

Professional Career Development

BMSW4005

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Table of contents

1. Introduction
2. Reflection
3. Self Motivation
4. Learning Styles
5. SWOT analysis
6. SMART objectives
7. Johari window
8. What employers want
9. Career ambitions and aspirations
10. Plan of action
11. Conclusion
12. References
13. Appendix

1. Introduction

I am a mother of two children with busy lifestyle, working two jobs part time in Morrisons and Uber, but also managing my own small business that sells food products. I am also a student at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

This report discusses different elements of my professional development. The reflection is focusing on a recent experience from the University, a role play that recreates an interview where I am the person who is interviewed. The reflective writing enables me to assess personal skills and identify the skills I need to have in the actual employment world. This report evaluates different concepts such as self motivation, learning styles, self awareness which helps me to contour a clear understanding of own assessment. This is illustrated using own experience and relevant theory to the reflection.

The overall aim of this reflection is to understand my skills that will help me to execute task related to the job and career development and to analyse what areas I need to develop for my employment goals. It gives me the knowledge and increases my self awareness in order to create a personal action plan with precise steps and actions.

2. Reflection

Gibbs (1988) considers that in order to learn from an experience effectively it should be realised a reflection. It is indicated a theoretical model that has six steps: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan. This reflective model identifies the strengths of the reflector, the areas for development and what to do to enhance professional skills.

For my reflection on the role play I am using Gibbs reflective model following the six steps. Description: the experience took place for the examination for the Personal Career Development module. The role play was the first task of our assessment for the module and we had to team up with a colleague to organise an interview for each other. In my role as an interviewer I welcomed the interviewer and asked five questions based on my colleagues experience, formal education and training, set of skills found in the Application form for Recruitment researcher position. When my colleague interviewed me she welcomed me, asked me five questions based on my Application for for team leader position.

Feelings: Despite that I prepared my interview writing notes and had a mock of the role play, on the day of the exam I was very nervous and I consider that interfered with my performance. After the experience I felt that I could have done better and be more confident.

Evaluation: The positive aspects of the experience is that I had a good start of the interview welcoming the interviewee. I received good marks for mapping out the interview, with the feedback from the lecturer mentioning that it was little abrupt. I was marked high for using open ended questions and a good mix of questions, asking the candidate to give examples. My interview style was considered friendly by the marker, but was advised to smile more. My responses as interviewee were not that confident and I was criticised for reading from my notes too much. Another positive feedback related to the professional standards.

Analysis: I consider that my role play experience was a good learning experience, but I should have prepared more my answers as an interviewee. Being scared not to forget anything I relied too much on notes instead of being focused on interaction with the interviewer and showing my personality. I did not take in consideration the knowledge learned during the module about the importance of entrance and first impression.

Conclusion: this experience has helped me to develop communication skills. I have learned about the importance of verbal communication to express effectively my thoughts and ideas, but also non-verbal communication through body language, the importance of making eye contact, smiling. In future interviews I would ensure I engage in the conversation actively making eye contact, smiling.

Action Plan

I intend to develop further my communication skills, to practice more verbal communications during the course at the University and at work in daily interactions with my colleagues. I will make use of the lecturer's feedback and advices to have better interviews in the future.

3. Self Motivation

Self motivation is the “engine” that keeps the individual moving ahead, learning and achieving own goals. It is the primary means towards progress through determination and believe in personal capabilities (Smith, 2020).

Sometimes there is the need fo self motivation and can be followed several techniques: boost energy by talking to motivated individuals that can provide encouragement and support. When others perform it influences desire to perform and keeps self motivated. Be optimist and look at obstacles with positivism. Find the own interest for tasks as it help to achieve performance. When goal is to big it is helpful to set smaller goals that lead to achievement of the final goal. Monitoring and recording success is another method to keep high levels of self motivation. Be always willing to learn as it increases confidence. Keeping active and doing sport is beneficial for the body and mind and uplifts energy levels (Management Study Guide, 2021).

I am a self motivated person, I am always looking for ways to progress and be involved in different projects. That is why I started selling home made pastry products and I took a second job as a driver at Uber.

4. Learning Styles

The VAK learning styles refer to the categories of learning and the predominant way to absorb information. The visual learners learn better by sight, auditory learners by sound and kinaesthetic by moving. This model considers that although a combination of learning styles can be used, individuals are more likely to absorb information better when using one category of learning.

The Visual learning style involves learning information that is seen or visualised mentally. This type of learners are creative and find easy to absorb information from complex images and visual

representations. It is specific for individuals that enjoy art and aesthetics, have good writing skills, find it efficient to take notes, mind maps, flash cards, diagrams, flowcharts. They can also get distracted by external visual stimuli in the process of learning.

The Auditory learning style involves learning information by hearing it. Therefore this learners follow easily verbal instruction and will get understanding by talking through the process. Their preference is to listen to a lesson than taking notes and have good oral presentation skills. They can be sensitive to the tone of voice used and distinguish the pitch and rhythm of the communication. In some cases music as background sound can be helpful, but can get distracted by noises.

The Kinaesthetic learning style involves physical movement for the learner to absorb information better. They prefer hands-on experiences and can be very good at practical subjects. This learners can be inclined for drawing, arts, dance. They can also have good physical coordination.

The VAK model for learning styles had been developed to VARK adding a fourth learning style that refers to the impact of representational systems. An example of this learning style is the preference to learn solitary or within a group (Engage Education , 2018).

I am an auditory learner and I absorb information more easier if I am given instructions verbally. At work this helps me as we use headphones for instructions and face to face communication with managers.

5. SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Managerial skills Creative Determined Hard working Persistent	IT skills Written communication Time management
Opportunities	Threats
University Degree Internal promotion in Morrisons Learning new skills Getting new knowledge	Increased competition due to pandemic Regression of the economy

My SWOT analysis helped me identify my strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. From managing my small business I developed important managerial skills, how to organise, stock to advertise and use social media for promotion. My determination and hard work helps me towards my goals. In challenging situations I am persistent and I want to achieve success. My weaknesses are related to IT skills. I am self taught and many times I consider that I am not very effective when using computer. In written communication I need to improve more in order to be more confident. Having a busy work life I need to improve time management. My opportunities related to my personal and career development, to obtain a degree, learn new skills and get new knowledge. I can take advantage of internal promotion in Morrisons as I have been with the company for more than 3 years and work hard to perform. My threats are the competition, as the pandemic has determined a rise in unemployment and potential candidates that are looking for similar job positions. Regression of the economy is another implied threat.

6. SMART objectives

The SMART objectives frame is helping me in setting objectives. I intend to use this frame for setting up objectives for addressing my weaknesses from the SWOT analysis.

Specific: to improve IT skills

Measurable: to learn how to use EXCEL programs

Achievable: I have the resources to achieve this objective

Relevant: this skill will help me at work and the University

Time bound: I want to get this skill in 6 months

7. Johari window

The Johari window is another tool to increase self awareness regarding the relationship with self and others. The model is developed on a four regions map that includes: arena, facade, blind spot and unknown. In the first box there are included adjectives on the personality traits and skills that are known by the individual and by others. The arena: I am hard working, ambitious, compassionate. Everybody knows that I like to help others and that I am an empathetic person. The facade box includes information known only by the individual. I do not like waking up early. The blind spot is what others think and know about the individual, but not known by the individual. I found out that my team thinks I can talk too much at times, that maybe because I have energy levels.

The unknown region is the information not known by the individual or other. I do not know if I would have good teaching skills to give training at work for example.

8. What employers want

Career paths are no longer linear and individuals can change career when their interest decreases. Many skills are transferable and that helps the individual to adapt to the change. Employers are looking for a variety of skills, qualifications and experience. In some cases attitudes and aptitude prevail work experience. Resilience is one aptitude that is considered to be essential as it enables them to cope with criticism feedback, remain calm and seek to solve challenges. An employee that is punctual, shows flexibility and has good work ethics can be considered an asset for the organisation. Verbal communications are important as it can impact the job performance (Chron Contributor, 2020).

Some individuals might not be aware of the skill set they have, but many skills are obtained from work experience, formal education or social context. It is helpful to think creatively, to try to solve problems, to act from own initiative, to organise own work and know how to find things out, to be a good team player, to show leadership skills. When employers are looking for specific skills this usually relates particular industries and this can be achieved from training, formal education, part time jobs (UCAS, 2021).

9. Career ambitions and aspirations

My career aim is to access management level jobs. For that purpose I intend to apply for team leader position at my current place. I have been working for some years for the company and that contributed to my knowledge and experience on the warehousing. I have developed managerial skills by running my small business activity in my spare time. I am also a student to get formal education. These small goals are helping me towards my career development and aspirations.

10. Plan of action

Personal and development plan

Skills	Method of achievement	Obstacles	Completion date
IT skills	Undertaking a course	No time to finish it	01.03.2022
Written communication	Writing assignments	Procrastinating	3.09.2021
Time management	Learning about time management techniques	Procrastinating	1. 10.2021
Leadership skills	Learning about leadership styles	Procrastinating	01.03.2021

11. Conclusion

The reflection has helped me to assess my strengths and weaknesses, to be aware of my skill set and opportunities and to apply the knowledge gained through the model in practical life situations. It contributed to my understanding of having successful interviews and career development.

12. References

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Smith D. (2020) Emotional Intelligence: Improve Your Social Skills & Relationships, Achieve Self Awareness & Self Management, Boost Your EQ and Control Your Emotions, Independently Published

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Ucas (2021) "what employers want" [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ucas.com/careers/getting-job/what-are-employers-looking> (Accessed 1.09.2021)

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13. Appendix

Interview questions

1. Tell me more details about your experience?
2. How do you think you can contribute to this job?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
4. Can you describe a situation when you overcome a challenge at work?
5. What are your long term career plans?

Applicant form

Private & Confidential Application for Employment

To ensure that you are able to complete the application form in full, please refer to the short-listing criteria on the job description.

Position Applied For	Team Leader
How did you learn about this vacancy?	Indeed

1. Personal Details				
Title	Ms			
Surname	Papp			
Previous Name				
Forenames	Denisa Maria			
Address	66 Unity Street Sittingbourne			
Post Code	ME10 1HX			
Telephone number		Mobile No	777644946	
E-mail address	Denisapapp21@gmail.com			

National Insurance Number				
1a. Additional Information				
Do you hold a full, clean driving license valid in the UK?	Yes	Yes		
Do you have the right to work in the UK without restriction? (Proof of right to work in the UK ID will be required)	Yes	Yes		

2. Employment History The last 5 years employment should be detailed, including any gaps in employment. Please continue on a separate sheet if required.				
Current or Most Recent Employment				
Employers Name	Morrisons PLC - Sittingbourne, United Kingdom			
Address	N/A			
Postcode	N/A			
Job Title	Warehouse operative			
Dates of Employment	From	01/07/2018	To	Date
Reason for leaving		Salary	£22.00	
Brief outline of main responsibilities and key duties	This is a full time position. I work in warehouse, fresh department. I received health and safety training, and tracking and loading. My tasks were related to collect the products for the orders, to be picked and organised for the delivery.			

2. Employment History The last 5 years employment should be detailed, including any gaps in employment. Please continue on a separate sheet if required.				
Current or Most Recent Employment				

Employers Name	<i>Leoni SRL- Beius, Romania</i>			
Address	N/A			
Postcode	N/A			
Job Title	Manager			
Dates of Employment	From	1/01/2013	To	01/06 /2018
Reason for leaving	Moving abroad	Salary	£4000	
Brief outline of main responsibilities and key achievements	This full time job enabled me to engage with a large network of individuals in the manufacturing industry and offered me the opportunity to build on my communication, networking and analytical skills. It enriched my leadership skills and as I managed a team of over 20 employees. Other tasks included fulfilling customers orders, making sure the delivery is realised on time, administrative tasks.			

Previous Employment				
Employers Name				
Job Title				
Dates of Employment	From		To	
Reason for leaving		Salary		
Brief outline of main responsibilities and key achievements				

Previous Employment				
Employers Name				
Job Title				
Dates of Employment	From		To	
Reason for leaving		Salary		

Brief outline of main responsibilities and key achievements				
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Please continue on a separate sheet if required.

3. Formal Qualifications and Training & Development Continue on a separate piece of paper if required. You will be required to provide original qualification certificates if successful.				
Secondary Education Qualifications				
Name of Qualification	Date Gained	Level	Grade	Awarding Body
Baccalaureate Diploma	01/07/2007		7.50	Avram Iancu Highschool

Further/Higher Education Qualifications				
Name of Qualification	Date Gained	Level	Grade	Awarding Body
CertHE in skills for workplace	01/08/2021	4		University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Professional Qualifications				
Name of Qualification	Date Gained	Level	Grade	Awarding Body

CPD / Training and Development	
Brief description / course title	Date Taken

4. Interests and hobbies
Please provide details of your hobbies / leisure activities / voluntary work
I am a mother of two children with busy lifestyle, working full time in Morrisons, but also managing my small business that sells food products. I use my passion for cooking and I am selling traditional pastry, towards that I also advertise on Facebook and make delivery.

5. Referencing			
Referencing required for 2 full years (with a minimum of 2 references). At least 1 reference should be your current or most recent employer. Please confirm any existing personal / family relationship with existing PRC employees			
References (Current or most recent employer)			
Name of Referee			
Job Title			
Employers Name			
Address			
Postcode			
Telephone Number		Ext. Number	
E-Mail Address	T		
Are you willing for this referee to be approached prior to interview?	Yes No		

References			
Name of Referee			
Job Title			
Employers Name			
Address			
Postcode			
Telephone Number		Ext. Number	
E-Mail Address			
Are you willing for this referee to be approached prior to interview?	Yes No		

6. Reason for applying

Please detail below reasons for applying for the position including your skills, experience and attributes.

I am a hardworking person, well-organised and very ambitious student in Business Management. I have experience in administration and retail. My versatile skill set corroborated with my work experience can provide significant value to busy teams as I can engage with people at every level in organisation.

Please specify how you meet the criteria for this role.

7. Declaration

Please complete the following declaration and sign it in the appropriate place below.

I certify that:

- All the information given to me on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge
- All questions relating to me have been accurately and fully answered
- I possess all the qualifications which I claim to hold

Signed:

Date:04/07/2021

Print Name:

Denisa Maria Papp

