



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Module Name: Professional Career Development

Module Code: BMSW4012

Student Name: Edmarco J. Lenkaitis

Student Number:2529029

Lecturer: Jonathan Wyatt

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AI Acknowledgement:

I acknowledge the use of ChatGPT (<https://chatgpt.com>) on 17/06/2026 to support research, structure planning, reflective framework organisation, and language review for this assessment.

I used the prompts:

- Help me structure a reflective essay using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle.
- Help me identify how SWOT Analysis, Johari Window and SMART Goals relate to my career journey.
- Review and improve the academic English of my reflective writing.

I confirm that I have not presented AI-generated text as my own work and that I have retained drafts, notes and supporting materials used during the preparation of this assessment.

1. DESCRIPTION

My professional journey began after I completed high school in Brazil. I entered the workforce and built a solid career in automotive sales, working at several major dealerships. These roles allowed me to develop strong commercial competencies and establish a professional network.

In 2013, while already established as a successful automotive sales consultant, I decided to pursue higher education. I enrolled in the Tourism course at UNISUL through their virtual learning platform. I successfully progressed through the program and reached my final year. However, I did not complete my undergraduate thesis, leaving the course unfinished.

A significant turning point came when I made the decision to emigrate to the United Kingdom, motivated by growing concerns regarding personal safety in Brazil. The move represented a profound transformation in both my personal and professional life. Upon arriving, I began working as a delivery driver through Uber Eats to ensure my financial subsistence while I explored new opportunities and continued my studies.

This reflective process follows the principles outlined by Gibbs (1988), allowing experience to be transformed into learning through structured description, emotional awareness, evaluation, and analysis.

2. FEELINGS

Reflecting on my journey, each phase has evoked distinct emotions.

During my career in automotive sales, I felt a strong sense of confidence and achievement. Building a successful career and managing client relationships gave me professional pride and financial stability.

The decision to pursue a degree at UNISUL in 2013 came from a desire for personal growth. I felt enthusiasm about obtaining a higher education qualification. However, this was accompanied by deep frustration when I was unable to finish my thesis. It felt like a significant goal was left unaccomplished.

The decision to emigrate was a mix of hope and anxiety. I felt hope for a safer quality of life, but also considerable anxiety about restarting my professional life from scratch in a new country.

Regarding my current situation, the language barrier is a significant source of frustration, as it limits my ability to express my full potential. Despite this, I feel strong motivation. The commitment to learning English and developing new skills drives me forward and fuels my optimism for the future. As Dweck (2017) argues, adopting a growth mindset believing that abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work is essential for overcoming such challenges and achieving long-term success.

3. EVALUATION

Several aspects have functioned well, while others have presented significant challenges.

What Worked Well:

Development of strong communication and negotiation skills through extensive sales experience.

Professional experience with renowned global companies, providing a credible background.

Proven adaptability to different work environments and cultures.

Courage and resilience demonstrated through the decision to emigrate and start anew.

Commitment to continuous learning, evidenced by my pursuit of higher education and current studies.

What Was Difficult:

The non-completion of my Tourism degree remains a personal and professional regret. The necessity to rebuild my career from the ground up in a new country has been demanding, both professionally and psychologically.

Current limitations in professional English have been a major obstacle in accessing roles that match my experience. A significant, temporary reduction in my previous professional standing and financial security.

Working long hours in delivery to achieve stability is exhausting and lacks career satisfaction or progression. Connecting these points to the module activities, the reflective exercises and classroom discussions have been crucial in helping me frame these challenges not just as obstacles, but as integral parts of my growth.

The SWOT and Johari Window analyses have been particularly useful in providing a structured way to view my situation (Cottrell, 2021). According to Honey and Mumford (1992), understanding one's preferred learning style and reflecting on experiences are essential for professional development, as they enable individuals to identify areas for improvement and build on existing strengths.

4. ANALYSIS

This section moves beyond a simple description of theoretical models to apply them critically to my own journey. By using the SWOT, Johari Window, and SMART frameworks as analytical lenses, I can move from superficial self-awareness to a deep, actionable understanding of my professional position (Cottrell, 2021). Career development theories emphasise that structured self-reflection is fundamental to employability and career progression (Robertson, Hooley and McCash, 2020).

SWOT Analysis: A Critical Assessment of My Professional Standing.

The SWOT analysis has forced me to confront the uncomfortable tensions within my current situation. The most significant insight came from examining the interplay between my strengths and the external environment.

Strengths: My primary strength is my proven track record in high-value automotive sales. This represents years of mastering complex negotiation, understanding consumer psychology, and building trust-based relationships. The resilience I have developed is the direct result of navigating competitive environments and the immense challenge of international relocation.

Weaknesses: The most critical weakness is my current professional English fluency. I understand business communication theory but lack the speed, cultural nuance, and confidence required to perform at my previous level in a UK context. The lack of UK-specific experience compounds this issue, as employers cannot see my past success, they only see a foreign CV with no local references.

Opportunities: The UK automotive market is a significant opportunity. It is a mature, sophisticated market where my experience with premium brands is highly relevant. Furthermore, my current course bridges the gap between my Brazilian experience and UK expectations, providing local accreditation and industry insights.

Threats: The primary threat is the competitive nature of the UK job market. For every sales role, there will be dozens of local candidates with native fluency and instinctive cultural understanding. This threat is directly linked to my weakness; if I cannot overcome the language barrier, my strengths become invisible to employers.

The Critical SWOT Insight: My strengths are latent in the UK market. They exist within me but cannot be effectively communicated without first addressing my weaknesses. The opportunity of the UK market is conditional upon overcoming the language barrier. This analysis reveals that my priority is not simply to "find a job," but to translate my value proposition for a British audience.

My professional rebirth depends entirely on this translation both linguistic and cultural. As Maslow (1943) suggested in his hierarchy of needs, individuals must first address fundamental needs in my case, effective communication before they can achieve higher-level goals such as career fulfilment and self-actualisation.

Johari Window: Uncovering Hidden Competencies Through Immigration

The Johari Window model has allowed me to identify competencies that were previously in my "Unknown" quadrant and have now moved into the "Open" and "Blind" areas (Luft and Ingham, 1955). This framework supports the development of self-awareness through feedback and reflection, which are essential for personal and professional growth.

Open Area (Known to Self and Others): Previously dominated by my commercial skills sales, negotiation, and customer service. These were visible to my colleagues and managers in Brazil.

Blind Area (Unknown to Self, Known to Others): Through feedback from my course instructors and peers, I have become aware that my work ethic and seriousness are more visible to others than I realized. They perceive a level of dedication and maturity I took for granted.

Hidden Area (Known to Self, Unknown to Others): This is where my fears and insecurities lie my anxiety about my accent, my fear of making mistakes, and my shame about working as a delivery driver despite having been a successful professional. By choosing to share these feelings in this reflection, I am consciously moving them into the Open area, reducing their power over me.

Unknown Area (Unknown to Self and Others): This is where the most profound discovery has occurred. The experience of emigrating has revealed strengths I did not know I possessed. I have discovered a level of perseverance that is more than resilience; it is the grit to perform a physically demanding job knowing it is a temporary step. I have uncovered a capacity for adaptability that goes beyond "being flexible" it is the cognitive ability to rebuild my identity in a new culture. Most importantly, I have discovered a capacity for learning that I had never been forced to develop before.

The Critical Johari Insight: The act of immigrating has fundamentally expanded my self-knowledge. It has forced competencies from my "Unknown" area into the "

"Open," proving that I am far more resourceful and capable than I initially believed. I can now articulate these newfound qualities, adaptability, perseverance, and ease of learning as essential competencies that set me apart from other candidates.

SMART Goals: A Strategic Bridge to the Automotive Sector.

The SMART framework breaks my ambition into manageable, sequenced actions. Setting specific and measurable objectives is a key component of effective career planning (Gallagher, 2022). The analysis below shows how each goal is directly linked to the insights from the SWOT and Johari Window analyses.

Goal Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-bound	Rationale & Connection
1. Improve Professional English	Dedicate 10 hours/week to focused study.	Track progress via assessments and self-testing.	It addresses my number one weakness.	0–6 months	This is foundational to making my strengths visible and moving language anxiety from "Hidden" to "Open."
2. Active Conversation Practice.	Participate in two English conversation sessions weekly.	Track attendance and measure fluency improvement	It addresses my greatest weakness and my most hidden fears.	0–6 months	Builds confidence and fluency in real-time communication. The exact skill representing my biggest threat.
3. Update CV & LinkedIn	Complete UK-standard CV and LinkedIn profile.	Achievable with research and guidance.	Crucial for communicating my strengths to the UK market.	By end of month.	Translates my experience, addressing the threat of being overlooked by reframing my past as an asset.
4. Apply for Automotive Roles	Research and apply for 2-3 relevant	Achievable with consistent effort.	Targets the Opportunity of the UK	6–12 months	Bridges my experience with my future. Quality of

	roles per week. Track applications sent.		automotive market.		applications improves as my English and CV improve.
5. Secure a Commercial Position	Obtain a commercial role in the automotive sector.	Achievable through accumulation of previous goals	Targets the Opportunity of the UK automotive market.	Within 12 months	The culmination of the entire process: The successful transfer of my professional identity from the Brazilian market to the UK market.

The Critical SMART Insight: The SMART framework reveals a clear dependency chain. I cannot achieve Goal 5 without achieving Goals 1-4. My success is not dependent on luck but on a sequence of deliberate, measurable actions. This analysis has shifted my perspective from anxiety about the future to agency over the present. Each goal is a step that builds upon the last, creating momentum that directly addresses my weaknesses and leverages my strengths. Gallagher (2022) emphasises that structured goal setting is particularly important for international professionals navigating new labour markets, as it provides clarity and direction during periods of transition.

Conclusion of the Analysis Section:

By applying the SWOT, Johari Window, and SMART Goals frameworks critically and analytically, I have moved beyond self-description to self-understanding. The SWOT analysis revealed the core tension between my latent strengths and the language barrier that obscures them. The Johari Window uncovered hidden strengths born from my immigration experience. The SMART Goals framework translates these insights into a concrete, actionable plan. This analysis has provided me with a strategic understanding of my situation, transforming my reflection from a simple story into the foundation for a successful career transition.

5. CONCLUSION

In summary, this reflection has been an invaluable exercise in self-analysis. I have learned that my past experiences, even those that ended without a formal qualification, were not wasted. They contributed significantly to the development of key competencies—communication, negotiation, and resilience—that form the bedrock of my employability. The decision to pursue a degree in 2013, even though unfinished, demonstrated my commitment to personal growth and lifelong learning (Dweck, 2017).

The decision to move to the UK was a monumental challenge, but one that has presented a unique opportunity for profound personal and professional growth. It has forced me to step outside my comfort zone and discover strengths I did not know I had. The module has been instrumental in increasing my self-awareness, helping me to more clearly understand my core strengths, the specific areas where I need improvement, and the concrete steps required to achieve my career objectives (Cottrell, 2021). By following the reflective cycle proposed by Gibbs (1988), I have been able to transform my experiences into actionable learning, shifting my perspective from one of frustration and setback to one of strategy and hope. I now have a much clearer vision of how to bridge the gap between my experience and my future aspirations.

6. ACTION PLAN

Short Term (0–6 months):

Continue dedicated, daily study of English, focusing on business and professional vocabulary.

Actively participate in conversation clubs, language exchanges, and practical speaking activities.

Successfully complete my current course with a focus on employability and British workplace culture.

Finalize my UK-style CV and build a professional LinkedIn profile, including requesting recommendations.

Medium Term (6–12 months):

Begin applying for customer service and entry-level sales roles to gain UK experience.

Dedicate time to researching and studying the specifics of the UK automotive market, including key players, trends, and consumer behaviour.

Participate in interviews, viewing each one as a learning experience to improve my technique.

Long Term (1–3 years):

Secure a stable and permanent position in automotive sales where I can leverage my experience.

Once established, focus on developing leadership skills to pursue opportunities for team management or supervisory roles.

Actively seek continuous professional development opportunities within the sector to progress my career and achieve a senior position.

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