Valentina Rosca

Lecturer: Joanna Walsh

Term 3

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Introduction

In order to enhance the professional career, it is necessary to update the knowledge regularly so that effective outcome can be achieved. If I am able to develop my skills, it will help to increase my employment opportunity in future. During my academic career in university, I was pregnant and after delivery, I used to attend classes. In that period, I have gathered a different experience as I am working as a student as well as a mother. From that life-experience, I am able to develop my various skills such as time management, patience development, confidence and willingness to learn. This study will focus on my experience and will try to identify employability skills so that I can achieve better opportunity in case of employment. The factors related to self-evaluation and self-motivation will be examined in order to understand the chance of achieving success in future. Various learning theories will be used in order to understand my nature of learning. Analytical tools related to conducting personal analysis will be used so that my strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats can be identified. Based on the threats and weaknesses, objectives for personal development goals will be set and effective plan will be prepared.

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation is the process through which strength and weaknesses of an individual can be identified. It is an important part in order to bring development in the personal behaviour of an individual so that he/she is capable of getting better employment in future. As per the viewpoint of Hewitt (2015), if one person is able to identify their weaknesses, effective plan can be developed and it will help to bring improvement in my weaknesses. As I want to find out my strengths and issues, I have used various tools such as Honey and Mumford style and Kolb's style of learning.

Using above-mentioned self-evaluation tools, I will be able to find out my strengths and motivational factors. If I am able to know my motivational factors, I will try to focus on it. It is quite common that self-evaluation can be considered as the best starting point of learning and effective knowledge will help me to make effective plan for future (Potvin *et al.*, 2016). As self-evaluation assists me to understand my present weaknesses, I will be able to set effective goals,

plan accordingly and try to bring improvement in the identified factors. Thus, by developing my skills related to employment, I will gain success in my professional career in future.

Self-motivation

Self-motivation is the impulse that has driven me towards achieving my goal, in the present context following the academic path even during pregnancy. The idea of continuing my study even during the delicate stage of my life has motivated me in pursuing my dreams of attaining a good career in future. Self-motivation is the key to success of my life as I have stay motivated during the learning career to develop my future so that I will be able to take good care of my child. Being motivated is necessary for employability as its breaks the mould of hesitation and make us move forward in life with enthusiasm (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Motivating is essential for learning new things as well as to develop innovative things in life.

I have participated in the Self-motivation Quiz as well and have good score. I got 49 out of 60 for my self-motivation skill. Through this, I have been able to assess my self-assurance and self-confidence skill. I have positive thinking about my future that has kept me motivated. I keep myself motivated by setting goals for future activity and by learning Vroom's theory of motivation. I have learned through the particular theory that an individual's motivation is triggered by the factors such as skills, knowledge, and experience (Jago, 2015). Therefore, I have enhanced by knowledge trough learning and gathering details to improve my skills.

Kolb's learning style

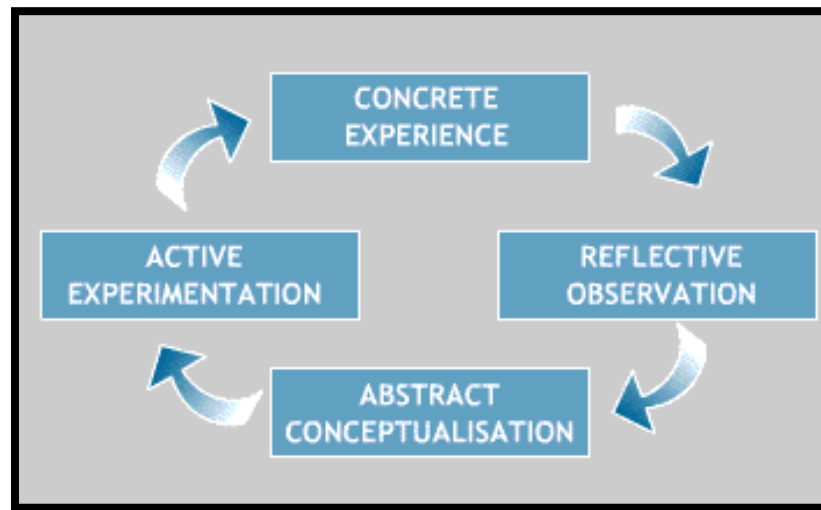


Figure 1: Kolb's learning cycle

(Source: Smith, 2016)

I have discovered the learning cycle of Kolb and have incorporated it into my learning career. There are four stages of this cycle such as concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation (Smith, 2016). Through this cycle, I have been able to align the learning career of my life in different stages of this model.

In the first stage of *concrete experience*, I have reflected my experience of learning in the university during and after my pregnancy period. I have reflected upon the tasks that I had to carry out in learning period as well as the duties that I had to perform at home.

As per the next stage of this cycle that includes *reflective observation*, I have been able to review my experience during the academic period in the university (McCarthy, 2016). I have reflected that I have gone through many problems at the time of examination when I was pregnant. I had to take care of my health as well as prepare for the examination and score well in studies. I was having a lot of pressure however, I have kept myself motivated and move forward with passion and dedication towards learning. I had to manage the responsibilities of a mother and a student at a time. Through this, I have developed the time management skill. This has assisted me in carrying out multiple tasks by creating schedules of every work of the day.

In the stage of ***abstract conceptualisation***, I can reflect that I have learned many things from the experience. It was a nice experience to develop my learning career along with the duty of a caring mother. I can conclude from the experience that I have developed my skill of time management through the experience as well as developed patience and self-encouragement in carrying out the daily chores of the life.

In the last stage of ***active experimentation***, I have to say that I will develop my skills further to develop my career in the future (Sudria *et al.*, 2018). I will put into practice what I have gathered in my academic career from personal experience. In future, I will try to work hard with calmness and manage the hectic schedule of managing home and career with composed mind. I will develop the time management skill in future as well so that management of home in assisting my daughter would not be neglected for my dream of becoming independent woman. I will give time to my daughter in her growing period to help her learn as well as schedule time for myself to develop my career that would be supportive for me as well as for my daughter.

The learning cycle of Kolb has enabled me to assess my learning period and personal skills during and after pregnancy. I have been able to develop plan as per the last stage of this cycle that will develop my skills further in future.

Honey & Mumford learning styles



Figure 2: Honey & Mumford learning styles

(Source: Truong, 2016)

After conducting Kolb's theory, I have used another learning theory, Honey and Mumford styles, in order to understand the importance of various learning styles. It is found that Honey and Mumford style is the advanced version of Kolb's theory and it is comprised of four aspects such as activist, pragmatist, reflectors and theorist (Truong, 2016). If I am able to identify my learning style, I will be able to learn new skills, which can help to improve myself.

Activist

As per the viewpoint of Stander *et al.* (2019), various people are there, who prefer to learn from their work and they cannot enhance knowledge from listening or reading. As they are involved in their work and they handle the situation by their own, from practical experience people develop their knowledge and it is the profitable idea for leaning. This kind of people has various skills such as problem solving, handling competition and generating new ideas.

Pragmatist

On the other hand, Bontchev *et al.* (2018) commented that few people are there, who prefer to do experiment with their work. This type of people gathers knowledge from various aspects such as reading case study or hearing discussion; and thinks about the learning so that they can apply it in reality. Hence, it is clear that pragmatists have the quality to apply their theoretical knowledge in the practical work for achieving better outcome.

Reflector

The reflectors like to learn by watching, contemplating or observing the scenario and the people of this category try to think about the facts what they watch. The reflectors have the critical thinking power and before taking any kind of decision, they try to utilise knowledge related to the topic (Weng *et al.*, 2019). In order to avoid confrontation in time of taking decision, the reflectors analyses information in various aspects and it helps to be successful. The reflectors learn from various activities such as attending seminar, gathering feedbacks, interviews and watching others' activities.

Theorist

Theorists focus on the collection of data and according to the data, effective theories and models are developed (Newton, 2015). New concepts and facts are analysed and it is used in the practical life. Theorists develop their knowledge through stories, theories and statistics.

From the entire discussion, I am able to develop knowledge related to the theory and I have completed the questionnaire from the Moodle in order to understand my learning style.

I have noticed that I am a *pragmatist* and *activist* as I have scored 17 out of 20 in pragmatist portion and 19 out of 20 in activist portion. During my pregnancy, I did not stop studying and I took admission in the University for enhancing my career. This activity has proved my *confidence* power; I have learned that willingness is the key to success and I have applied this theory in time of my pregnancy, which indicates my pragmatist nature (Aljaberi, 2015). As a result, now I am a mother as well as a student of University for developing skills related to future employment. On the other hand, after my delivery, within two weeks, I have joined University and I am taking care of my baby and attending my classes. Moreover, I have attended examination, where I have scored good marks. From this experience, I have learned that *patience* helps to handle critical situation effectively (Pritchard, 2017). In addition to this, as I have to manage my study along with my baby, this experience is developing my *time management skill*, which reflects my activities nature of learning.

Therefore, by using this tool, I can state that effective learning process not only enhances my knowledge, but also it will help to develop my employability skills for future. My confidence power provided me the courage to take admission during my pregnancy and my willingness for learning in order to be employed in future has motivated me to join university as quick as possible (Dvouletý and Lukeš, 2016). Hence, it is clear that if I have clear knowledge to my goal, I will be successful by making effective plan. Being an activist, I am able to take risk in order to get success and it helps me to serve a higher position in a company in future.

Personal development plan

As commented by Gould (2017), personal development plan is the process, where objectives and goals are set in order to develop skills in an appropriate manner. Self-evaluation is the part of

personal development cycle and an individual tries to evaluate self for identifying own strengths and weaknesses.



Figure 3: Personal Development Cycle

(Source: Gould, 2017)

Therefore, by using development cycle and after completing self-evaluation, I am able to identify my weaknesses and threats and according to it, I can set my objectives and goals so that appropriate plan can be made. At present, as I am a mother and a University student, I have developed my knowledge as a mother and I am continuously learning on employability skills for getting better employment opportunity in future. As my aim is to work in the good position in a company in future, it is necessary for me to develop my employability skills along with knowledge. Without effective knowledge, I will not be able to manage the pressure of work and it can ruin my goodwill in the venture (Kivimäki and Meriluoto, 2018).

Therefore, in order to evaluate myself effectively, I will use SWOT and Johari Window Model for identifying my skills and competencies, which are to be improved. These models will guide me to discover my skills, which are my strength, and reduce my threats along with weaknesses for achieving my ambition as early as possible. After finding out my weaknesses, objectives will be set and I will prepare the plan for developing my skills.

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis can be considered as a framework in order to evaluate my strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats (Phadermrod *et al.*, 2019). If I am able to identify my strengths and weaknesses related to skills, I will be able to find out its threats and opportunities as well. Using SWOT, I will be able to find out the areas, where improvement is required.

Strengths • Hard worker and patience • Time management • Continuous learner and confidence • Teamwork	Weaknesses • Excessive pressure • Communication skill • Sensitive • Negotiation skill
Opportunities • Effectively handling the competition • Completion of work within time • Updated knowledge	Threats • Communication gap • Threats related to competitors • Lack of capacity of taking effective decision

Table 1: SWOT analysis

(Source: created by learner)

Strengths

Hard worker and patience

I am a hard worker and I have patience to work; I have identified these skills from my life-experience. Though I was pregnant, I took admission in University in order to develop my career. I am continuing my study along with taking care of my baby girl and this routine is quite hectic; however, I am able to score very well in my class examination.

Time management

As I am a mother, most of the time I have to spend for my child and it is difficult to me to manage my study equally. However, when my baby sleeps, I study in that time so that I can update my knowledge (Gürel and Tat, 2017). Moreover, my energy level is high and it motivates

me to study for my professional career. Due to this reason, I have joined University within 2 weeks after my delivery and I able to score a good marks in the class examination.

Continuous learner and confidence

Strength is related to my confidence and in academic career, I communicate confidently with my professor for expressing my knowledge on a topic. Though I am a mother, I attend class regularly, which updates my knowledge properly.

Teamwork

In time of doing assignment, I make a group and involve my friends in specific areas such as data collection, presentation so that I complete my team project within time along with maintaining its quality.

Weaknesses

Excessive pressure

As I am a mother as well as a student, it creates excessive pressure on me and it affects my health. This is the major weakness, which can reduce my employment opportunity in future and without fitness, I am not able to serve my designation in an appropriate manner.

Communication skill

I know English and my colloquial language and apart from it, I only know sign language. However, in case of employment, at present, employers prefer to recruit candidate, who have knowledge on various languages such as French, Spanish. In University, language related issue is not observed and as a result, I only know English and colloquial language.

Sensitive

I am very much sensitive in case of criticism and it decreases my motivation to work. In time of teamwork, if I receive negative feedback about me performance, I feel de-motivated, whereas I can consider it positively for developing my performance in future.

Negotiation skill

During teamwork, I cannot say directly “no” to others and as a result, few times, effective decision is not taken, which is my weakness.

Opportunities

Effectively handling the competition

As I am trying to apply my theoretical knowledge in the practical work, I am able to put my creativity in the work and in University; I have applied this knowledge for preparing project in a unique way.

Completion of work within time

Being a mother, I know the importance of time for my child and I use this knowledge in my education life. I know that time management helps me to achieve my goal properly and by maintaining this, I complete my projects within deadline.

Updated knowledge

I attend class regularly and it helps me to update my educational knowledge. Moreover, I have interest to learn new thing related to my subject and thus, in time of employment, effective knowledge increases my employment opportunity.

Threats

Communication gap

As I have language barrier, I cannot communicate with the people, who do not know English and in case of employment, it can be considered as the major threat.

Threats related to competitors

In University, every year many students pass out and they all are efficient; hence, without having effective skill, employment opportunity can be reduced. Though I am capable of managing time and having confidence, lack of communication and negotiation skill can create huge competition in competitive market of employment.

Lack of capacity of taking effective decision

Due to not having the capability of saying “no”, effective decision cannot be taken. During my academic career, I solely take the responsibility of my child and manage my study. Due to having excessive pressure, few times, I did not provide proper attention to my study and on that day, my performance in class was bad.

Johari Window

Johari Window model is the useful tool in order to improve self-awareness and develop understanding between groups (Berland, 2017). Using this model, the relationship between two groups can be examined and required skills for an individual in order to conduct teamwork properly can be identified. This model has four quadrants such as open area, blind area, unknown area and hidden area.

Arena/Open area • Time management	Blind spot • Patience
Facade/Hidden • Communication gap	Unknown area • Pressure management

Table 2: Johari Window Model

(Source: Created by learner)

The open area means the skills, which is known to the people as well as known to me, whereas, blind area means that others, not known to me, aware of the skills. In case of hidden area, I, not known to the others, know the skill and the last is unknown area, where no one (self and others) knows the skill (Tran, 2016).

In time of analysing my skills, I have asked questions to my friends so that I can identify my skills, which they know and which they do not know (Cruz, 2019). It is found that *time management* skill belongs to the *open area*, which is known to me as well as my university friends. As I am a mother of a newly born baby girl, my friends observe that I never be late at class and attend class regularly. This skill will help me to get good opportunity for future in case of employment.

On the other hand, *patience* can be placed under the *blind area* as I complete my projects properly with my friends, which are given by the University professors. My friends stated that if problems occur related to project, I handle it calmly and I provide all attention towards my work (Hamzah *et al.*, 2016). Though I have a baby, it does not affect my study; this skill will help me in future to handle critical situation properly and it can increase my employment opportunity.

In context of *hidden area*, my friends have stated that I *do not clearly communicate* with my professor with the topic, which is not clear to me. As mentioned by Shamo-Nir (2017), it is necessary to communicate with professor if any doubt related to the topic is there. My friends pointed out that one topic related to the project were not clear to me; I did not show any interest on this and select another one. *Personal fear* is nothing but creates barriers in order to enhance my knowledge related to the subject.

Using Johari Window Model, I am able to discover my various skills such as time management, teamwork and patience. Moreover, I have found skills, which I did not know as well as my friends do not know. This model will help me to think about my skills as well as the process of developing it so that I can handle my *pressure* properly. As I am a mother, I need to spend time with my baby girl and it is important to study regularly for achieving my goal. Hence, in order to reduce pressure, I can make plan and try to complete work accordingly. Moreover, I can arrange group study, where, within few times of discussion, I can enhance my knowledge on the specific topic (Koca and Erigüç, 2019). It not only improves my knowledge, but also, increases my listening power in appropriate manner.

S.M.A.R.T. Objectives

Specific	Measurable	Attainable	Realistic	Timeframe
To develop knowledge on various language such as Spanish and French	I will speak by using the language, which I am starting to learn and I will gather feedback from my	In order to attain this objective, I will join specific class, where I can learn French and Spanish language.	It is realistic as many students are there, who join other classes after university for enhancing employability	12 months (6 months for each language)

	professor for measuring this objective		skills.	
To reduce pressure in order to handle critical situation properly	In order to measure this objective, I will observe my free time, when I relax and spend with my baby.	This objective can be attained by making effective plan based on which work can be completed	It is realistic as many people are continuing their study with part-time job. Being a mother it is necessary to spend quality time with child so that I can balance my personal life as well as work or academic life.	2-3 months
To reduce fear related to communication with professor	For measuring this objective, I will gather feedback from my professor	Continuous communication and good relationship with professor can help to attain this objective	It is realistic as without effective communication, concept related to topic is not clear and expected outcome cannot be achieved.	5-6 months

Table 3: S.M.A.R.T. Objectives

(Source: Created by learner)

Personal development plan

Plan	Activities	Duration	Impact
Learning Spanish and French language	-Attending course, where, foreign languages are taught	12 months	-Positive as I will be able to work as an interpretation -Negative, if I cannot develop skill related to reading and listening
Reducing pressure related to work or daily activities	-Developing the plan by maintaining the priority list - Discussing with seniors for enhancing knowledge	6 months	-Positive as if I am able to reduce daily work pressure by completing work within time, I will be able to get free time, which motivates me to work. -Negative, if seniors do not provide proper idea related to pressure management, knowledge related to it would not be developed
Fear for communication and developing negotiation skill	-Focusing on the communication -Analysing the importance of effective communication with	5-6 months	-Positive as this skill will help me to get clear knowledge, where I face confusion and negotiation skill will

	professors		develop my
	-Creating mock		employment
	situation for		opportunity
	developing		
	negotiation skill		

Table 4: Personal development plan

(Source: Created by learner)

Conclusion

In time of drawing the end line of study, it can be deduced that personal development is the important part in order to enhance employment opportunity in the competitive market. I am able to know my skills and weaknesses throughout this study by using various tools such as SWOT, Johari Window model. At first, I have identified my nature of learning, which are pragmatist and actionist by using Honey and Mumford model and in order to reflect my experience, I have used Kolb's theory. Applying SWOT, I have identified that patience, time management and calmness are my strengths, whereas, lack of communication, negotiation and pressure management skills are my weaknesses. As per the weaknesses, objectives have been set and plan has been prepared so that I can develop my skills for getting better employment opportunity in future. Moreover, though I have a baby girl, my willingness to learn has helped me to join University within 2 weeks. It proves my responsibility towards study and this skill will assist me to earn reputation in my professional career.

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