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## Introduction

This report aims to present a personal research of my professional path options and steps to follow in the most efficient and objective I could expose. For this reason, I subjected myself to a series of examinations and I used analysing techniques such as SWOT analysis and Johari Window.

I also reflected on my learning style and I designed SMART objectives to help me achieve my career goals. I reflected on my personal attributes in order to be able to lay the foundations of an action plan in accordance with the information obtained.

In this paper I will also include the 'Reflection on the role play' section where I will show which learning style suits me better according to Kolb, but most of all, what working for the job interview role play represented for me and how it improved my vision about the world of employment and what I felt like being really challenging.

## **Reflection on the role play**

As a result of working on the role-play exercise I can say that I've seen a quite big improvement on my communication and my social skills by putting myself in the "problem giver" shoes and trying to respect the criteria for asking questions but also for answering, so that my partner and I can manage to create an authentic atmosphere of a job interview in the few minutes that have been allocated to us.

I sadly have to admit that I have a little bit of social anxiety, a thing that I'm working to keep as down as possible to the point that I get rid of it entirely. The main cause for this I found to be the fact that social situations can be unpredictable and I don't have an answer to every social situation that occurs. This can be translated, of course, on workplace situations and interactions, some being not too different than those I presented on the role play.

By doing this exercise I experimented some possible and plausible scenarios, not too far from my work life day to day situations, therefore I taught myself how to respond in these situations without the fear that I don't know at all what comes next and how I can carry the conversation if things get tricky and out of my hand.

Although so far I have taken part in a few real job interviews and I can say that I have experience in this regard, to practice this scenario from both perspectives I must admit it was challenging. The absence of the pressure of a real interview helped me to notice some things that in real life so far I have overlooked because of emotions.

Moreover, the fact that I practiced this role-playing scenario under the direct guidance of a specialist and that I was offered all the advice, rules and information to consider, helped me to complete the acquisition of new notions.

According to Kolb, learning represents „the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984).

Kolb has developed a classification of learning styles, a theory that focuses on two levels: one level belongs to the Learning Cycle, which contains four stages and the other level is dedicated to a number of four separate Learning Styles (Kolb, Plovnik, 1974, page 5).

Analyzing the learning cycle, I am characterised by the stages abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation.

Regarding the learning styles established by Kolb and looking at my work on role play, I can say that the learning style that describes me is the converging one because I

consider myself being quite practical in my analyses of ideas and tasks. I also prefer the interactive activities as a instructional technique and this role play has fulfilled this aspect.

## **Self Motivation**

I think most people know Walt Disney's famous saying: "If you can dream it, you can do it." I totally agree with that. However, it seems that sometimes it is not enough and it is necessary to contribute with a little effort for the success of our plan.

In my case, I can say that I consider myself a self motivated person regarding my career. I know I want to pursue my dream to practice HGV driving and I am sure I have a passion for this. I enjoy working in this field and I know that even after a few years I would not feel that I am working just to earn a salary, but out of pure satisfaction.

However, the problem for me would be in terms of determination, because this is where I do feel I have to work from time to time, to keep my internal motivation high. I need to improve my self-discipline to be able to increase the likelihood of achieving my goals

Hopefully, the knowledge about me that I have accumulated working on this paper will help me to design the proper steps that I have to follow in order to maintain a high self-motivation.

## **Learning Styles**

In order to acquire some notions, each of us needs to go through a learning process from time to time. Thus, our evolution in any field, whether it is a personal, professional, social or any other evolution, implies to expose ourselves to a volume of information, to sift through them what will be useful to us and to try to ground them in our nature, to be able to use them when the situation requires it.

But being all different, it is normal for the learning style to be different as well. Which means that if we want the learning process to be successful but not difficult at the same time, it would be very helpful to look at ourselves and find out what is the right method to get maximum results.

There are several theories formulated by specialists regarding learning styles (Sadler-Smith, 1996). I chose to evaluate myself by using VAK learning style theory, shown schematically in the figure below.



*Fig. 1 VAK Learning Styles*

Being a person oriented towards practical activities, the learning style that suits me well is the kinesthetic one.

It is known that for someone with a Kinesthetic learning style it is preferred to learn by touching, feeling, doing, holding or any other physical experience that involves hands on experiences.

I can say the same about myself, I find myself in the descriptions offered to this style of learning. To make sure that I assimilate information efficiently and quickly, I must try to put it into practice in a way that involves active participation on my part.

Moreover, the Kinesthetic style of learning is also reflected in my aspirations regarding the professional path. Being a good professional driver mostly involves practical skills.

## **SWOT Analysis**

In order to lay the foundations of a career development plan, I conducted a SWOT analysis to highlight what my employment potential strenghts, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are.



Fig. 2 SWOT Analysis

| Strengths:                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Weaknesses:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Passionate about driving</li> <li>-Experience with driving and good feedback</li> <li>-Courteous and polite to customers</li> <li>-Good communicator</li> <li>-Organised</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of ambition</li> <li>-Lack of self-discipline</li> <li>-Tendency to abandon</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Opportunities:                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Threats:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-HGV drivers are heavily in-demand</li> <li>-Valuable and rewarding career</li> <li>-Becoming familiar with numerous cities along the way</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-It can get lonely</li> <li>-There are high levels of stress that you must endure</li> <li>-Not easy to get a good meal</li> <li>-A lot of time spent away from home</li> <li>-Exceptionally patience required</li> <li>-Might need to drive even when tired</li> </ul> |

With my SWOT analysis complete, I will convert it into a strategy that I can work on, starting with figuring out how I can use my strenghts to take advantage of my opportunities, but also to combat the weaknesses and threats.

## Johari Window

We don't always get to know ourselves and have a true picture of who we are as people

In order to become more self aware about how others see me in comparison with how I present myself to them, what are my in sight features and what are the ones known only by me or only by others, but also those unknown to anyone, I proceeded to draw up a Johari Window, to be able to separate and categorize them more clearly.

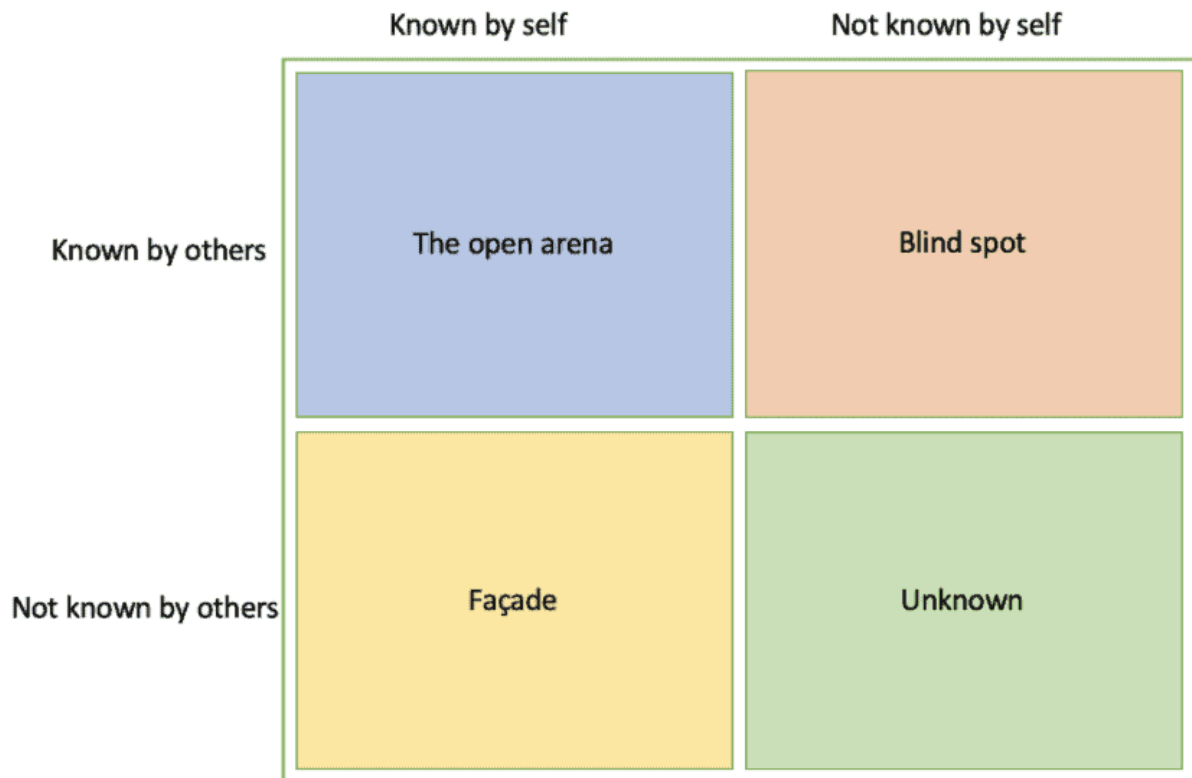


*Fig. 3 Johari Window*

In my personal Johari window, the attributes are arranged as follows:

- **The open arena:** friendly, calm, energetic, logical, organized, clever, giving, independent, kind, patient, warm, wise;
- **The blind spot:** helpful, modest, trustworthy, confident, extroverted, happy, intelligent, knowledgeable, mature;
- **The hidden area (façade):** idealistic, adaptable, accepting, nervous, caring, cheerful, empathetic, loving, reflective, spontaneous;
- **The unknown:** able, bold, brave, self-conscious, witty, complex, ingenious, introverted, observant, powerful, proud, quiet, shy, tense.

Depending on the place that each feature occupies in the Johari window, I can start building a strategy to act so as to take some important and logical steps.

First of all, I have to think about what traits I can share with outsiders and not just keep them known to me, and maybe moving them to the open arena, or even moving traits from the open arena to the hidden arena.

Secondly, it is important not to leave untapped the features in the Unknown and to try to take advantage of any opportunity that may represent a chance to prove the existence or non-existence of these features.

Lastly, the features in The Blind Spot should be seen as clear clues to what I mirror on the outside without even realizing and working, as the case may be, either to keep them there, supplement them, or to remove them from that category.

## SMART Objectives

In order to meet personal career development it is necessary to design my path step by step. Therefore, I will formulate my objectives according to SMART criteria, meaning that they have to be measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (Forbes-Taylor, 2021).

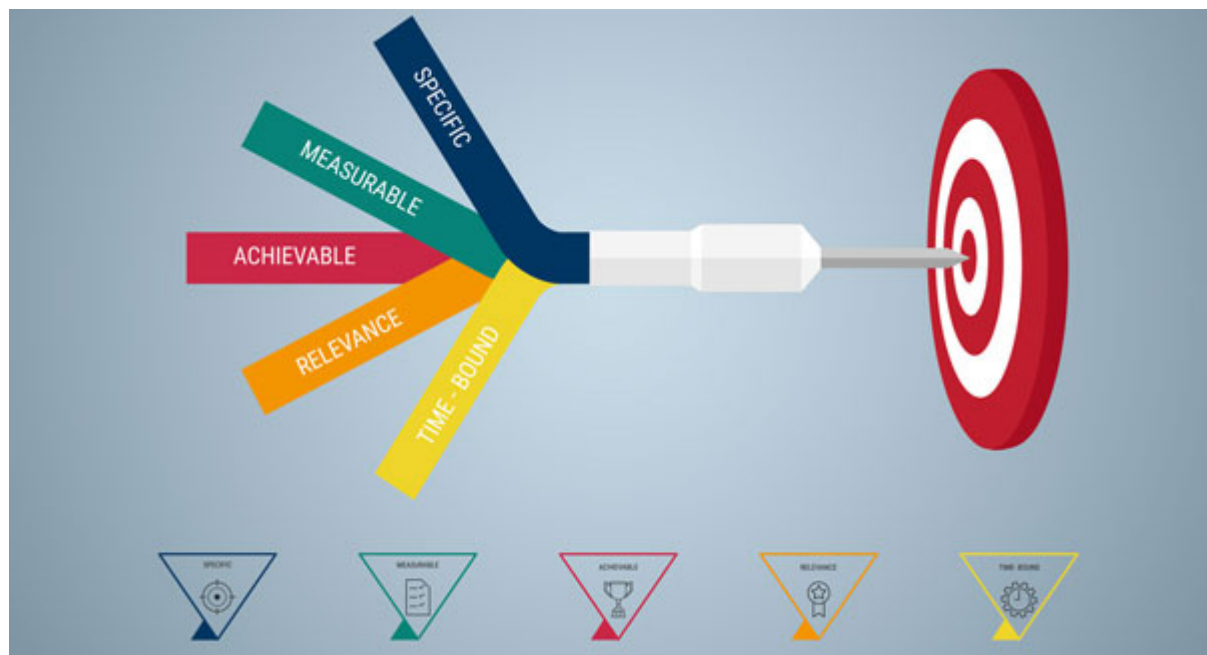


*Fig. 4 SMART Objectives Criteria*

Starting with my short and long term plans, these being to practice HGV driving to feed my desire to see as many places as possible, to explore new roads and to travel around at the same time as I work and then to make a change and become a driver on another continent, I will set the following SMART objectives:

| SPECIFIC                                                                                    | MEASURABLE                                                                                                                    | ATTAINABLE                                                                             | RELEVANT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | TIME BOUND                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <u>Searching for a</u><br><u>HGV Driver</u><br><u>position</u>                              | <u>Apply for at least</u><br><u>20/30 offers and</u><br><u>schedule at</u><br><u>least 10</u><br><u>interviews</u>            | <u>Select the best</u><br><u>HGV driver</u><br><u>position</u>                         | <u>Once I get this</u><br><u>job I can start</u><br><u>the research</u><br><u>and test the</u><br><u>market for the</u><br><u>next steps in my</u><br><u>career</u>                                                                             | <u>In the next 3 to 4</u><br><u>months</u>   |
| <u>Qualification in</u><br><u>another certain</u><br><u>category of</u><br><u>vehicles</u>  | <u>Obtain a driving</u><br><u>license for the</u><br><u>other categories</u><br><u>of vehicles that</u><br><u>interest me</u> | <u>Attending a</u><br><u>driving school</u><br><u>program</u>                          | <u>It will support</u><br><u>career</u><br><u>progression by</u><br><u>making sure that</u><br><u>if I find a job that</u><br><u>interests me I</u><br><u>will not be</u><br><u>limited due to</u><br><u>the lack of any</u><br><u>category</u> | <u>The next 2/3</u><br><u>years</u>          |
| <u>Exploring</u><br><u>another</u><br><u>continent</u><br><u>behind the</u><br><u>wheel</u> | <u>Obtain a job in</u><br><u>America,</u><br><u>preferably</u>                                                                | <u>Apply for a job in</u><br><u>the field on</u><br><u>another</u><br><u>continent</u> | <u>It will support</u><br><u>the</u><br><u>achievement of</u><br><u>my career long</u><br><u>term objectives</u>                                                                                                                                | <u>In the next up to</u><br><u>5/6 years</u> |

*Fig. 5 Personal SMART Objectives*

## What employers want

Consulting the recruitment and job offers sites, I found that for the HGV driver position, there are a few requirements from the employer that have a very large share.

These include a very strong driving record, navigation skills, customer service oriented employee, basic maintenance skills and knowledge, physical strength, time management skills, safety regulations and traffic rules knowledge, problem solving skills and concentration.

As for me, I am satisfied that I can say without a doubt that I meet these general criteria. Of course, they can be further improved, but the experience of previous jobs has come with the sedimentation of these aspects.

## **Professional Development Plan**

All this analysis that I have done in connection with my personal aspirations and the possibilities that I have in my career would prove to be of no real use if I did not complete by establishing how I will proceed precisely so as not to deviate from plan.

In order to reach my employment goals described above, I formulated the following battle plan:

1. I will make a list of relevant sites in the field that interests me and I will check them once a week to check the new offers and apply.
2. I will look for the main actors companies that hire regularly and I will apply directly through their contact channels.
3. I will look for job events abroad, both online and physically and I will try to attend at least one to have the chance to talk directly with a company representative.
4. I will get at least one more category in the driver's license in the next 2 years.

## **Conclusion**

Each of us is built differently and this directly influences the world of work. A perfect job for some can be a burden for others. In the same way, one can perform an activity well naturally, while others have to make a considerable effort for a similar quality.

In order to avoid unnecessary inconveniences and obstacles during the career path, it is very important to be honest with ourselves and also to analyze ourselves. Indeed, such an important step often ends up being ignored and frustrates the people involved.

I admit that until this professional development report I have never analyzed these aspects so concretely and I am very satisfied that I finally checked this and I cleared my career expectations.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Application form**

#### **Job application form**

Application for Class 1 HGV Driver

#### **Your details**

Name: Valentin Astefanoaei

#### **Education and training**

Please give details:

Automobile College Piatra Neamț graduate in 2008 Romania

University of Wales Trinity Saint David studying CERTHE Skills for the Workplace

Class B commercial drivers licence Piatra Neamț graduate in 2009

#### **Qualifications**

Please give details:

Driving Licence category C+E

NCFE Functional Skills Qualification in English Entry Level 3

#### **Employment history**

##### **Your current or most recent employer**

**Name of employer:** Rim ACD

**Job title:** Driver

**Length of time with employer:** August 2012 to March 2020

**Reason for leaving:** Covid 19 / pandemic situation

**Duties:**

- good communication in relation with customers and management
- drive safe and be on time
- clean car and well maintained
- send daily summary

## **Previous employers**

**Please tell us about other jobs you have done and about the skills you used or learned in those jobs.**

From 2009 to 2012 bartender at Alex Club

I have learned to become more organised and developed skills in customer service

## **Supporting statement**

**Please tell us why you applied for this job and why you think you are the best person for the job.**

I am presentable, polite and courteous to customers at all times.

In addition to this I have no problem driving in unfamiliar areas and can read a map and navigate to multiple addresses within locate time slot.

As a true professional I am ready at all times to roll my sleeves up and get stuck in whatever I am needed.

I also want to mention that I fully understand the importance of ensuring customers are arriving on time.

I have learned how to properly use satellite tracking systems to plan the shortest road and now possess excellent knowledge of both the local and national road network system.

On a personal level I ooze with personality, enthusiasm and a genuine desire to help others.

## **Right to work in the UK**

Do you need a work permit to work in the UK? Yes / No

## **References**

Please give the names and contact details of 2 people who we can ask to give you a reference. We may ask them before an employment offer is made. We will not ask your current employer until we get your permission.

- Sam Buckland - sam.buckland@rimacd.com
- Sarah Bell - sarahbell@gmail.com

## **Declaration**

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information I have provided on this form is correct and I accept that providing deliberately false information could result in my dismissal.

Name: Valentin Astefanoaei

Signature: VA

Date: 11.11.2021

## **Appendix 2: Interview questions**

- Hello! My name is Valentin and you will talk with me today for the position of beauty salon manager. Can I get you anything?
- **For a start, tell me about yourself. Why you want this position?**
- **How do you think this job would contribute to achieve your career goals?**
- **Can you tell me a situation where you used your leadership or managerial skills?**
- **What was the worst experience dealing with customer inquiries?**
- **Tell me what other skills recommend you as suitable for the manager position of our salon.**
- In the end, I want to know your expectations about this job and feel free to ask any question about this job.
- If there are no more questions, I want to thank you for being here and we will hear from you at the end of the interview period, when we will have made a decision. Goodbye!