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1) Introduction.

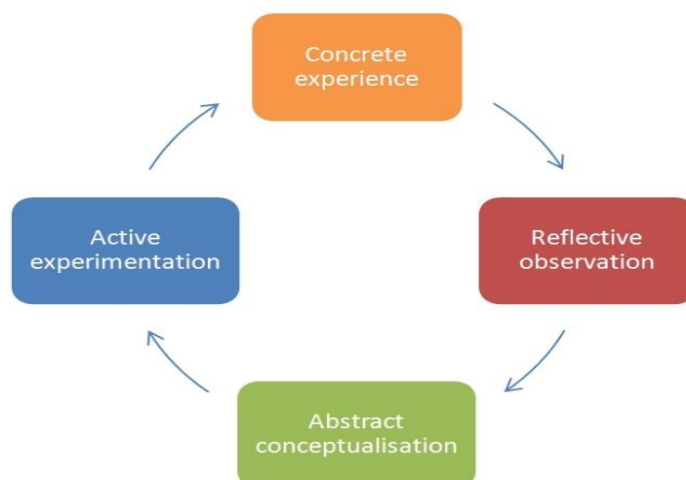
In this academic report I am going to talk about 3 topics learned during this module. It will be a reflective report using the Kolb's reflection model in which I will analyse CV Writing, paraphrasing, and cover letter writing. This report will show my understanding of the topics and my learning experiences with each of them, explaining my knowledge and thoughts about these specific ideas.

2) Kolb's reflecting model.

The reflecting model of Kolb is also known as "experiential learning". Personal experiences are the nexus of this model, which goes through 3 different steps after, to be reconsidered, studied and evaluated methodically. When the process is completed, a new cycle can begin from the new experiences. (Brown, 2015)

The cycle is structured by 4 steps.

- 1) Concrete experience.
- 2) Reflective observation.
- 3) Abstract conceptualisation.
- 4) Active experimentation.



A diagram of the 4 steps of Kolb's cycle. (Brown, 2015)

The whole base of the cycle is that everything starts with an experience that could be repeated or completely new, which would be considered as our first step, also known as “Concrete Experience”. After that we can move on to our “Reflective observation” which consists in analysing the experience and understanding what happened, annotating everything that we might not noticed before. Once we have done that, we begin our 3rd step, coming up with new ideas to improve the situation, think about why that happened that way or change the outcome itself; that would be our “Abstract Conceptualisation”. Lastly, we go to the “Active Experimentation”; that involves developing our ideas to test the results and learn from them directly from our reflection. The idea can be compared to a little child’s discover of new concepts, such as learning the difference between cold and hot. (Kolb, 1984)

I chose this reflection method because it is very simple and straight forward to analyse and experiment about your ideas and it gives you a deeper understanding and learning of things in a different way. I like the fact of putting in motion all the ideas that can emerge so the results can be proven faster and easier than just seeing it from the outside and I consider it as an opportunity to develop a new stage of thinking and learning about something that can be considered basic or simple from the practice instead of the theory.

3) Topics.

3₁) Paraphrasing.

According to W. Davidson, “paraphrasing is the putting of the sense of a passage into different but equivalent language”. This is taking another person’s ideas and give our own understanding and interpretation of it but maintaining the structure and meaning of it. (Lai, n.d.) To make this possible it is very important to be aware of not just changing a word for another, even though it might have the same meaning.

The first experience I had in paraphrasing was during this course. This consisted in analysing a group of ideas and giving my understanding of them, which was certainly difficult as my vocabulary in English language is not as extended as in other languages. The explanation given by the lecturer clarified most of my doubts at that time, but then I needed to deepen my understanding of the exercise.

So, I started questioning myself, what is this and why does it happen that way? And I discovered that everything I was doing was not coming from me and I should not steal someone else’s ideas. And started thinking about my personal mistakes while putting into practice the new concept, like copying the exact same order or idea just changing a couple of words or just changing the order of the exact same sentence.

That took me to realise that to improve my job I could not just search for synonyms, but also experimenting with the structure of the words using new vocabulary to express the same idea from a new point of view to make it understandable for a new group of people, or just to myself, giving a fresh perspective to an existing idea.

At the end of it, I am putting that into practice in this report, taking into consideration the new information learned from past tries and exhaustive research. The new results can be seen all along the essay, which also leads me to a whole new analysis of the outcome, starting a new cycle of things to be improved and proving the analysis made before.

3₂) CV Writing.

A CV or Curriculum Vitae, is a resume educational and professional background, made with one purpose: to get you an interview. This could be also seen as your presentation card to be sold, trying to highlight your achievements and talents in the best possible way. Do not confuse this with an autobiography, and always try not to just list everything you have done, or it will look boring and unprofessional. (Innes, 2009)

It is recommended to not to have more than 2 A4 pages in your CV’s length. This may vary depending on the experience, age, background, etc; of the person writing the CV. A school leaver’s CV would be way shorter than one from a person with many years of experience or many job changes in the past decade. A 3 pages CV is not very usual but can also be seen depending on the

field and experience. It is important to cite only the important information keeping them as key bullet points and trying to avoid information already mentioned in your Cover Letter. (Annon, n.d.) Developing a CV during this course was challenging, considering the lack of experience I have with this specific subject, but I have done it before. The task given in this course consisted in analysing past experiences and putting them together to create an appropriate CV, showing key examples of good layout and presentation. It was simple to put it together but when it came to the structure and visual appearance of the paper it was difficult to find one that could look professional for me. I started analysing my main mistakes after getting the outcome of that first try, the words were not concise and clear enough and the order of the summary was not right. The colours were too bright for a professional CV, but the main idea was right, as it was expressing the information I wanted to share.

That made me analyse what could I change to make it look better, and I got to the conclusion that I should change some vocabulary to make it more appealing for the reader, and to replace the pallet of colours to one more professional.

After that I marked all the important words and changed them for synonyms that sound more professional and apt for that specific task. To continue, I analysed the description of myself and replaced some of the skills and attributes to some more appropriate for the specific type of job I was looking for and changed some vocabulary to make it more concise and clearer for the employer to read and engage. To end I chose black and blue for the design of the CV, which gave it a very professional look.

At the end, the new results were very satisfactory for me and I managed to obtain more experience and a good learning from it thanks to my investigation and the lecturer's explanation.

3₃) Cover Letter.

A cover letter is a very important document with the purpose of complementing your curriculum. It is usually used as a presentation letter that will help the employers to understand more about you and to get a better chance of being considered for the role. You should always write it in relation with the position you are looking for and for the specific company desired as well. The basis of a cover letter is to make emphasis in your key abilities and background that are related to the role. (Smith, 2019) A good thing to consider when you write a cover letter, is the person receiving it, so try to be aware of that and write the letter directly to them. That information might come on the job advertisement, but if not, would be a good idea to call the company directly or to visit their website in case they do have one. Also be mindful of the presentation and layout of it, that can certainly make the difference. The first step to engage the reader is by the visual look of your letter, so keep an eye on your font, font size and colours used on it. (Innes, 2016)

To start analysing this, I never made a cover letter before this course, so the experience was totally new for me, as well as my knowledge about it. Apart from the explanation, it took me a lot of research to completely understand what a cover letter is and how to make it. After that I managed to make the cover letter.

Once it was finished, I had the same problem that with the CV, it was not concise enough and there was a lack of information that made it look poor and empty, and the information was displayed in a very disorganized way. The format was not the right one.

Once I found the main issues of the letter, I pointed them out to think about ways to improve it, so I began to think about vocabulary change, and to check at some professional cover letter examples that made it through the job applications in my specific field.

The final step I did was to remake the letter using a new format for it that looked more appealing and easier to read, giving clear examples and pointing the right strengths required for the job. I also replaced colloquial words for more professional words and gave it a touch of space between paragraphs to make it look more organized.

At the end I had a look to the cover letter and the CV together to compare them and to make sure there was no repeated information or grammatical mistakes. At the end I was very pleased with the results and I was able to begin with a new analysis of the results and find new improvements and ideas for further cover letters.

4) **Conclusion.**

This report was key for my findings, it was an amazing tool to analyse all my weaknesses in relation to these specific topics. I managed to get new information about new topics and gained experience for future job applications and university or job reports. I found that a good vocabulary is key for all the topics, being paraphrasing, CV writing or cover letters. The presentation of them is very important to get the results desired. The most important finding of this report were the employability and academic skills gained during the research. During the writing of this report, I managed to have a second look on the topics studied during this term, which was very helpful for the absorption of the information.

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