

BMSW4001 ACADEMIC AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

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Introduction

Accurate employability skills and competencies of employees is highly imperative in climbing the professional ladder in an individual's desired domain of work. Both business owners and employees need to possess relevant business skills that can aid in positively impacting the business performance and output, helping them understand both the internal and external factors affecting business growth and its profitability. The following paper will be discussing elaborately the need for employability skills in business industries and the impact that they have on business growth. Four of the employability skills from the personal learning module have been taken into account, with an insightful discussion, and a Gibbs reflective cycle has been developed later in the study for making a reflective analysis identifying measures to strengthen the weak areas.

Discussing Employability Skills

In this reflective analysis, I have considered 3 major topics that I have covered during the term, reflecting their usefulness while making a self-analysis on each of the considered topics. I have considered ***Time management, Cover letter writing and Public Speaking*** in order to analyse self employability skills. ***Gibbs reflective model*** has been used in evaluating employability skills. It is a cyclical model of reflection that leads through six stages helping to explore and experience in context to a description of the event, related feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and creation of a strong action plan.

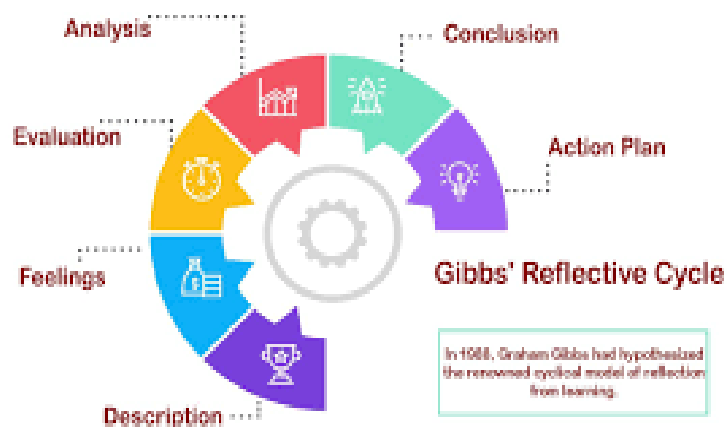


Figure 1: Gibbs reflective cycle

(Source: Adeani *et al.* 2020)

Time Management

It requires ***planning, prioritisation, setting boundaries, task delegation and building an accurate timeline*** while following it such that activities can be organised systematically, without causing much delay. It is an important employability skill since it aids in increased self-efficacy while improving workflow and filtering notification (Aeon, and Aguinis, 2017).

Using the Gibbs Reflective model I have systematically elaborated this specific skill and its impact on my personal experience.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	DO NOW	DO NEXT
NOT IMPORTANT	DO LATER OR DELEGATE	IGNORE

Figure 2: Time Management

(Source: Aeon, and Aguinis, 2017)

Reflection on Time Management skills

Description: learning the module has greatly contributed to the development of my employability and competency skills. It is mainly through group activities that helped me in comprehending the need for time management skills. I had been a part of a crucial group project that had been assigned to our team at a short notice period, requiring us to strictly maintain the deadline. I had been working following the element of task prioritisation and delegation as reflected in Figure 2. Though it helped me a great deal in completing my project on time, I realised that I could have done better had I strengthened my time management skills. Even though I made my contribution following the provided timeline, I could have managed my content better with a thorough revision that could have aided me in higher academic

performance. At the same time, the learning module has helped me in strengthening my Academic writing skills, paraphrasing and summarising.

Feelings: I felt that I could have done my part better helping to elevate the content of our project since I was in charge of making a thorough analysis of one of the most crucial parts requiring authentic statistical data. The Urgent/ Non-urgent approach helped me in proceeding with my project meeting the basic requirements, but I was not satisfied with my output or contribution to the project. Since I have been a perfectionist and always paid attention to details, this project somehow left me with more space for improvement, which could have been done with effective time management skills.

Evaluation: This stage of the analysis helped me in making a detailed evaluation of my experience. The learning module has helped me in sharpening the academic writing skills that have helped me in generating original content. Since the module was conducted digitally, it greatly helped me in getting accustomed to online learning as well. However, time management has been an issue to some extent that has hurdled my smooth activity courses.

Analysis: Though this learning module I have been able to identify my strengths but one of the areas that needed practice is my time management skills so that I can deliver my delegated tasks more efficiently and systematically.

Conclusion: through the thorough analysis I have reached the conclusion that strengths can help me deliver quality work in my field however issues in time management can limit my growth and efficiency. Thus this area of employability skills needs my attention through the preparation of the right course of action plan.

Action Plan: since I have a deficiency in time management skills, I will be working on a Personal Development Plan, considering all the effective factors needed to be worked over in order to develop this certain skill. Further, I will be creating a daily planner in order to keep track of my progress.

Cover Letter Writing

Cover letter writing skills is necessary since it helps an individual in appealing as to why and how the required skill sets of an individual align with the job role that they are applying for. Cover letters are an accompaniment to CVs that help in elevating an individual's demonstration of why they are fit for the job (Bournique, 2020).



Figure 3: Cover Letter writing

(Source: El-Kassar, and Singh, 2019)

Reflective analysis of Cover Letter writing skills

Description: the learning module helped me in understanding the importance of cover letters and the way it can help me in grasping opportunities in my chosen sector. Prior to this, I was not wholly aware of cover letter writing necessity, however, I have realised that in order to reach my professional goal, it is necessary for me to improve my cover letter writing skills which need an adequate grasp over writing skills and its technicalities.

Feelings: I felt that this learning module greatly helped me in getting a basic grasp of the idea of cover letter writing. I have been quite anxious about how to find my way to my chosen field of work and job role, and this learning module has greatly helped me in getting an idea about how to appeal formally using technicalities to bag my dream job. I believe that my strength in academic writing will greatly help me in structuring my cover letter writing with a little more practice involving the use of technical words and presenting myself effectively. However, I realised that this needs some work since a cover letter should have a strong sales pitch.

Evaluation: learning this module has helped me develop a few of the basic employability and competency skills. This module has helped me grasp a better understanding of referencing techniques, paraphrasing and self reflection skills. However, it could not help in getting an insight to the technicalities of cover letter writing. I did make an attempt of creating my cover letter along with a CV, however when I got it reviewed by my professor, I learnt that I needed a lot more skill to develop cover letters on my own.

Analysis: I have been able to analyse that in order to improve my cover letter writing skills, I need to work on a vast area related to it. I identified that it is necessary for me to first identify my strengths in context to employability skills and next it is important for me to analyse how those skills align to my job role. Since I have my strengths in academic writing skills, therefore I have been accustomed to explaining and exploring things elaborately, however, I learnt that cover letters need to be short and crisp with high sales pitches, which is an area I need to work on.

Conclusion: I learnt from my experience that it is necessary for me to develop a sales pitch in me such that I can convince my employer in explaining as to why I am fit for the job role. I have thus been trying to improve work on my sales pitch and to understand how to present my views briefly but with the most impact.

Action Plan: The action plan for cover letter writing has also been developed in my personal development plan.

Public speaking

Public speaking skills help in career advancement indicating creativity, critical thinking skills, leadership abilities, poise and professionalism (Ivanova *et al.* 2020). It is important since it helps in forming strong connections while helping to make efficient decisions.



Figure 4: anatomy of public speaking

(Source: Ivanova *et al.* 2020)

Reflective Analysis of Public Speaking

Description: Public speaking and delivering presentations have always made me anxious. I have had strength in writing however I have always had low confidence when it came to public speaking. This learning module helped me to identify that weakness in me. It made me realise that public speaking is crucial in order to grow personally and professionally and is an important aspect of employability skills. During the course of the module that had been mainly conducted digitally, we were required to involve ourselves in group discussions, it is then that I realised my weakness in public speaking.

Feelings: the positive aspect of the learning module is that it helped me understand my strengths as well as weak points and in making me realise that in order to be eligible in the professional field I needed to possess all the skills and could not just depend on my strong points. I felt I could have made a better contribution in the group discussion had I worked upon my public speaking skills.

Evaluation: after evaluating my experience I have realised that working on my communication skills is an absolute necessity that can help me grow personally. I could have created a better impression about myself if I had a slightly strong public speaking capability. This has helped me in understanding that public speaking is another crucial aspect that needs to be developed in order to gain success in the professional domain.

Analysis: An analysis of the experience helped me in understanding that I have strength in making theoretical projects since my skills related to academic writing, paraphrasing, summarising and referencing are strong. I perform well in my projects because of these strengths in me, however, the concerning factor is my public speaking ability causing a low academic performance because of my inability to deliver my presentation fluently.

Conclusion: I learnt from my experience that it is necessary for me to work on my public speaking skills to involve better with a crowd of people. I have been working to strengthen this skill in me so that I can grasp better opportunities.

Action Plan: public speaking action plan has also been developed in my personal development plan.

Personal development plan

Issues	Action plan	Timeframe
<i>Time Management</i>	● I have been working on my planning skills in order to organise all my daily work. ● I have started segregating my work on the degree of their urgency. ● I am also maintaining a log book in order to keep track of my progress.	4 months
<i>Cover letter writing</i>	● I have been referring to sample structures and instructions on google on tips to write cover letters. ● I have enrolled myself in a digital course that advocates creating effective cover letters. ● I have been practising the tools and techniques that I have learnt through these channels as well as through the learning module.	2 months.

<i>Public Speaking</i>	● I have been trying to sharpen my communication skills. ● I am taking courses that teaches how to control body language and other non-verbal ways of communication while presenting in front of a big audience. ● In order to reduce my anxiousness, I have started doing meditation. ● Also, I have been rehearsing a lot in front of the mirror in order to gain confidence and perfect myself.	5 months.
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Conclusion

This study has highlighted the importance of employability and academic skills and the need to strengthen them in order to gain success professionally as well as academically. Three of the crucial skills from the learning modules have been discussed in this reflection, with the use of the Gibbs reflective model. Further, a proper Personal development plan has been structured in the study aligning to the weak aspects that have been identified in the course of the study.

Reference

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