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High certificate skills in the workplace

Module: Academic and employability skills

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to reflect my learning on this module using Gibbs model of reflection on time management, academic writing, CV writing and public speaking. Both academic and employability skills are essential aspects that promote development of learners in learning institution and future workplace which I believe this course has helped me to develop my skills in these areas and help me in the future in self-development and my career.

## **Descriptions**

Undertaking the module on academic and employability skills, I have been assigned to prepare a reflective report on my learning. I will use Gibbs reflection model to help me to reflect on my studies since it promotes better organised thinking for different experiences that I encountered during learning process (Gibbs, 2010). It allows me to focus on how I can improve my skills for future. Reflection is a key in learning as it helps me as a learner to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and help me improve.

According to Cottrell (2015), time management is the individual ability of planning and organising time well between different activities. I learnt that the ability to manage time well allows me as a learner to improve on my career, helps me to complete my assignments on time and be creative. I was able to get a better understanding of time management through methods like Eisenhower's method, which provides a table using the important criteria of a table less important. There is a less urgent need for less urgent priorities and tasks.

The lecturer introduced us to the effective ways of writing CV through showing CV samples. The lecturer emphasised on the importance of a good CV to increase my ability of getting jobs and standing out. Assiter (2017) argued that a good CV is expected to present specific details of job being applied, need to be attractive and appealing, brief but straight to the point, not exceeding 2 pages and use of official emails only. These techniques learned in the class will allow me to increase my chance at having a better position in my career.

Academic writing is a formal writing style that is used in academia for a clear and impactful writing for the reader to read. The lecturer introduced us to key aspects of academic writing

in terms of being concise, clear, properly structured and backed by clear evidence to support our on the subject. Academic writing is prepared with objective of making the reader understand what the learner is conveying (Open Learn, 2016). Academic writing is the key for a successful path in the university and later in my career.

Public speaking skills is the ability to share ideas with a given crowd in an effective manner while engaging them in your speech. It is essential skill in both learning environment and workplace since it ensures the information is shared effectively. These skills was further developed in this class by giving me the opportunity to give presentations in front of my class mates and through feedback developing a this skill.

## **Feelings**

In this module I felt the importance of planning and organising my time is essential for a successful time in university and career. I realised the importance of prioritisation my time since it will help me in achieving sets of activities depending on the level of their urgency. I did not know the relationship between time management and individual creativity until I came across it in this module where I felt how effective management of my time gives me an opportunity for planning my time and engage in other activities. And through learning different methods of time management such as 20/80 method I have been able to better use my time. Those 20% of the task add to 80% of my time.

I used to think that a good CV is very detailed with no page limits, that employers are pleased when they see that my CV has many skills, many experiences, many hobbies and using any email in sending job applications is ok. This is different from what I know now because possible employers focus on brief CV but straight to the point, attractive and appealing CV, importance of using official emails during applying jobs and designing CV that does not leave any gaps in required skills (Wickramasinghe and Perera, 2018). Since this class I have been able to build myself a structured and rebalance skills and experienced CV that I am sure will help me in the future to secure my desired role.

I feel that academic writing is the essential component to both academic and work environments and used to think it is applicable to only learners and university environment. I now know that quality academic writing follows formal writing style and define tone with relevant structure, being concise, it is clear and presents adequate clear evidence. I used to

think quality academic writing is full of complicated vocabulary and long sentences which I now feel different in terms of being simpler and short sentence when communicating with academic writing. I did not know the importance of supporting claims and content used in developing the academic writing.

I felt the importance of public speaking skills in my learning and future workplace when conveying public information. I currently feel the importance of developing confidence and having passion to deliver quality public speech which is very different from the way I understood this skill before. I did not think that the way you connect with your audience has greater impact towards effectiveness of public speaking until after learning more in this module.

## **Evaluation**

My future success is enhanced by development of my communication skills, I can be able to convey clear messages with audience. I need to develop a weekly timetable, set reminders and alarms which can help me in monitoring how I spend my time. I need to practice more, identify professional writers to inquire for further samples that I can use to improve my skills on CV writing. It is good to develop my skills further to understand how to support materials used in preparing academic writing in terms of in-text citations and presenting skills on referencing using Harvard Referencing System. This will be essential in developing the academic documents in learning and future workplace.

It was however very challenging to differentiate academic writing styles and determine appropriate tone for given academic writing. In management of my time, I find it more difficult in setting priorities when having various urgent activities and proper way of designing right timetable. However, I have started to use techniques learned in the class specially 20/80 rule and focus my mind on more challenging task first as they add up to the most. As I have developed my skills in public speaking, I still need to create a connection by doing preparation and understanding my audience, utilise effective nonverbal cues like my voice and by language which we learned in class. I need to focus on aspects like storytelling to influence and attract the attention of my audience (Assiter, 2017).

## Analysis

I feel that time management has helped me improve my career, complete my assignment on time, priorities activities between urgent and less urgent, set clear timetable and manage work related stress. I have learned how to be organised to manage my time and time management has given a clear picture on when and what to complete using 20/80 rule. I appreciate prioritisation since it can enable me to manage more urgent activities than those less urgent. I have learnt that effective communication is key aspect of managing my time since it ensures clear goals are communicated and delegation done appropriately (Morgan, 2016). I can understand the importance of setting timetable, using alarms and reminders as essential tools when manage my time effectively. Lastly, I appreciate that effective time management is essential for my health since it eliminate stress that occurs when managing several activities at the same time. after passing this period, I had a lot of changes in many of my life fields, including time management using Eisenhower, which made, the better and more useful works a priority and then turned the importance into a second priority. And have good management in other fields, including financial management. The priority of things over the week and the month helped me in all the fields of life.

CV writing skills have enabled me to develop brief, standard, attractive and presentable CV which meet needs of current employers. In this case, I have understood on critical areas which modern employers focus on when conducting interviews and how CV can be developed to manage such issues. I am aware of general outline of the CV in terms of indicating my skills, work experience, achievement, education background and including only relevant interests and hobbies. In all, a good CV should be free from grammar, spelling mistakes and gaps in my career history.

Academic writing skills have enabled me to understand general format of formal documents, being concise and proper use of referencing to support claims used in developing such documents. I am now able to understand the formal style and tone to be used during development of academic writing, which is simpler, prevent complicated vocabulary with short sentence. I appreciate various learning disciplines and their unique conversations and vocabulary, but reminder was made on common features of all academic disciplines in writing. I can now support claims used in developing academic writing through

using credible sources, in-text citation and including list of reference used to develop a given academic writing (Cottrell, 2015).

For public speaking, I have learnt the importance of having confidence and use of nonverbal cues during public communication. I have appreciated that effective public speaking is enhanced by passion since it connects an individual with the speech to be delivered. I am now able to understand on the importance of connecting with my audience during public speaking through use of nonverbal cues in communication, preparing in advance to understand my target people, make the speech as short as possible and use relevant storytelling to make the team more engaged with you. Moreover, I have also understood on various aspects that I must consider when engaging in public speaking like channel of communication, feedback expected, situation that link the speaker and listener and lastly the barriers that may impact effective communication. I value the confidence as critical ability that an individual requires to communicate effectively in public as it eliminates any excitement that may interfere with communication and makes one more accurate and competent (Maund et al, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

Skills acquired in the module is key in ensuring any gaps are addressed and strength used to develop further. The skills which I have learnt will enable me to improve my performance and be prepared for future workplace. The learning institutions need to offer necessary support to promote development of such skills. Learners should take initiative of developing individual skills to realise set goals.

## **Action plane**

To be effective in utilising the acquired skills in the module, I need to develop them further through focusing on areas of weaknesses and determine clear action plan for improving them. To improve the ability of setting clear goals and prepare timetable in development of time management skills, I need to attend time management training and conduct some

research on ways of improving it. This development activity will require a period of one month.

The ability of developing standard CV free from spelling mistakes and grammatical error can be developed within three. This will require me to engage in group discussions and conduct intensive online research.

The ability of understanding unique conversations on different academic writing is developed further through research from online reading materials and engaging in group discussions with classmates. This activity will require a period of 5 weeks for me to accomplish it.

Lastly, to engage my listeners well during public speaking, I need to engage in class training on use of nonverbal cues for a period of 3 weeks.

## **Conclusion**

It can be noted that Gibbs Reflective Cycle is important model that has enable me in reflecting my employability and academic skills in the module. It has help me to manage my time well, develop academic reports, write standard CV, and develop confidence and passion of speaking in public places. This model has enabled me to identify areas of my weakness and strength and determine effective ways of improving them. Gibbs model enables me to conquer various barriers and obstacles that may limit me from realising relevant skill development.

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