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Your Module Title: Academic and Employability Skills.

Assignment Title: Academic and Employability Skills.

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Executive Summary

This paper will look into the topics that I have learned during my academic time at the university, I will look as well at topics that are of importance in employment. The topics that I will state here are of high importance to me and they are the ones I priorities while aiming to perform well with good grades and hope to have a good job performance at my future employment.

Introduction

The university is a special place for learning and gaining skills, it draws people from all walks of life with different backgrounds, the lecturers are trained in a wide number of disciplines and have specialized skills to manage students, create environment that is suitable for students to learn new skills and this allows students to develop their own different paths in academic skills development and post university.

In my dealing with students, teachers, admin staff etc., I realized that I had come to the university with inherent learning skills as suggested by (Winne, 1995) like revision prep where I revise every topic before the next class on that subject, this way I get to refresh my mind from what I had learned in class, this is how reinforcement learning takes place by repeating what has revised earlier.

In the beginning I was no confident and not knowledgeable in many aspects of learning, I could have performed better but gradually I learned in class about report writing, I have improved my English, have built confidence in my approach to employment, and CV writing skills.

I designed an action plan on how I will revise, take notes, use the library, text books, I changed my time management and ensured I get to class in time. Online learning has been valuable to me as well it has a number of resources including notes and collaboration with classmates that I have used to benefit the richness in learning it provides.

University experience is shaping my future job prospect as I have learned employable skills that will be practiced while on the job, these employable skills include problem solving as 'Students with strong complex problem-solving skills are on demand' stated (Kyllonen, 2018), team working, valuing diversity and project management.

These employable skills are part of the whole educational learning environment, they are not the main subject area that I specialize in my day to day studies but they are learnt consciously, subconsciously, or copied. In class I learn subjects like project management which is essential in employment. The advantage of studying specialized subject like project management is in itself a career-oriented course that I can work as project manager.

I have consciously adopted new skills in my academic as conscious control is required to learn something new, this is attested by (Rezaee, and Farahian, 2015), these skills include how to Write effective notes, English composition and grammar, critical thinking, visual imagery, time keeping, and communication skills.

Academic Writing

Write Effective Notes

This takes place normally during the class session, to make sure that whatever the lecturer is saying is remembered well, I jot down key points that will make me bring back memories of what is being talked about in class, main important point like the ones that I think may come in exams are highlighted with a marker to remind me that it might be an exam question.

Writing thesis, report, assignment are part and parcel of what is expected from student's assessment, being able to compose and express grammatically is fundamental to score good grades, I use different approaches to learn these skills which include going through YouTube video's, text books I borrow from the library and listening attentively to lecturers and students especially as English is not my 1st language.

Critical thinking

The ability to analyze and formulate judgement without bias. This is one of the most difficult skills as in some situation one can be emotional bias like if one is writing about his or her favorite personality, one tends to write all the good things and ignore the negative bit. I try my best to look at things with an open mind, read, evaluate and weigh on both the pro and con based on content research (Williams, 2007).

Visual imagery

In learning there are times when to remember things or events is in the form of imagery, mental, visual scenes, pictures or sounds. This embeds to the mind and helps to improve memory (Doore, 1989). This is effective in situation like descriptive writing and help to evoke mental picture.

Time keeping

Classes start and end at a prescribed time, same is with the assignment that it has to be handed in at a certain time, failure to keep time can result in missing part of the lesson or be penalized for handing in assignment late. I have worked hard to improve my time management; it is a discipline that I continuously do my best to implement as I hope to transfer it to my employment.

Communication skills

Being able to articulate both verbal and in write effectively, this helps in presentations, speech, writing notes, thesis, and assignments. The expression from the lecturer's handouts, presentations and writing are structured in an organized way, easy to read and follow a pattern that is professional.

Looking at works from the lectures inspire me to read, understand English better, learn how to structure my class work and improve my verbal communications.

The library has manuscripts, past papers, new papers, text books and tones of other supporting documents that solidify the learning outcome. These are mainly secondary materials that have research that was carried out or information that is already verified from other parties and stored in the library. I use a lot the library resources and services to improve my communication skills and help in students learning outcome (Oakleaf, 2011).

Employability Skills

At university we attain lifelong experience that we bring with it to employment, here there are skills that are practiced in the day to day activities, while others are applied in different scenarios or settings. Some are our past experience; other skills we learn through the university environment and others we gain them interactively in employment.

problem solving, team working, valuing diversity and project management are priority subjects that have to be learnt in university.

Problem solving

Problems can be complex, easy and require different ways to solve them, being analytic that you look at it an issue in a number of ways to come with a solution. Being creative and thinking outside the box especially in areas like engineering. Problems in work change from time to time and vary in scale, being able to adapt, be calm and use all available tools and resources is important.

Team working

Building a strong, united and dedicated team that bonds in accelerating the assigned work is a boost to achieving the set goals. People come from different backgrounds and work ethics, Influencing and conflict resolution are some of the tools to keep abreast as there are at times some people will need to be convinced to carry out a particular task.

Company to provide training in team skills development (Hyne,2012), this has potential for employee development and empowerment.

Valuing diversity

UK is a place where multiculturalism is valued in university, workplaces and the country at large, this brings in people from a wide spectrum with skills and experience from all walks of life. The employees feel at home and work hard if they feel they are recognized, valued and respected and in turn may lead to optimal function and growth (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Organizing events to celebrate individual contribution and the potential they have for all employees in work.

I have been able as well to gain online learning experience and referencing.

Online Learning Experience

Moodle and other online learning services provide a rich learning experience that is flexible where students have access to past papers, class notes, teachers' comments, feedback, virtual library and many more services that make it easy to study at any time of the day, or night or at any time.

Online learning help in collaboration (Stoytcheva, 2018) and networking and study remotely using technologies like zoom that allow virtual students meeting up and has been essential during the Covid-19 period when onsite universities are closed off and everyone has to attend classes online.

Lecturers provide learning materials, make clarifications, students can ask questions (Goh, 2016), and students get feedback from their assignments.

My experience of online learning was very limited at start of my university course. Being presented with Moodle and others online services was quite challenging. As I felt overwhelmed by the high volume of information and was thrilled by the capacity to master these new digital tools. To overcome my fear, I went back to the elementary requirement of information finding, analysis and compelling. The quest for details and relevant information's have relatively improved my skimming and scanning reading skills. I am intending to continue the process as sufficient practice in reading will help achieve fluency with online learning tools.

Referencing

At university there are strict rules on report and assignment writing that any work that is copied or plagiarized without reference is penalized (Berlinck, 2011). It is important that students learn the proper referencing guide so that they cite and reference where they get quotations from.

My lecturer uses the Harvard Reference guide, in class we got a good number of examples to learn how to use it. In cases where we collaborate on a project, every student has his reference and we all put the references at the end of the document.

There are online Harvard reference tools that help in the cite of website, books, journals and videos automatically. One only title or identifier and the tool generate back the result like

<https://www.mybib.com/tools/harvard-referencing-generator>.

I did not have a proper grip on essay referencing despite extensive explanation given by the lecturer. To support my understanding on how and when to use referencing I watched several video on YouTube. I did not comprehend how to use other people work to support my argument without risking plagiarism.

I started to reading other people work online to see how best to reference. I am gradually to increasing my knowledge on essay writing and referencing.

Conclusion

There are fundamental skills that are inherent that we bring with us to University, these we learn through experience either consciously or subconsciously. As we start university, we gain a number of skills from our friends, lecturers and administration staff.

As with the choices we make in our course module, the nature of studies and priorities is important in our academic goals and expected result after graduation. In my learning from time to time I learn new skills like writing effective notes, English composition and grammar, critical thinking, visual imagery among others.

Looking ahead in my employment there are skills that I will need while at my future work I will use problem-solving skills, team working, valuing diversity and project management skills.

The reference guide help to reference reports, ensure I don't plagiarize my work and produce contents that are to the required Harvard reference guide.

Covid-19 has help me be confident in using online tools as I find it more user-friendly, study and do all my university work at the comfort of my home and have extra time to do revision which I would have used to travel to go to university.

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