

Academic and Employability Skills
Skills for Workplace

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Introduction

The aim of this report is to analyse a few academic and employability skills and to make a personal analysis of these skills. There exist countless kinds of skills, some are very useful at the workplace, some for academic field and others can be useful for both. There are four types of skills, basic skills what people uses usually, the thinking skills that includes high cognitive level, people skills and personal qualities skills. In this report, the skills analysed are: communication, time management, leadership, critical thinking, problem solving, paraphrasing and summarizing.

Communication

Communication is the ability to express thoughts, knowledge, feelings to other or others in a way that they can understand. It requires a message, a sender (the person that send the message), the receiver (the person who receives the message) and the channel to transmit the message (Griffths and Dunham 2015 cited in Maund, Schriek and Tinkler, 2017).

Having this skill is very important. It grants the transmissions of message, verbal, nonverbal, written or visual from the sender to the receiver which results in a way that everybody understands each other. It is not just based in speaking, but it includes listening, understand and paying attention.

Communication, that belongs to the 'people skills' category, is essential for both workplace and academic life. At school it allows to understand the teacher explanation, the communication in between colleagues and to make yourself understood. According to BookBoom (2010), based on a study made by a University of Pittsburgh, communication skills are the key factor used for some organizations, in selecting administration staff. The study found that oral and written communication skills were important in predicting job success, as was the ability to communicate well with others in workplace.

Based on the "Test Your Skills Questionnaire" by MindTools made on the first week of class, I have this skill, and I think is true. I can easily speak and deal with my colleagues, friends as much in the university and the workplace.

Time management

Time management is the capacity to use your time adequately (Morgan, 2017). Managing the time effectively is a smart way to work not a harder way, it allows getting more done in a short period of time, and it avoid wasting of time and some stress (Mindtools, 1996 - 2019). There are some techniques for an efficient time

management, starting with setting priorities, making a list with ten things to be done, and choose the two most important items (80-20 rules) and record, analyse and change (RAC).

Time management, that belongs to a 'personal qualities skills' category, is very important for the academic life. Good time management allows students to meet deadlines, to structure all their tasks to achieve all goals, and not leave everything to the last minute, especially when it comes to study. Time management is also very useful at workplace. According with Morgan (2017), when someone miss a time limit for his work, he may causes others some stress or big problem if they work depends on that, or if someone arrive late or even miss some important meetings, he loses the opportunity to presents his work or sell his products.

According with the MindTools questionnaire, this is one skill that I have, which I agree. For example, I had tree important things to be done in this period (November to December), two personal assignment, that I wanted to be almost complete before the end of classes to have something to show the lectures and one personal task that needed to be read by 20 December. Between my work and my daughter, I do not have much time for them. However, I made a plan to do the assignments every day after work and whenever I find a break in my daily tasks. The other thing to be done after my daughter goes to bed and weekends, and it works because all of them was almost done and I had plenty of time before the deadline.

Leadership

Leadership is the combination of several skills that gives a person the way and the manner to lead other. Morgan (2017) said that there is no leader without followers. There are many types of leadership, varying according to the people, place, things and situations. It could be a community leadership, religious leadership, political leadership, and leadership of campaigning groups. (Mindtools, 1996 - 2019).

Leadership, which belongs to 'people skills' category, is definitely more important at the workplace than at the academic life. At the workplace a leader must lead his workers in order to achieve the company's goals, and as a leader is important to understand and manage all workers. Leadership skills can be useful at academic live as well, especially if there is a group work and someone needs some orientation.

Based on the same questionnaire for the skills above, this is one skill that I have to improve. To be honest, I have never been in a position to lead someone at the workplace yet, but the few I had at school I always leave to another person. I think, I do not like much responsibility. However, I think I can deal with it if I do not have other choice. To get better, I first have to take advantage of the opportunities that I will have to lead, and then discover the flaws in order to fix and improve.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability that a person has to question, analyse, even argue every information that has given to him.

Critical thinking begins to appear as a child, it is at this age that curiosities, questions, analyses, etc. begin. Although it only develops itself in school. It is one of the skills that belongs to a 'thinking skill' category, and is very important for the educational and learning process.

This skill is very important for the academic field because it develops the capacity of each one, to question, analyse, not accept something just because it has been said for a lecture or colleagues, but to seek evidence that corroborates the information given. At the university, students are in contact with numerous information, and so it is important to always consider whether the information and sources are credible (University of Essex, 2019). This skill is also important for the workplace, according to The Balance career (2019), employers are looking for candidates who can come up with solutions through a critical analysis of the situation. According to the same ones, the employers can easily trust in an employee that has critical thinking skills to solve problems and make decisions without continual supervising.

This is one skill that I have a lot to improve. I am not a very critical person, normally I assume that the information that was given to me, by the teachers or by some documents are credible. To improve for now on, I have to analyse, question and corroborate every information that I am in contact with.

Problem solving

Problem solving is the ability to find good solutions to solve complications.

This ability may be somewhat linked to critical thinking (Snyder and Snyder, 2008). To solve a problem, you first have to study the problem, ask all the necessary questions, analyse all aspects, that is, critical thinking first.

Problem solving belongs to a 'thinking skill' category. It is very important as each day brings new challenges and sometimes new problems whether small or big at work or in life. Before solving a problem is important to be aware of the problem, study the problem, knowing the extent and cause and then making a decision in order to solve the problem (Morgan, 2017).

This is a skill is more important in the workplace than academic life. In every kind or type of work there is a problem to solve and having this ability differs a good manager from one less effective (Morgan, 2017). It will help as well in the academic field, as in any party can have some problems to be solved. However, is definitely a skill for workplace.

I may have this skill, but probably need some improvements. When facing some problems, I search every way to solve it, but I am always afraid to give a step forward because of the consequences.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is the ability to write something that had been written before by someone else, in your own words. The meaning should be the same, the message should be clear and basically it should have the same length (Mindtools, 1996 - 2019). For a good paraphrasing is necessary first read and understand the text that will be paraphrased, change the structure of the text, use synonyms and antonyms, change word class etc.

Paraphrasing, which belongs to a 'personal qualities skills' category, is very important because when paraphrasing the reader is showing a full understanding of the text and it allows at the same time a different way to use others people idea without using quotation. Is an alternative to plagiarism that is illegal and it gives credibility to the research paper (La Trobe University, 2019).

This skill is very important skill for academic field. Trough the study time there are countless research papers, documents, thesis, projects and other assignments to be done, and paraphrasing is the key for the students to complete all this task with remarkable notes. Paraphrasing may not have the same importance, and use for the work place as it has for the academic field but it still can be useful in certain areas. In some work probably it will be necessary do some research paper and this skill can help with that.

I have done one in class exercise about paraphrasing, and according to the lecture I have some good paraphrasing skill, but there are always some points that need to be improved.

Summarising

Summarising is the ability to make from un entire discussion, argument, book etc. a brief synopsis. This is due basically when the prime material is extensive, that might cause some distraction to the readers, or to give just a primary facts or points of the text (Mindtools, 1996 - 2019).

This skill is very important especially for those that is constantly doing researches, or given information, because helps them in many aspects such as: spare time, the work reliability and it is important as well for the increasing of the knowledge (Mindtools, 1996 - 2019), and similarity of paraphrasing, it is one of the ways to avoid plagiarism.

Like paraphrasing, summarizing belongs to a 'personal qualities skill' category, and is more important for academic field, than workplace. There are works that might need some researches to be done and consequently the ability to summarize can be useful. In the academic field is fundamental to complete all the assignments that the student needs to do, in order to have the most credible and well-presented work and to avoid being accused of unfairly practice.

I have good summarising skills, according with the lecture feedback about the in class exercise I have made. Although good is not excellent, so I may have something to improve, and I intend to do so, with more practising.

Conclusion

As discussed in this paper, abilities are extremely important for humans to be able to perform or even coexist. Everything that the human does requires skills: the elementary act of cooking or reading, knowing how to speak and explain or listening and understanding, a simple leadership or knowing how to do it, the organization of tasks according to the time we have available, the ability to make decisions or to solve problems, etc.

A human being has innumerable abilities, each one has its importance, that differentiates when one person is good at doing certain things and not at others. And also, when someone is more likely to do something than others.

The skills are not only important for academic life or work, although in this work only these two parts of man's daily life were analysed. However, since academic field is the basis of human development, followed by work that basically occupies most of the lifetime, then these two points require the greatest number of abilities each.

Skills is not something that a person have or do not have, is possible to acquire new ones and also to develop the ones you already have.

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Appendix



Academic and Employability Skills – BMSW4001 Term 1

In-class exercise 1: Paraphrasing (Oct 2019)

Student Name: Ramona Correia

Student ID: 1908756

Time allocated: 1 hour. Please return your paper to the lecturer upon completion. It will be returned to you at the next session. You will need to include a scanned copy of this exercise in the form of an appendix together with you Task 1 (part of the Assignment for this module).

Ex.1 Write a paraphrase of the following passage.

Chocolate has always been considered an affordable little luxury, associated with romance and celebrations. Therefore in 2001, revelations that the production of cocoa in Ivory Coast involved child slave labour deeply shocked chocolate companies, consumers and governments alike. The USA passed legislation mandating that standards be created to permit companies who could prove that their chocolate was produced without forced labour to label their chocolate "slave-labour free." The chocolate industry agreed to an international protocol that would give chocolate producers four years to limit abusive practices.

Chocolate has for long been used especially for lovers and for ^{celebrate} special dates. However, ~~the~~ the discovery that the fabrication of cocoa in Ivory Coast was made by child slave labour in 2001, ~~the world~~ let everybody ^{know} that every ~~one~~ chocolate producer has to ~~provide~~ ^{provide} evidence that their products was made without children slavery "slave-labour free" and this is due to a ~~new~~ law created by the United States of America. ~~And~~ The chocolate producers was given four years to eradicate ~~abuse~~ slavery by an international agreement made by chocolate industry.

Lecturer's comments: Some good paraphrasing skills. Try to reduce the number of errors.

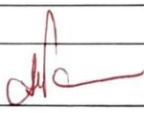
Lecturer's signature: _____

Date: 15/11/2019

Ex.2. Complete the blanks in such a way that the meaning of the second sentence is as close to the original sentence as possible, using the word in brackets where given. Pay attention to grammar and make sure what you write matches what is already given.

- 1) There will be a few changes around in the office. (announce) X
The boss announces that they will make new arrangements in the office.
- 2) He doesn't write to me as frequently as I wanted. X
I wish he wrote to me as much as I liked.
- 3) We were concerned about her health. X
We had some preoccupation about her well being
- 4) You weren't careful, so you made so many mistakes. (had) X
If you had paid more attention, you had not done so many mistakes.
- 5) The council cut funding so we could not provide free parking. X
Because of the ~~council~~ cancellation of the funding by the council we weren't
able to provide non-payed parking.
- 6) His proposal was a failure as it was too theoretical. (relied) X
His proposal _____
- 7) It was Mary who stole money. X
He accused Mary for stealing the money.
- 8) He seems well-educated. However, he's not very bright. (although) X
He seems a educated person. Although he is not so smart.
- 9) Universities place the burden of understanding plagiarism and attribution conventions on students. X
The responsibility for the plagiarism according to the Universities is due to
the burden of understanding by the students.
- 10) 33% of adolescents who have one baby, have a second baby within two years of the first baby's birth. (third) X

Lecturer's comments: You need to improve your grammar.

Lecturer's signature:  Date: 14/11/2019

Student Name: Romina Correia Student ID/Group: 1908756

Time allocated: 1 hour. Please return your paper to the lecturer upon completion. It will be returned to you at the next session. You will need to include a scanned copy of this exercise in the form of an appendix together with your Task 1 (part of the Assignment for this module).

Ex.1

Read the following text and make notes on the main ideas. You can do this on a separate piece of paper which you do not have to hand in.

To be a great leader, you need to start by leading yourself

Most people go into top positions with good intentions, but those often crumble due to the demands — and perks — of the job. If you want to succeed, devote some time and energy to self-leadership, says consultant Lars Sudmann. Being a leader is a little like being a parent; beforehand, we have all these rosy visions of how we're going to do it, how incredible we're going to be, and how we'll sidestep the mistakes that we see other people make. But when it's our turn to assume the role, we find that reality doesn't match our expectations or imaginations. Sudmann, for example, believed that he would ace his first leadership role. Then, he held his first major staff meeting, an employee asked a question about the company's email signature, and the proceedings — and his command of them — completely fell apart.

After some months, Sudmann realized he was fighting against certain entrenched factors that keep all leaders from improving. Like many in the working world, leaders have too much to do and not enough time to do it; they don't clearly think through their priorities and strategies; and being in a position of power causes them to assume that the people beneath them will take care of a lot of problems.

Sudmann found a potential solution to these "classic leadership problems" in Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor and Stoic philosopher. Rather than spending his time trying to rally and guide others, Marcus Aurelius focused a surprising amount of his energy on mastering self-leadership. Sudmann has found this orientation tremendously helpful. Below he breaks down three actions that go into self-leadership.

First of all, you need to be aware of your shortcomings; leaders need to know all of their biases, predilections and weaknesses. Another idea is to take 5-10 minutes every day to think about the challenges you've recently handled and the ones you'll soon face. While Marcus Aurelius was fond of reflecting in the evening, Sudmann likes doing this over morning coffee. Questions to pose include: "How did my leadership go yesterday? How would the leader I'd like to be have faced the challenges I faced? What about my challenges today? What could I do differently?" Write down your thoughts so you can refer back to them and learn from them.

Also, regulate your feelings; no matter how much preparation and reflection you put in, there will be employees, colleagues, clients and associates who anger, frustrate or annoy you. That's where the practice of "reframing" comes in; stopping and asking yourself ... on a scale from 1 to 10, how important is this issue right now? Then, give yourself a moment to think: "How would the leader I aspire to be handle this situation?" The answer will come to you.

Lecturer's signature: _____

Date: 12-12-2019

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.

Being a leader is a very difficult task. For Lars Sudmann to be a good leader first you have to know to lead yourself, but it wasn't like this at the beginning. In fact the ~~thought~~ ^{idea} that the reality was far from the expectations.

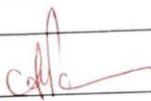
After some months Sudmann was facing a time management problem, having a lot to do and not enough time.

He found a solution for this problem in Marcus Aurelius; instead of trying to lead other, he first tried to mastering selfleadership.

First you have to know yourself. you can spend ~~so~~ some minutes thinking of the challenges you have faced or will face and have a critical thinking about your leadership.

It is important to not let anyone ^{have all} having influences on your emotions, and to not ~~let~~ waste time or energy with questions ~~or~~ that doesn't matter.

Lecturer's comments: Good Summarising skill. Try to reduce the number of language errors

Lecturer's signature: 

Date: 12-12-2019