

Self-reflection of leading self on outdoor activities

Introduction

This assignment is a reflective review of my experiences in outdoor activities and how they have helped me develop skills in leadership, motivation, and discipline. The aim is to look at what I have learned from these activities and link them to relevant theory and the requirements of working in the fire service.

The outdoor activities I will reflect on are rock climbing, coasteering, white water rescue, and caving. These activities challenged me both physically and mentally. They put me in situations where I had to stay calm, think clearly, communicate well, and sometimes make quick decisions under pressure.

Leadership, motivation, and discipline are important because they help people perform safely and effectively in difficult situations. They also help with teamwork, responsibility, and making the right decisions when under pressure.

These skills are very important in the fire service, where teamwork, discipline, and motivation are needed to deal with emergencies safely and efficiently. This reflection will show how my experiences in outdoor activities connect to these skills and how they will help me in a future career in the fire service.

Personal Motivation and Relevant Theory

I take part in outdoor activities like rock climbing, coasteering, white water rescue and caving because I enjoy challenging myself and trying things that push me out of my comfort zone. These activities are physically and mentally tough, and they put me in

situations where I must stay calm, think clearly, and work under pressure. I also do them because they help me build skills that will be useful for a future career in the fire service, such as teamwork, confidence, and problem-solving.

My motivation comes from both inside and outside factors. Intrinsically, I feel a strong sense of achievement when I complete something difficult, like finishing a climb or getting through a tight cave section Self-Determination Theory. (*Deci and Ryan, 1985*). It makes me feel more confident and prouder of what I can do. Extrinsically, I am motivated by my goal of joining the fire service, as these activities help me prepare for that kind of work. I also feel motivated by wanting to do well in the activities and not let my team down.

This links to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, especially the parts about esteem and self-actualisation. Completing these activities helps build my confidence (esteem), and pushing myself helps me improve and reach my full potential (self-actualisation).

It also links to Self-Determination Theory. I experience autonomy when I must make my own decisions during activities, competence as I improve my skills over time, and relatedness when working with others, especially in team activities like white water rescue. These all help keep me motivated and focused.

Personal Discipline in Outdoor Activities

Discipline is really important in outdoor activities, especially the ones I have done like rock climbing, coasteering, white water rescue and caving. For me, discipline means staying focused, following instructions, and not taking unnecessary risks. (*Priest and Gass, 2018*). These activities can be dangerous if you are not paying attention, so I had to make sure I was always thinking about what I was doing.

I showed discipline by listening carefully to instructions, checking equipment properly, and staying calm even when things felt difficult or uncomfortable. For example, during caving, I had to stay focused even in tight and dark spaces, which was challenging mentally. There were times where I felt like rushing or giving up, but I had to control that and stay committed.

This links to the fire service because discipline is very important in emergency situations. Firefighters need to follow procedures, stay calm under pressure, and work safely as a team. My experience in outdoor activities has helped me understand how important discipline is and how it can affect both safety and performance.

Working Independently and in a Team

During these outdoor activities, I had to work both independently and as part of a team (Belbin, 2010). When working independently, I had to take responsibility for my own actions, such as making decisions while climbing or controlling my movement during coasteering. This helped me build confidence and trust in my own ability.

However, a lot of the activities required teamwork, especially in more risky situations. A good example of this was during caving, where we had to move through a tight section that had a wooden pole holding up loose rocks above us. If the pole was knocked, it could have caused rocks to fall, which made the situation dangerous. To get through safely, we had to work closely as a team by communicating clearly with each other. The person in front had to guide the person behind, telling them exactly where to place their hands and feet to avoid hitting the pole. This required full concentration, trust, and no mistakes.

This experience showed me how important communication and teamwork are in high-risk environments. Everyone had to stay calm, listen carefully, and do their role properly to keep the group safe.

This is important for the fire service because firefighters rely heavily on teamwork in dangerous situations. Clear communication, trust, and discipline can prevent serious mistakes. My experience has shown me that working well in a team can make difficult situations safer and more successful.

Barriers and Challenges

While doing these activities, I faced a number of challenges. Some were physical, like fatigue and cold conditions, especially during coasteering and white water rescue. Others were mental, such as fear when climbing or being in tight spaces during caving.

One of the biggest challenges was managing fear and staying calm. For example, when rock climbing at height, it was easy to feel nervous, but I had to control that and focus on what I was doing. I overcame these challenges by staying positive, focusing on small steps, and reminding myself why I was doing the activity.

Motivation played a big part in overcoming these barriers. I kept pushing myself because I wanted to improve and not give up. Support from others also helped, as encouragement from teammates made it easier to keep going. One of the biggest challenges was managing fear and staying calm... which required focus and control under pressure (*Klein, 2008*).

Discipline and Teamwork: Outdoor Activities vs Fire Service

Discipline is very important when working in a team, both in outdoor activities and in the fire service. In activities like white water rescue, everyone needs to follow instructions and work together properly. If someone doesn't stay disciplined, it can put others at risk.

This is very similar to the fire service, where teamwork and discipline are essential for safety and success. Firefighters need to trust each other and follow clear procedures. My experience in outdoor activities has helped me understand how discipline supports teamwork and why it is so important in high-risk situations. This is similar to the fire service, where teamwork and discipline are essential for safety and success (*Jahn and Black, 2016*).

Conclusion

Overall, my experience in outdoor activities such as rock climbing, coasteering, white water rescue and caving has helped me develop a range of important skills, particularly in motivation, discipline, and teamwork. These activities challenged me both physically and mentally, often placing me in uncomfortable or high-pressure situations where I had to stay focused and keep going. As a result, they have helped me grow in confidence and better understand how I respond when faced with difficulty.

I have learned how to stay motivated even when tasks become challenging or when I feel tired, nervous, or unsure. I have also developed a better understanding of discipline, especially the importance of following instructions, staying calm, and making safe decisions. In addition, I have improved my ability to work both independently and as part of a team, depending on the situation. I now understand how

important communication, trust, and responsibility are when working with others in demanding environments.

These skills are directly relevant to a future career in the fire service, where teamwork, discipline, and motivation are essential for dealing with emergency situations safely and effectively. Overall, these experiences have helped me develop both personally and professionally.

In the future, I will continue to build on these skills through further training and experiences, as they will help me become more prepared, confident, and capable of working in high-pressure emergency situations.

References

Self-Determination Theory (autonomy, competence, relatedness):

(Deci and Ryan, 1985)

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