

Certificate of Higher Education in Skills for the Workplace

‘Reflection on Career
Development’

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BMSW4005

Professional Career
Development

Lecturer: Mary March

Date: 16/04/2020

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Introduction

My name is Rosen Agushev and I am 20 years old. I was born in Bulgaria but I moved to London at the age of 14. I came to London to build a better life for myself and to find me dream profession. In this essay I will be writing about career development. Career development is a major aspect in every person's life as no one wants to stay at the same position forever. I believe that every person must set up goals for themselves, as goals give you a purpose to learn new skills and technics which are going to be beneficial not only for a person's work environment, but also in their social life. We should all know our strengths and weaknesses as this is going to help us to ether work on weaknesses or enhance our strengths, and this can be beneficial on our career development.

Every person has had a dream profession when they we just kids, and my one was to be a bodybuilder/fitness model. in order for a person to fulfil their childhood dream profession they have to be committed, ambitious and motivated. I started working on developing my dream career when I was eleven years old. The first thing I did to make sure I work towards achieving this goal was to start going to the gym. At the begging it was very difficult as I didn't know what exactly am I doing, there were moments where I was about to give up as It was too difficult or even because my friends were making fun of me, but then I realised that when you want something in life you have to work for it and be committed to it.

During the first 2-3 years of my journey I managed to pick up a lot of career development skills which I didn't even know about at the time. One of these skills was self-motivation. I picked up this skill by being content to succeed in what I was trying to accomplish, no matter of the obstacles or difficulties I faced. The second skill I gained during that time was determination. I picked up this skill by not giving up even at the toughest times. And the third career development skill I acquired was passion. My passion for the fitness industry was so high up that I was training/building my body almost every day. Now when I look at these skills I know how important they are not just in my work environment but also in my social life.

With time passing by I had already made up my mind completely about what I want to do as a career. From the age of 17-18 I tried to concentrate fully on this childhood dream. I was even more content and passionate about the fitness industry which motivated me to extend my knowledge about the industry even further. I started doing a personal training course which taught me a lot of new things. One of the things I learned in this in this course was how to set up goals and how to track the progress of my goals. I learned a technique called SMART goals as (Doran, G.T) states "The establishment of objectives an the development of their respective action plan are the most critical steps in a company's management process."(Doran, 1981, p.35). This helped me set up realistic goals for myself and showed me how to monitor my progression.

Reflection

in other to evaluate my fitness experience for the first couple of years of my start I will be using Gibbs reflective cycle (Gibbs, 1988). Gibbs's reflective cycle is simple method in which you are able to examine a specific situation or activity you have done in the past and see how you can improve or adapt your future behaviour. You can do that by using 6 simple steps: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan.

Step 1: Description – When I started my fitness course I was not confident about anything as I had lack of knowledge about things like anatomy of the human body and even basic biology things.

Step 2: Feelings – I was feeling very insecure as everyone in my group knew so many things and I didn't know almost nothing. When my teacher was asking questions everyone was trying to answer them except me and this behaviour of mine made me teacher doubt my personal training qualities.

Step 3: Evaluation – When I was performing the physical exercises my teacher saw that I was doing great and even better than the other students, but when doing class work I was very far behind from the rest members of my class.

Step 4: Analysis – I learned from this situation that I have to be more prepared for my future classes and also that even if I am not sure about the correct answer to a specific question I should at least try to give an answer as when I was not answering anything people started to doubt me.

Step 5: Conclusion – This experience I had was not all bad as I learned a lot of new things that will help me in future. I learned from this situation that I have to work on my communication skills as they are essential for a person's career or even social life. If I sign up for a different course in future I will make sure I am more prepared for my classes and study even harder.

Step 6: Action plan – I will do everything in my power to work on my behaviour and also on my communication skills as this way I will be more confident I won't be stuck in a situation like this again.

This reflection cycle has helped me identify the good and bad things about a specific situation, which is going to help me improve my previous mistakes and also realise what I have done well in the situation. If I do this cycle more often I will be able to improve my career development skills and also get a clear vision of what I doing right and what I can improve.

Career plans

My career plans for the future are to have a successful career as a personal trainer/bodybuilder, and also to have my own business one day. At the moment I am lucky to be working at one of the most luxurious places in the world, so maybe before I focus on my fitness and business plans I will try to progress in the company I am at the moment. I am a very success driven person and I always try to improve myself in order to grow not only at my current company but also to grow as an individual.

In order to achieve my future plans I must constantly try to develop my personal skills and also keep working on my persona. The main skill I am always embellish is my communication skill because they are the most important skill to have, as the better communicator I am the better relationship I can establish with my customers, teammates and even friends. The other skill that I am also very keen to upgrade is my confidence. Being confident can help me grow in my current company and also help me take necessary risks in order to succeed in my life.

As I would love to have a prosperous career in the fitness industry I am always looking for ways to extend my knowledge about the industry. The first step of my career was to do a course which I finished successfully and now I looking for different courses to ensure I gain as much education possible. Having a lot of knowledge can help me stand out from the crowd and also build the desired reputation I am after.

Regarding my career plans about having my own business I am studying a business course at my university which will help me acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to become the entrepreneur I dream to be. By doing this university course I already have a vision of what type of business I would like to have in future and how to work towards achieving it. I learned a lot of useful things about the business environment such as business plans, financial plans and marketing plans. To ensure I gain the correct education about business and how to manage my business I have decided that I will keep studying a business course in an university as this will help me attain a lot of new knowledge about how to create a wealthy occupation for myself.

Regarding to my current position I will do everything In my power to make sure I progress in my company. I will do that by being committed, motivated and passionate. By doing this I will be able to demonstrate my skills and experience which will create a positive and trustworthy view of my in my managers eyes, which may lead to a promotion or at least to self-satisfaction and pleasure.

What do employers want

Following my experience and research I believe that they are 5 qualities employers are looking (Brooks, 2019) for in an individual. In my career development lectures we covered most of the qualities employers are looking for and we also did a group task in which we had to see which of these qualities we had. This was a very beneficial exercise as I got the chance to review my qualities and see which of them I have and on which I can work more to improve.

The main quality is communication skills. Employers are looking for people with good communication skills as mainly every role includes talking to customers and even writhing to clients. The better communicator a person is the higher the chances of getting pick for the job he/she has. Companies are looking for people who can integrate in the company and people that they can rely on. Employers want someone who is friendly and respectful towards other as this will create stronger connections between team members which will lead to increase in productivity and it will also create a more welcoming work environment.

The second quality an employer wants in a candidate is good team working skills. Being able to work as a team is highly beneficial for companies as it boosts the success of the company. When team members are compatible with each other this will help the overcome challenges as someone's weaknesses are someone's strengths. Businesses prosper when they have an assorted team members who can contribute to the success with individual ideas.

The third important quality is passion about the job. When a person is passionate about their job means that they will constantly try to do their best for company and they will also go the extra mile to ensure targets are met. Another benefit of being passionate about your job is that when you go to work you will create a more friendly environment for you and others. Passion give a person a reason to learn new things and develop in their career.

The fourth major attribute managers are looking for is experience and education. Managers want to see that you have experience within the industry you have applied for, as this will make them feel more secure about you. When a candidate has enough experience it will be easier for the employer to rely on them, as they will be pleased that you know what you are doing. A lot of companies require to have some sort of qualifications or degrees as this shows that you already know about the environment and you are passionate about it.

The fifth feature employers are looking for in a person is self-confidence. When someone is confident they usually are keen to take the right decisions and this is beneficial for companies as they want someone who will step forward to give new ideas which can contribute to the growth of the company. People who are self-confident are more consistent and they also build relationships with others easily. They also feel happier and people are more keen to believe and trust them.

Self-motivation

Self-motivation (Meier, 2016) is one of the most important aspects of the career development. Being self-motivated makes you push yourself to achieve more even if things do not go as smooth. When a person has a large amount of self-motivation they are prompt to progress and get to the desired profession because they will stay committed and do the best they can to get there. Employers appreciate employees who are self-motivated as they are frequently exceed expectation and they deliver a better quality of work. Self-motivation builds self-esteem and confidence which gives a person the power to meet their targets.

I am a very self-motivated person. I always try to push myself to achieve more and learn more as I know that this will help me achieve all my future and present goals. Being self-motivated gives me a reason to want more not only from my work but also from my life. By being self-motivated I have been able to carry out tasks at my workplace that have gone above and beyond my job description. Another benefit is that it gives me the ability to learn quicker. When I started my job I had no idea what was expected from me, but I was driven to learn and succeed. Just after 6 months I was already a team leader and I accomplished that by constantly trying to prove myself and even perform tasks that were way above my job role.

My self-motivation has boosted not only my enthusiasm about life but also it has helped me to build for myself a strong character that a lot of people can rely to. Furthermore it helped me achieve my personal-development goals and now when I see my progress I get even more and more motivated. In addition I believe that self-motivation has helped me do better at my university as well as I am concentrated and motivated to learn new things and complete my study successfully, because I know that this will also help me get to my desired profession.

Learning styles

The term “Learning styles” means that every person has equal capabilities to learn things but the way every person learns is different. In my Career Development classes we learned about the different learning styles and those learning styles are called VAK (Constantinidou and Baker, 2002, p.296–311) learning styles. VAK stands for Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic. These three styles of learning are very different from each other but they have the same purpose and this purpose is to learn and develop. [4]

Visual learning style means that learners need to see the information in order to process it. People who have this learning style have the ability to learn and remember things by looking at them, but are less keen to remember information if it is said to them or just showed to them.

Auditory learning style is a learning style in which people learn through listening. Auditory learners need to listen, communicate and interact with others in order to learn. The benefit of this learning style is that you do not have to see or read what you are supposed to learn. The disadvantage on the other hand is that they need to hear it to process it and it is also more difficult for them to concentrate when there are people around them.

Kinaesthetic learning style is leaning style in which people have to physically touch or try things in order for them to learn it. The advantages of this learning style is that people who are kinaesthetic are more physically active and they are also very hands-on. The disadvantage about it is that it is more difficult for people to learn through speaking and seeing things which sometimes creates an issue with students as lecturers are mostly presented and communicated.

I can say for myself that I am a kinaesthetic learner as I learn things better by doing them first rather than learn them through visualising or listening. I am a very hands on person, I like to try things for myself rather listen how to do them. My learning style has helped me learn a lot of things in the fitness industry as there mainly everything is done by trying things. Every time I want to learn something new I just jump straight into it. I think this learning style for me have some major benefits in my life as I want to have a career in the fitness industry and this learning style is helping me develop myself. However it has some disadvantages as well, and one of these disadvantages is that it is more difficult for me to learn at university.

Personal Development

At the moment I am currently working at Harrods, which is one of the most luxurious department stores in the world. I am working there as a Retail Associate but I would love to get to a managerial level one day. In order for me to make this happen I need to enhance my strengths and try to improve my weaknesses. I believe I have a lot of important strengths which can help me get to this level in my current company but it is essential that I also focus on my weaknesses as every weakness can become a strength. One of the weaknesses I possess is my education as I came at a young age to London and I couldn't finish my studies back in my country. To improve this weakness I am doing a business course at University of Wales Trinity Saint David. This course will help me get a better understanding of the work environment.

At my university we study a variety of personal development technics which are helping me get a better understanding of my strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The technique I have used to get a clear vision of all of them is called SWOT Analysis (Shewan, 2020) (**Figure 1**). By doing this analysis I am able to identify all the key things that will help me get my desired promotion. One of the opportunities I have at the moment is to enhance my education. Once I have complete all my studies I will have greater chance to progress in my company or find an even better job. The biggest threat I think I can face is competition as both in the fitness industry and in the retail sector there are a lot of people who have more knowledge and experience than me. I am planning to overcome this threat by simply be more patient, because when I finish my university I would already have the required experience and knowledge.

Another technique I tend to use often is SMART objectives which I mentioned above. SMART objectives are a simple technique that allows you to set up realistic goals and measure your results. The definition of SMART is: S- Specific, M- Measurable, A- Achievable, R- Realistic and T- Timebound. By using this method I set up specific goals for my career development and I am measuring my progress monthly to ensure that I am working towards achieving those goals. One of my long term goals is to successfully complete my education by the age of 23. I am constantly working towards achieving this and I measure my progress by successfully completing university assignments and tasks.

S-strengths	W-weaknesses	O-opportunities	T-threats
Communication	Education	Growth	Competition
Experience	Lack of ideas	Enhance education	Office politics
Motivation	Patience	Enhance connections	
Passion	Being too honest		
Network			

Figure 1: SWOT Analysis Chart

Employment goals

My desired career is to be a well-known and successful personal trainer. I have been dreaming to be a famous personal trainer even from a young age. I have put a lot of commitment and desire in accomplishing this dream. From a very young age I started training and researching the fitness industry. I found out that there are a lot of things I must do before I get to where I want to be. The first and main thing I had to do to start working towards achieving this goal was to get a personal trainer diploma. I got my personal trainer diploma in 2019. Since then I have been trying to integrate in the fitness culture, but sadly I realised that it was not as easy. In the fitness industry there is a lot of competition, and to be on top of everyone you have to dedicate all your time and energy towards the fitness industry. My goal now is to understand the industry fully and to start building the right network, because in an industry like this one it is very important to know the right people.

To make sure I am on top of the competition I have started to work on building my body more frequently and efficiently. I am trying to learn as much exercises and techniques that will help me create amazing training sessions for my clients as this will help me start creating a name for myself as when a client is happy they will recommend me to others. The next goal I have set up for myself is to get a dietitian and also nutritionist degree which will support me further in my career.

Apart from building a career in the fitness industry my second desired job is to become a manager at Harrods. I have been working at Harrods for over 2 years now and I really love working there. I would love to be a manager at Harrods as this is an amazing opportunity to grow in life and find even better opportunities in the future. To be a manager in Harrods on the other hand is a very long and difficult process as there is a lot of competition as well and not every department in the store is keen to promote their staff. To become a supervisor or a manager in Harrods, if you are already working for the company, does not require any qualifications, the only thing it requires is experience, network, passion and patience. Being a part of this company is extremely beneficial as I meet hundreds of people with different

backgrounds, motivations and connections, who can one day help me to achieve my career goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion I believe that everything is possible with the right amount of passion and dedication. When a person is committed and motivated to succeed they can achieve everything. I believe that I have a great chance to fulfil my dream as I am motivated enough to do it. I also believe that I possess some key skills that will help me attain my goals and desires. Some of those skills are self-motivation and passion. I believe that these skills are preferred by every employer, because they show that the employee is going to do the best possible to boost the success of the company. However there are some skills I should work on in order to show the best version of me. The skills I should focus the most to enhance are time management and patience. Both of these skills are very important, by having a better time management I can make sure that I complete all the daily tasks I am required to complete by the required time frame, and by being more patient I can give myself more time to develop and learn (**Figure 2**). No one is perfect but I believe that, it is exactly our imperfects that makes us want to develop ourselves, learn new things and just be the best versions of ourselves we can possibly be.

In my opinion career development is a very important factor in a person's life as it gives a person the purpose to develop not only their career but also their character. Career development makes you learn new skills and find new opportunities which can create a good and happy quality of life.

Current skills	Experience	Self-motivation	Commitment	Passion
Skills to work on	Leadership	Time management	Organisation	Patience
My goals	To get to a supervisor/ manager position within Harrods	To get more qualifications withing the fitness industry	To develop a good and athletic body	To build myself a name within the fitness industry
My resources	Apply technics I have learned in University	Use my free time to start a new course	A gym close to my house	Friends and family
Action plan	I can try to complete tasks that are on a managerial level	I will dedicate 1 hour per day to study for a new fitness course	I will try to go to the gym at least 4 times per week	I will start training friends and family until I get enough clients

Figure 2: Personal Action Plan

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