

Academic and Employability Skills

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Introduction

The academic skill refers to the skills that individuals learn during their academic learnings from school, college and university. These learnings come from text books, and the materials that the students see during the lectures. Academic learning is a common aspect, which means academic skills are pretty common to develop. However; depending on how much the students are able to use this learning to actual scenarios is what represents how capable they would be in career sector. This is where the employability skill has its role. These are the skills that can be developed through academic skills as well as personal traits, but the most important factor is that the employability skills are considered valuable to employers of different organizations, aside from the consideration of academic skills. While it is not possible for every individual to have every possible academic and employability skill; the employers of organizations prefer the skills that make the candidates suitable for the job role. And this is where things like educational qualifications are considered important, since this represents what the students have learned during the academic periods, which gives the employers ideas on the employability skills that the candidates might have from their academic learnings. This is the reason it is crucial to understand about academic and employability skills and as students it is also necessary to identify their own skills in order to be capable enough to become competent when it comes to seeking jobs. Because the main reason academic skills are developed through learning is to increase their employability when they look for better career. And with that in mind; this report is my own analysis on the academic and employability skills that I have been able to develop from all the lectures, literature, and in-class exercises from this module which I would be able to make use of in order to seek better employment opportunities in the job market.

Personal and Professional Development: An introduction

The first thing that we were introduced in this module is an overall introduction to the personal and professional development. When it comes to building academic and employability skills, students can go through their personal and professional development as they enhance their knowledge through learning and building new skills. From this early lecture; I learned that there are some basic skills for effective learning. These include research skills, referencing skills, writing skills, reflective and creative thinking, critical analysis and memory.

We also learned during the introductory lecture about the variation or types that can be used to categorize various skills. **Adaptive skills** can help us to build out attitude and interpersonal interactions, **academic skills** are developed through studying, **transferable skills** that can be used in various situations, and the **job-related skills** that are mostly specific to a particular situation or tasks (Maund et al., 2017).

There are tools such as **SWOT analysis** for identifying skills. In our beginning class discussion, we were taught how to conduct a SWOT analysis and why it is an important tool. For starter; it allows individuals to identify their own strength, weakness, opportunity and threat which can relate to their personal and professional development (Cottrell, 2010). In order to identify one's employability skills, tools like SWOT analysis can be really useful. Based on the findings from SWOT analysis, individuals can get a good idea of their own traits and missing skills that they can focus on in their personal planning and this is where they really need to reflect on their learning as well in order to develop their employability skills from their reflection of learning.

Organizing study

During the second week; we were introduced to the topic of time management. This is relevant to the academic learning because time management essentially helps to allocate the times for study, make use of that particular time limit, and then managing the time based on activities. In the lecture, we were introduced to various activities where time management can be relevant. These include activities such as class lectures, study, work, family related tasks, recreation etc. and these are mix of personal and work related activities. We have also learned that time management requires individuals to be able to prioritize their tasks in order to maximize the performance when doing a task. There are ways like forming a **to-do list** which can be both daily basis or weekly basis, which can be useful in allocating the important task within different hours to keep things organized. **SMART** goals can also be used to specify goals and then focus to achieve these goals. We also learned that during each day, there are certain times when we perform well and times when don't perform efficiently enough. So based on this knowledge, making a to-do list can be very useful when managing time for different tasks.

Note taking

During the same week, we were also given lectures on note taking. I have learned that note taking is useful to learn the key ideas of a text. This means note taking cannot be a shorter version of a text, like a specific theory, in which case the taking notes from a theory would mean the key ideas that are presented through this theory in specific so that the main concept would be learned.

Note taking also needs to be avoiding plagiarism and there should be a single set of notes. It is also suggested that there should be some space around the notes so that more notes can be added if it is necessary. Adding the page number of the reference page can be useful as well. We had also learned how to effectively take notes. At first, it is crucial to read the main text several times to understand this, then highlighting the key words, looking up unfamiliar words and synonyms, and then taking notes of the important concepts from the text using few words for each concept from the text in specific.

Academic writing: language and grammar

The third week of this module is where we got introduced to the academic writing topic and we began with focusing on learning about the language and grammar when developing an academic writing on a topic. In class, we got explanation of different important aspect of the basics of writing. First of all; the **sentence structure** should be aligned to each other. This means that each sentence in the writing should relate with each other, maintaining consistency. **Paragraphs** can be useful in breaking down separate discussions, but at the same time it is also useful to break down a huge-looking text into more easier looking so that readers would not get confused on what is being covered in the writing. **Vocabulary** is also crucial where the writer must make use of appropriate words and sentences that goes along well with the topic, while also avoiding words that are not appropriate, vulgar or could be difficult to understand the meaning of (Morgan, 2016).

Academic writing: paraphrasing

During the fourth week, we continued the topic of academic writing and we were introduced to the aspect of paraphrasing. This term indicates the ability of the writers to explain the same meaning of an original writing but using words that are completely different from the original source. The main thing here that remains the same is the meaning of the original source in order to present the understanding of the writer on the original text and also to avoid the risk of plagiarism. In other words; it is a form of summarizing information.

Referencing

In fifth week, we were introduced to referencing and in sixth week we got to practice referencing in the referencing workshop as well. From my understanding through lectures; the term referencing indicates the use of sources that have been used in citing a piece of writing. This means that referencing and bibliography is not the same thing. I realized, from the class, that bibliography contains the list of sources that have been consulted during the writing; not the list of sources that have been used in citation. Referencing is useful in avoiding plagiarism; a term used to explain the idea of stealing or using another writing without permission of the original author.

Report writing

We learned about the report writing during the lecture from seventh week of this module and this is where we learned how to write a report. The basic idea of the report, is to convey information, explaining own opinions on the topic, concluding the actual meaning from the data that have been shown in the report and then coming up with recommendations based on the report in order to take necessary actions. So this means it summarizes tons of data from researching in order to communicate the findings by presenting the analysis and explaining it to the readers thoroughly so that the topic could be explained properly and recommendations can be given.

I have also learned about the basic structure of report writing and the requirements for each

segment of writing a report. It starts with a **title page** that briefly explains the purpose of the report along with the name of the author and the date when this report was written and whom it is written for and after the title page there is the **acknowledgement** where the expected readers are mentioned along with the purpose of the report and methods that have been used to prepare the report, in a single paragraph. After that, the **table of content** presents the list of topics covered in the report with page numbers. The report begins with an **abstract** that summarizes the entire content of the report without going in broader details. This is where the aim of the report and its findings are briefly explained and it should only be written after writing the report. The next section of the report is the **introduction** where the context of the report and its scope is mentioned as well as the objectives and limits. It also contains a brief background to the topic and brief information on the methods that have used for the research. **Methodology** is where the methods of research are explained in details; like the approach of the research, the data collection methods, population and sampling etc. and the tools used for the report development. **Findings** is where the data gathered for research are presented in simple ways, using graphs and charts. These are explained in the **discussion** where issues are outlined properly which leads to the **conclusion and recommendations** that summarizes the findings and then explains possible solutions (Wilson, 2013). The **references** section includes the sources that have been used for citation on the report. The report concludes with the **appendices** where additional information is given for the readers in case if they want to look into more details on a particular topic; like the survey questionnaire that has been used for doing a research or an implementation of a theory.

Academic writing: Summarizing

In the lecture; we learned the purpose of summarizing. This is written to inform people who have

not read the original source of information, which means the summary, for this particular reason, has to be in good structure and has to maintain the same logic, while citing on the original source.

Communicating and presenting information

Our module concluded with the teaching of presentation and the methods of carrying out a presentation to present a topic in appropriate manner. I have learned that there are some specific steps to ensure an effective presentation. Before setting up the presentation, it is important to arrive early at the venue with necessary equipment that would be used in the presentation while also wearing appropriate outfit. Mobiles should be switched off when presenting information (Van Emden et al., 2010). Handouts can be prepared for the viewers and should be distributed before presentations. The presentation should start off with the main topic without unnecessary explanations and should be explained using words that can catch interest of the viewers while also stating the main issues being presented to them with a summarized information. Natural way of speaking is required and voice should be balanced. Speaking should be clear and speeches should only cover the main aspects. Pausing can be important for letting the viewers get some moments to understand what is being presented to them. Showing natural gestures, looking at the viewers, and using notes only for references are signs of good body language during presentations. Viewers can be requested to not ask questions during presentations and this is why presentations should include some spare times for questioning sessions. If an answer cannot be given, then it should be clearly stated. I have also learned that length measure is important and only practicing can make it work. I have also learned from the class that there should be much interest visible in the behavior, but presenters should control their emotions. Humor can be

useful, but should be appropriate. Presenter should not be distracted as well. A presentation should always end with a summary of the topic and then a slide can be shown to ask questions about the topic that have been presented in the presentation.

Conclusion

This report explains my learning from this module and my understanding on the topics that have been delivered to us, the students, to develop our academic and employability skills. Most of the topics that have been covered have been useful for me to learn how to write a report, research for information, make use of referencing and presenting information. With the knowledge that I have, I should be able to develop my skills and use this learning to build my employability skills.

Reference

- Maund, A. Schriek, M. and Tinkler, P. (2017). Certificate in Higher Education: Skills for the Workplace Student Yearbook. Sage Publications
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- Cottrell, S. (2010). Skills for Success: Personal Development and Employability (Palgrave Study Skills) Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Van Emden, J. and Becker, L. (2010). Presentation skills for students. 2nd edn. United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan
- Wilson, J. (2013). Essentials of Business Research: A Guide to Doing Your Research Project, Sage: London

Appendix

Contains the list of exercises presented in the class

Ex.2

Re-read the text 'To be a great leader, you need to start by leading yourself' on the previous page.
Summarise main ideas from the text in your own words. Write about 175 words.

The idea of success in this text explained by Gary Sudman means in spending time and thoughts for self-leadership. He also explains that some tasks or ideas from reality what are ~~not~~ except doesn't match with reality situations.

After some time he explains that if you don't give attention and matter about time scheduling in your leader status can cause that people, employers or associated partners will give you problems. He also found a way for solving these kind of problems. While you spend time with other people or co-workers explaining their situation about problems you are attempting it's much better in this case to give more attention on your self-leadership status.

Also for a good leadership is better to know about successful and fails progress so you can know what to avoid or what kind of idea or action to maintain in the close future. It's good to know about leader status skills (149 WORDS)

Lecturer's comments:

You have included some of the key points, but not all. What about reflection, and controlling your emotions through 'reframing'?

Lecturer's signature:

Alan 15

Date:

11/12/19

Exercise 1: Paraphrasing (Bailey 44)

There has been much debate about the reasons for the industrial revolution happening in eighteenth-century Britain, rather than in France or Germany.

could be paraphrased:

Why the industrial revolution occurred in Britain in the eighteenth century, instead of on the continent, has been the subject of considerable discussion.

Which phrases from the original sentence have been replaced with synonymous phrases in the new sentence?

Exercise 1: Paraphrasing (Bailey 44)

Changed

much debate = *considerable discussion*

reasons = *why*

eighteenth-century Britain = *Britain in the eighteenth century*

rather than = *instead of*

France or Germany = *on the continent*

Unchanged

the industrial revolution

Exercise 1: Paraphrasing (Bailey 44)

Note that an effective paraphrase usually:

- has a different structure to the original
- has mainly different vocabulary
- retains the same meaning
- keeps some phrases from the original that are in common use
e.g. 'industrial revolution' or 'eighteenth century'

Exercise 2a: Paraphrasing (Bailey 45)

Match the underlined phrases with synonymous phrases in paragraph 2.1

A focus on demand may help explain the UK origin of the industrial revolution. At that time workers' pay was high, but energy from coal was inexpensive. This encouraged the development of inventions such as steam power, which enabled bosses to save money by mechanising production (Allen, 2009).

Synonymous Phrases – 2a

Original	Paraphrased
Studying demand factors	A focus on demand
British location	UK origin
High wages	At that time, workers' pay was high
Cheap energy	But energy from coal was inexpensive
The steam engine	Steam power
employers	bosses
Economise on labour by spending on coal	Save money by <u>mechanising production</u>

Exercise 2b: Synonymous phrases (p45-46)

Match the underlined phrases with synonymous phrases in paragraph 2.1

- (b) The reason why Britain was the birthplace of the industrial revolution can be understood by analysing demand in the early 1700s, according to Allen (2009). He maintains that, uniquely, Britain had the critical combination of cheap energy from coal and high labour costs. This encouraged the adoption of steam power to mechanise production, thus saving on wages and increasing profitability.

Synonymous Phrases – 2b

Original	Paraphrased
British location	Birthplace
studying	Analysing
Early eighteenth century	Early 1700s
Particular combination	Critical combination
High wages	High labour costs
The steam engine	Steam power
The mechanization of industry	Mechanise production
Economise on labour	Saving on wages

Exercise 2c: Paraphrasing (p46)

Match the underlined phrases with those in paragraph 2.1

(c) Allen (2009) claims that the clearest explanation for the UK location of the industrial revolution is seen by examining demand factors. By the eighteenth century cheap energy and high wages were both aspects of the British economy. As a result, the mechanisation of industry through inventions such as the steam engine and mechanical spinning was profitable because employers were able to save money on employees by spending on coal. At that time, Britain was the only country with significant deposits of coal.

Synonymous Phrases – 2c

Original	Paraphrased
Best explanation	Clearest explanation
British	UK
Found by studying	Seen by examining
features	aspects
Consequently	As a result
economise	Save money
labour	employees
No other country had	Was the only country
Abundant fuel	Significant deposits of coal