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Skills for the Workplace

Module Assignment Guides

Module No:	BMSK4005
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Module Assessment Guide 2020

The assessment criteria for this module asks you to:

- Identify your own learning styles and the learning styles of another member of the team
- Use a simple technique for identifying own development needs and the development needs of another member of the team
- Identify potential barriers to learning
- Explain how barriers to learning can be overcome
- Briefly analyse learning/development options to meet needs of self and another member of the team
- Identify support mechanisms for the development of self and another member of the team
- Prepare a development plan to achieve a learning objective for self and another team member
- Describe a method that could be used to monitor the development of self and another member of the team
- Complete a job application form with cover letter (email)
- Create a CV focused for the specific role you have chosen
- Reflect upon the recruitment interview process and techniques using a recognised reflective model.

The entire assignment should be of approximately 4000 words - not including Appendices and References as these are NEVER part of your 'word count'

Assignment Layout

It is easier and more practical to sub-divide your assignment into 3 sections to ensure you have covered all aspects in sufficient detail to pass the assignment.

Sections 1 and 2 are all about your Personal Development; including Learning Styles, SWOT, barriers to success, development needs, monitoring progress etc. for you and a colleague/friend and producing a Personal Development Plan for both of you.

Section 3 covers the recruitment process and should focus on how you personally would go about selecting, preparing for and applying for a job.

Section 1: Know how to identify development needs

1.1 Identify learning styles for self and another

Using the 2 recognised models shown below, identify your own learning styles.
Discuss the findings from the models used on both yourself and another person.

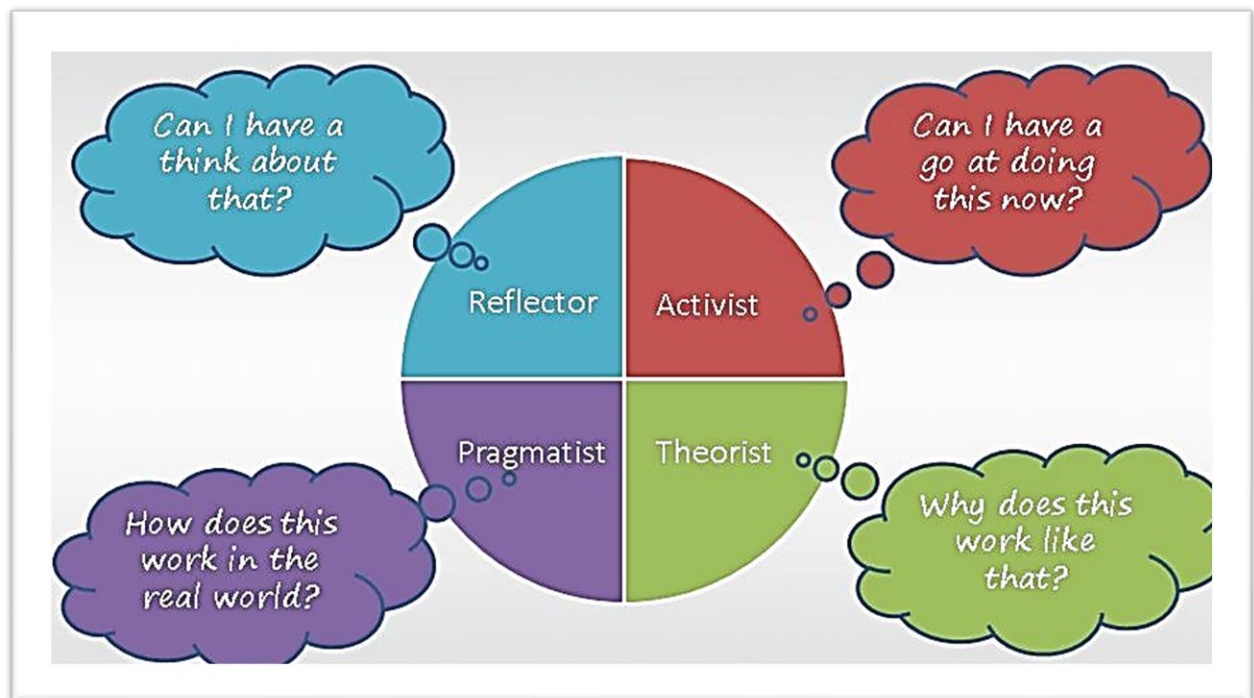


[Vark Questionnaire](#)

Sample VARK Results

The image is a screenshot of a "Your VARK Results" page. At the top, it says "Your VARK Results" in large black font. Below that, it states "YOUR LEARNING PREFERENCE: Mild Read/Write". To the left is a thumbnail of a VARK profile document. To the right, it says "Full information about your preference is available in your VARK Academic Profile or Business Profile (approx. US\$9.95). View Example Profile". On the far right, a box titled "Your scores were:" lists: Visual 8, Aural 5, Read/Write 14, and Kinesthetic 9. Below the preference, it says "Use the following helpsheet for strategies that apply to your VARK preference:". At the bottom left, a red box highlights the link "• Read/Write Strategies". A red arrow points from this box to a callout box on the right that says "Click on Strategies link for more details to help you expand in this section".

Honey and Mumford Questionnaire - **Appendix B** (copy and paste into your own assignment appendix).



1.2 Use a simple technique for identifying development needs for self & another.

Begin by conducting a **SWOT** analysis on self and the other person. Create two separate SWOT tables (as shown below) – one for each person.

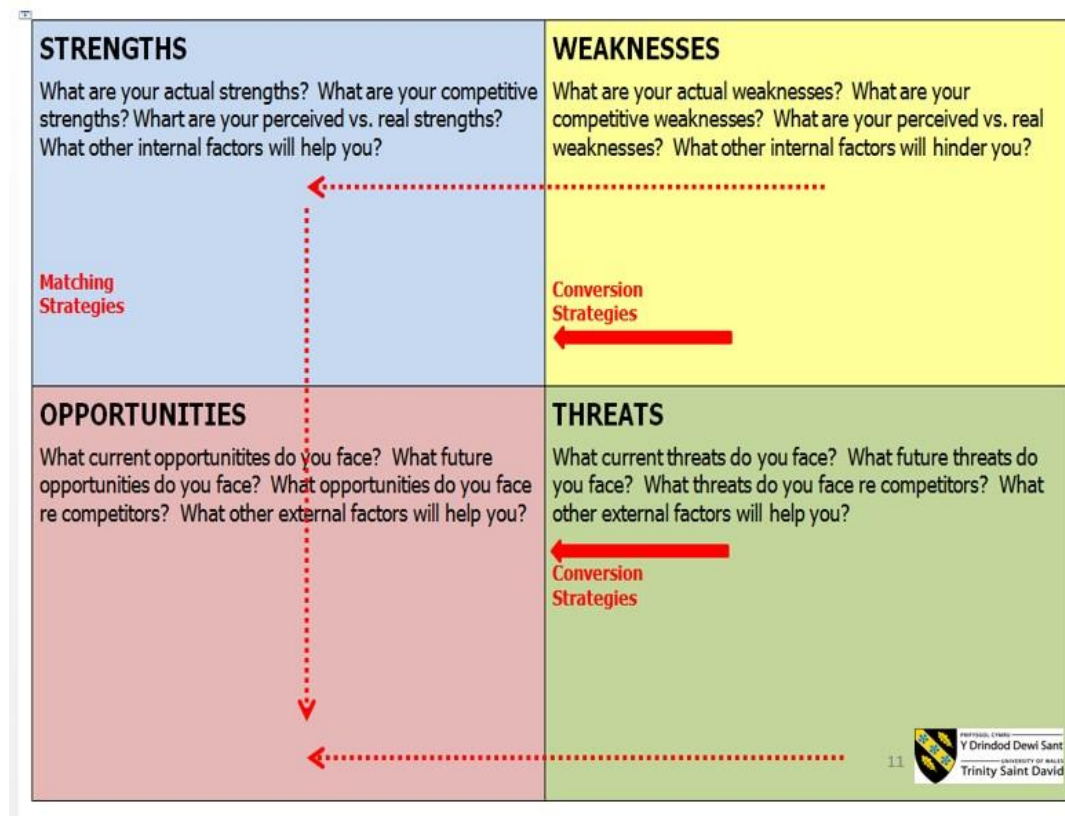
The SWOT should have identified *weaknesses* that may be holding you back in terms of career progression but which could be turned into *strengths* and *threats* which could be turned into *opportunities* if certain actions are taken. *Talk about these in this section.*

You are looking at '**Conversion Strategies**' when you talk about which actions could be taken to convert weaknesses into strengths and threats to opportunities. You will be using '**Matching Strategies**' to match your strengths to opportunities – *which strength maps to which opportunity.*

For example: *I could use my strength as being very good with IT as an opportunity to open a computer repair shop.*

I could use my 15 years in home catering as an opportunity to become a professional chef.

The strength in IT does not map across to the opportunity to become a professional chef or the catering strength to open a computer repair shop.



1.3 Identify potential barriers to learning for self and another.

You should be able to identify several of these, **but only talk about those that apply to either or both of you**. Some suggestions to consider are:

Childcare

- Can someone look after your children whilst you study – either at home or attending class?
- Do you have a backup strategy for emergencies, holidays etc.?

Work-Life-Balance

- You should also consider work responsibilities, home life, caring for elderly, taking holidays and so on.
- How will you manage to fit time to study into an overcrowded schedule?

Financial Barriers

Can you afford to study?

Are you comfortable with paying back student loans?

Geographical Barriers

Can you get to class easily?

Do you have to travel to class from work?

Do you have a car or have to rely on lifts from others?

Social Barriers?

Are you the first in your family to go into Higher Education?

How do your parents/ siblings/partner/children feel about your learning

What are their expectations of you? Are they supportive or resentful?

If resentful and possibly obstructive, how will you overcome this barrier?

1.4 Explain how these barriers to learning can be overcome.

You can answer the questions raised in the above section, here.

Section 2: Know how to develop self & others to achieve organisational objectives

2.1 Analyse learning/development options to meet needs of self & another.

Examination of the information gathered through the SWOT analysis and other information such as job appraisal feedback, job description etc. to **identify the development needs** of both yourself and another person should be used here to determine **the learning development options** open to both of you (two each would be sufficient).

2.2 Identify support mechanisms for the development of self & another

Following on from barriers discussed above, who can help both of you overcome these barriers and how?

2.3 Prepare a development plan for self & another

Now you move on to preparing a **personal development plan (PDP)** for each of you.

Use a suitable PDP Template like the one on Moodle and in the assignment template (as shown in images below)

Personal Development Plan

Part 1: Personal Analysis

Use your SWOT here

Part 2: Setting Goals

What do I want to learn?	What do I have to do?	What support and resources will I need?	How will I measure success?	Target Date for Review

Part 3: Personal Objectives

Short Term Goals (next 12 months)
Medium Term Goals (2-3 years)
Long Term Goals (3-5 years)

2.4 Method used to monitor the development of self & another.

This is where a detailed Learning Log and/or reviewing your PDP could be used.

See the Learning Logs guide on Moodle for more information about learning logs generally. A more comprehensive Learning Log you can use to monitor your PDP is attached at Appendix A below and is also available for download on Moodle.

Section 3: Know how to prepare for the recruitment process

This part of your assignment will be focused on how you would go about selecting, preparing for and applying for a job.

This will entail you demonstrating your understanding of the key points in the recruitment process by explaining them AND THEN using them to apply for a job.

3.1 Deliverables:

- Identify a suitable job and explain what is involved in deciding this.
- Apply for the job by:
 - Completing an Application Form
 - Preparing a job-focused CV that includes all relevant sections and uses an appropriate layout
 - Devising a tailored Covering Letter to email to the company concerned with your CV
- All of the above should be included in your assignment as appendices
- Using a recognised reflective model such as Gibbs, Kohl etc.
 - Discuss and evaluate your past interview experience
 - Combine it with your new learned knowledge from your research for this module in order to draw conclusions that will better prepare you for future interviews
 - Examples of areas for discussion could include organisational culture, dress code, interview questions, first impressions...etc.

Appendix A PDP Monitoring Log

BMSK4005 Professional Career Development PDP Monitoring Learning Log

Date:

STUDENT NAME:

What happened?
What did I do?
How do I think/feel about this?
How well or how badly did it go?
My conclusions/reflections/lessons learned
What did I learn?
What have I achieved?
How have I put any theory into practice?
What have I learned about myself?
How does what I am doing lead me to becoming better at a skill?
How can I use this to plan for the future?
How can I use this to plan new learning experiences?
My plan to do something better/different by using what I have learned
What will I do differently next time?

How will I do it differently next time?

Appendix B: Honey & Mumford

Finding your Own Learning Style

Honey and Mumford, two British psychologists, have developed a means of assessing the way we learn most effectively. In their learning styles questionnaire, learners are asked to agree or disagree with 80 statements concerning the process of acquiring new skills and knowledge.

Four different types of learner have been identified – *activist, reflector, theorist and pragmatist* – depending on the responses to the questionnaire.

A copy of this questionnaire follows. It provides an opportunity to understand how best you learn and, more generally, to find out how you approach particular problem-solving situations which require novel solutions.

There is no time limit to completing the questionnaire. It will probably take you 10-15 minutes. Before beginning, please note the following:

- The accuracy of the results depends on how honest you are.
- There is no right or wrong answer.
- **If you agree more than you disagree with a statement, put Y by it.**
- **If you disagree more than you agree with a statement, put N by it.**
- Respond to each statement in turn, not moving on until the current statement is answered and without looking back.
- Remember, the accuracy of the results depends on your honesty.

Honey & Mumford's Learning Styles Questionnaire

No.	Statements	Put Y or N
1	I have strong beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad.	
2	I often 'throw caution to the wind'.	
3	I tend to solve problems using a step-by-step approach, avoiding any 'flights of fancy'.	
4	I believe that formal procedures and policies cramp people's style.	
5	I have a reputation for having a no-nonsense, 'call a spade a spade' style.	
6	I often find that actions based on 'gut feeling' are as sound as those based on careful thought and analysis.	
7	I like to do the sort of work where I have time to 'leave no stone unturned'.	
8	I regularly question people about their basic assumptions.	
9	What matters most is whether something works in practice.	
10	I actively seek out new experiences.	
11	When I hear about a new idea or approach I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice.	
12	I am keen on self-discipline such as watching my diet, taking regular exercise, sticking to a fixed routine etc.	
13	I take pride in doing a thorough job.	
14	I get on best with logical, analytical people and less well with spontaneous, 'irrational' people.	
15	I take care over the interpretation of data available to me and avoid jumping to conclusions.	
16	I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives.	
17	I'm attracted to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones.	
18	I don't like 'loose-ends' and prefer to fit things into a coherent pattern.	
19	I accept and stick to laid down procedures and policies so long as I regard them as an efficient way of getting the job done.	
20	I like to relate my actions to a general principle.	
21	In discussions, I like to get straight to the point.	
22	I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work.	
23	I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different.	
24	I enjoy fun-loving spontaneous people.	
25	I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion.	
26	I find it difficult to come up with wild, 'off-the-top-of-the-head' ideas.	
27	I don't believe in wasting time by 'beating about the bush'.	
28	I am careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly.	

29	I prefer to have as many sources of information as possible, the more data to mull over the better.	
30	Flippant people who don't take things seriously enough usually irritate me.	
31	I listen to other people's point of view before putting my own forward.	
32	I tend to be open about how I'm feeling.	
33	In discussions, I enjoy watching the manoeuvrings of the other participants.	
34	I prefer to respond to events on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than plan things out in advance.	
35	I tend to be attracted to techniques such as network analysis, flow charts, branching programmes, contingency planning etc.	
36	It worries me if I have to rush out a piece of work to meet a tight deadline.	
37	I tend to judge people's ideas on their practical merits.	
38	Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me feel uneasy.	
39	I often get irritated by people who want to rush headlong into things.	
40	It is more important to enjoy the present moment than to think about the past or the future.	
41	I think that decisions based on a thorough analysis of all information are sounder than those based on intuition.	
42	I tend to be a perfectionist.	
43	In discussions, I usually pitch in with lots of 'off the top of the head' ideas.	
44	In meetings, I put forward practical realistic ideas.	
45	More often than not, rules are there to be broken.	
46	I prefer to stand back from a situation and consider all the perspectives.	
47	I can often see inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people's arguments.	
48	On balance, I talk more than I listen.	
49	I can often see better, more practical ways to get things done.	
50	I think written reports should be short, punchy and to the point.	
51	I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day.	
52	I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in 'small talk'.	
53	I like people who have both feet firmly on the ground.	
54	In discussions, I get impatient with irrelevancies and 'red herrings'.	
55	If I have a report to write I tend to produce lots of drafts before settling on the final version.	
56	I am keen to try things out to see if they work in practice.	
57	I am keen to reach answers via a logical approach.	
58	I enjoy being the one that talks a lot.	
59	In discussions, I often find I am the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding 'cloud nine' speculations.	

60	I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind.	
61	In discussions with people I often find I am the most dispassionate and objective.	
62	In discussions I'm more likely to adopt a 'low profile' than to take the lead and do most of the talking.	
63	I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer-term bigger picture.	
64	When things go wrong I am happy to shrug it off and 'put it down to experience'.	
65	I tend to reject wild, 'off-the-top-of-the-head' ideas as being impractical.	
66	It's best to 'look before you leap'.	
67	On balance, I do the listening rather than the talking.	
68	I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach.	
69	Most times I believe the end justifies the means.	
70	I don't mind hurting people's feelings so long as the job gets done.	
71	I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling.	
72	I'm usually the 'life and soul' of the party.	
73	I do whatever is expected to get the job done.	
74	I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work.	
75	I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning things and events.	
76	I'm always interested to find out what other people think.	
77	I like meetings to be run methodically, sticking to the agenda etc.	
78	I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics.	
79	I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation.	
80	People often find me insensitive to their feelings.	

Scoring and Plotting Results

You score one point for each item that you put Y next to. There are no points for items that you put N next to. Simply indicate on the grid below which items had Y next to them by putting a Y next to the relevant statement number here as well. The column with the highest total of numbers with a Y next to them indicates your preferred learning style.

2	7	1	5
4	13	3	9
6	15	8	11
10	16	12	19
17	25	14	21
23	28	18	27
24	29	20	35
32	31	22	37
34	33	26	44
38	36	30	49
40	39	42	50
43	41	47	53
45	46	51	54
48	52	57	56
58	55	61	59
64	60	63	65
71	62	68	69
72	66	75	70
74	67	77	73
79	76	78	80
Total Y	Total Y	Total Y	Total Y
ACTIVIST	REFLECTOR	THEORIST	PRAGMATIST

Honey and Mumford Summary

Activists learn best from 'having a go' and trying something out without necessarily preparing. They will be enthusiastic about role-play exercises and keen to take risks in the real environment. Activists are considered as those most keen to 'DO' in terms of the learning cycle.

Reflectors are much better at listening and observing. They are effective at reflecting on their own and others' experience and good at analysing what happened and why. In terms of the learning cycle, reflectors are seen as those who perform well in the 'MONITOR' role above all else.

Theorists' strengths are in building a concept or theory on the basis of their analysis. They are good at integrating different pieces of information and building models on the way things operate. They may choose to start their learning by reading around a topic. Theorists will see their role as strongest at the 'REVIEW and EVALUATION' stage of the learning cycle.

Pragmatists are keen to apply whatever they learn and will always work out how they can apply it in a real situation and plan how to put it into practice. They will value the information/ideas that they are given only if they can see how this relates to practical tasks that they need to do. It is the 'PLAN' stage that is most suited to pragmatists.

As managers and, if we are to maximise on the 'Personal Development' opportunity, we will be required to be effective in all stages of the Learning Cycle.

By recognising your style, you will be able to select learning opportunities which suit you and learning activities that will assist in developing the other styles.