

PROFESSIONAL CAREER
DEVELOPMENT

BWSW4005_LON

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Introduction

This is a reflective report about a Role Play I participated on. I will briefly define role play. I played both roles of an interviewer and interviewee interchangeably. My preparation which entails lectures and activities before the D-day of the role would be explained. In few words I would the role play itself reflecting on the experience of it. I will analyse my strengths and weaknesses through the application of SWOT analysis possibly link to my personal goals.

Background

According to mindtool.com, Role playing occurs when roles are acted out in a particular situation by two or more people (mindtools.com/blog/, 2020).

The class including me was prepared in advance by the tutor for all the requirements of role play. We were encouraged and made to feel confident. Last term I learned a lot about different types of academic and employability skills. These skills including communication skills, listening skills, team working, writing skills etc are all necessary for the role play and are linked to achieving my personal goals. This second term, I was as well immensely prepared for the role play with very important topics and class activities. I and my partner did a lot of practice for the role play.

I learned Employment laws. According to indeed.com, "Employment is a broad term that covers all aspects of employment" (indeed.com, n.d.). In our class activity, different areas Employment laws were covers. The areas include Age discrimination, Disability, Dismissal and Employee grievances, Discrimination based on race, religion, sexuality or gender.

Also contract of employment. UK government website stated that contract of employment is an agreement that sets out an employee's rights, responsibilities, duties and employment conditions (www.gov.uk, 2020).

I participated in a number of activities. One of them was the Four things Employers expect from staff. Below are the things:

- 1, Able to integrate quickly
- 2, Able to listen to others
- 3, Trustworthy
- 4, Honesty and integrity.

Each of us was asked to score them between the range of 1 – 10. We were required to look at them separately and as a whole. Integrity was viewed from the point of moral while morality was valued in relation to whistle-blower's persecution.

I was taught different types of interview questions and tips on how to answer them. The questions could be opened ended, probing, closed, leading or hypothetical questions. In relation to the interview as well, apart from practicing the questions and the answers, I was indoctrinated on what to do just a week before interviews: practicing some possible questions; being conversant with the company by learning

about it; planning my transport to the interview venue; and parking my documents (CV, Certificate etc) in order, perhaps in a particular folder.

For further learning activity about role play in relation to job interview, I was required to register with Prospects.ac.uk. I was matched to a job in a profession I am aspiring to be part of. The discipline is social services and the job title is social worker.

A week before the role play a dedicated channel was created in Microsoft team for only both of us. We were required to upload our job specifications and the would be interview questions and the corresponding answers to the channel. Both of us were expected to practice together as an interviewee and interviewer respectively. During our practicing times we were as well doing brainstorming. We were correcting each other's mistakes. Through practicing I was able to do away with cramming the interview questions' answers as I come to term that I could forget some of words and get stuck.

On my own I researched more on what makes a successful interview. I learned that my first way of communicating in an interview is presentation. An interviewee is expected to be 10-15 minutes early dressing appropriately for the job applied for. It is stated that virtually everything one does on job and life can be seen as a form of communication. It is recommended that one come to terms with his strengths and weaknesses and regularly practice good habits. I learned on my own how to look an interviewer in the eye and employing active listening skills. Bad habits of slouching or looking at phone during any interview should be avoided (mindtools.com/blog/, 2020).

The Role Play

Role play is not venture I had delved into before. To me, I attach more importance to it than real job interview as there are many jobs to apply for. However, role play is just one; there is no replay for the full mark. So, I was really nervous striding into the assessment. However, as soon as I heard the take-off bell rang, the nervousness disappeared. Of the questions that I was asked by my partner, one of them was unexpected. Surprisingly, I was able to answer it. The judgement of my performance is entirely for my tutor. The immediately feedback from tutor/assessor was that feedbacks, not result is given to an interviewee. This was regarding my asking, when I could receive the result of the interview.

I was highly elated to have participated in the role play. Though, it was virtual but it felt like real job interview. In my view, I see the role play as an opportunity to come to term with my strength and weaknesses in relation to my employability skills. The skills in question are communication skills, time management skills, team working skills, listening skills, and problem-solving skills. Digital skills.

Last term my report writing was about the academic and employability skills I had then learned which was only in theory. This term it is about putting those skills in practice as if in a real-life situation before a potential employer.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Going forward I am going to deploy SWOT to critically analyse my strength and weaknesses. According to mindtools.com, “SWOT is an acronym that depicts Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats” (mindtools.com/blog/, 2020).

The role play was all about communication with my partner. Indeed.com wrote that our actions on the job and in can be seen as communication (indeed.com, n.d.). Being able to put into action the act of looking the interviewer in the eye, and putting into practice other acts before the interviewer has further strengthened my communication skills during the role play. Fortunately, my partner was someone I had worked with before in another group work, so the nervousness of meeting a new or unknown person was not there. Writing communication is as well important; penning the corresponding answers to the questions meant that in future I could easily do the same.

From the role play I felt my team working skills further strengthened. Team spirit varnishes our natural tendencies to focus mostly on negative things. My focus during the role play was our partnership goal. I and Benah (my role play partner) possibly are from different culture. There is the possibility of shortcomings inherent in either both of but because it was team playing, we valued each other's input and concentrated on the goals. I have learned this particular skill and I am ready to put it in real life situation.

The role play gave me a platform to test my time management skills. Since I learned Eisenhower time management model. Eisenhower's, principle stated that only work that helps you achieve your aims is what is important (mindtools.com/blog/, 2020). I have put it into practice many times. In the duration of role play all my activities were carried as scheduled. All proposed telephone calls and virtual team meetings were made and held as planned. I have adapted this time management model in many other aspects of my private life as well. Even my family members see it as a revolution as my weak time management had before made us missed flight.

My digital skills have tremendously improved. Before I got into University of Wales Trinity Saint David I knew nothing about PowerPoint. Currently my knowledge of it is overwhelming. Many instances during the role play and other virtual group work like presentation, I have been the one explaining to fellow team members how to share screen. I have been imparting my knowledge of referencing to others. I am now a professional in Harvard referencing style which is University of Wales Trinity Saint David recommended style of referencing.

Listening skills is very important act of communication mostly used in personal, academic and professional settings (Wolvin and Coakely, 1996 pp 13-25). According to international Listening Association, listening is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or non-verbal messages (skillsyouneed.com, n.d.). I am now a better listener in comparison with, before I entered University of Eales Trinity Saint David. As I wrote initially that the role play felt like real life situation, no standing or wall mirror would have exposed me to testing my listening skills like the role play acted out on Microsoft team.

I am a very calm person but the role play gave me the opportunity to test my problem solving skills. Initially using Microsoft team to practice role play was very frustrating to some of us because we are not very conversant with system. As a member of team, I was able to identify the issue of concern, then deploy my problem solving skills and got the issue resolved.

Through SWOT I have been able to grasp that I have made enough effort towards my writing communication skills. The writing I meant is touch typing. From my understanding this skill is very important in social work. It is constantly required in order to meet time scale. Being good in touch typing will save me a lot of unnecessary stress. Even now as a student, I need it to enable speedy completion of my school assignments.

Finally, I am now able to identify favourable qualities in me that will make an organisation to hire me. The role play has made me to see that I am passionate person and outcome driven. I want to see the best in people. I am a good advocator. I can advocate for the causes that I believe in. I can support my organisation in ensuring the organisation's objectives and goals are achieved as well.

I am dependable, reliable, able to adapt to changing needs of any organisation.

I am a learner and a reflector. I can learn new tasks and adapt changes when necessary. I can take constructive advice and feedback to improve my practice/performance.

I have just discovered that there are still some gaps I need to fill regarding my time management. I had a narrow escape from submitting my assignment at the deadline. While I was waiting to submit my work at last minute it turned out that due to programming error the due time was back forward. This meant my inability to submit when I wanted to. The error was eventually corrected anyway and I later submitted. It is my believe tat if I had managed my time effectively I would have submitted my assignment before the error took prominence.

I feel constrained in terms of my finance juggling my education and work. There is no way I will not do exceedingly well in my results if I am only studying. Due to tiredness caused by working, sometimes I do a lot of procrastination with my school work.

Conclusion

Going forward, despite identifying the above weaknesses, I am very optimistic that my personal goals initially stated in my Personal Development Plan are on track of fully achieved by the end of the academic year. I always want to be skilful in communication skills, digital skills, time management skills, conflict resolution skills, doing away with procrastination, to be proactive rather reactive and learning from experience. Having been inducted on how and where to find jobs, acting out job interview in the role play, and with the skills I have learned so far, I am confident that my goal of switching career to social work is almost realized.

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