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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to reflect on the academic and employability skills I have acquired while studying for this module and the skills I need to improve on.

Description

As a student at UWTSD, I have been asked to write a reflective report on the acquired skills and skills gaps I have learnt about.

Customer service being one of the skills I have learnt, I understand that it is a very important skill to have in a workplace.

“The customer service industry requires employees to have a number of soft or interpersonal skills.

Whether you interact with customers in person, on the phone, or via email or online chat, it's important that you be able to relate to others on a human level and that they feel as if they are interacting with someone who genuinely cares and wants to solve their problem.

Developing these skills and emphasizing them in a job interview can help you rise above the job market competition.

Clear communication is essential to customer service. You need to know what the customer wants and be able to articulate what you can do for the customer.

Enunciating, speaking loudly enough, and employing an upbeat tone will help you

communicate clearly and positively with your customers.

These skills are essential in phone communication as well. If you write or email with customers, be sure to use proper grammar and spelling and choose words and phrases that convey a similarly upbeat attitude.

Listening skills are just as important as communication skills. Listen carefully to customers to know exactly what they need and how you can help them.

Demonstrate that you are actively listening through body language and responses.

Nod when you understand something, make eye contact, etc. Don't be afraid to ask clarifying questions to make sure you understand the other person.

An important aspect of customer service is simply making the customer feel heard. When you're talking on the phone, don't interrupt customers, and carefully respond to all their questions.

Self-control People who work in customer service need to be able to calmly handle all customers, even the most negative ones. You must strive to remain calm and cool, even when your customer is not.

Patience and self-control will keep you from getting upset and saying something inappropriate. Remember to try not to take it personally when the customer is upset.

When the customer is angry, it's even more important to stay calm and try to tone down the conversation.

A positive attitude goes a long way in customer service. Make sure you know all the benefits of the products or services your company provides and convey them to your customers.

If customers have a problem with a product or service, focus on what you can do to help them. While you don't want to seem overly happy when a customer is upset, being proactive and optimistic can help a customer stay positive too.

Having assertiveness when dealing with customers, you want to be able to take control of the situation and do what you need to do in an efficient manner.

If you are meek or passive, customers may not have faith in you. However, you also don't want to be aggressive or demanding, which can offend customers.

By speaking in a strong, steady voice, asking direct questions, and keeping track of what you need to do, you will convey confidence without being aggressive.

Conflict resolution is essential when working in customer service because you deal with many customers who have a problem that needs to be solved.

It is important for you to be a creative problem solver. Always make sure you understand problems clearly and offer customers realistic solutions.

Think creatively; often you will need to think of solutions that fit the needs of a specific customer.

Empathy is important to understand what customers say and how they feel. An important soft skill is being able to recognize and understand a person's emotional state.

Taking Responsibility this is a big part of working in customer service, and that includes being able to say, "I'm sorry," whether it's for a late shipment or the poor quality of a product.

You must be able to sincerely apologize to a customer on behalf of your company even when the problem was not your fault. Hearing an apology almost always makes a customer feel better.

Having a Sense of Humor can make a potentially stressful customer-service interaction more enjoyable. If a customer cracks a silly joke, she will appreciate it if you chuckle along with her.

However, make sure you are never laughing at a customer, such as when they make a mistake or have trouble with something. Instead, laugh with your customers”
([www.the balance careers.com](http://www.thebalancecareers.com), top soft skills for customer service jobs, august 24 2019).

Problem solving is one of the skills I have grasp and why it is a good skill for me to have in a business environment.

It shows your team that whatever problem arises you will be able to deal with it in a professional manner.

“Problem solving skills are Considered as a soft skill a personal strength, as opposed to a

hard skill that is learned through education or training, an aptitude for creative and effective problem-solving is nonetheless one of the most valued attributes employers seek in their job candidates.

In order to solve a problem, you must first figure out what caused it. This requires that you gather and evaluate data, isolate possible contributing circumstances, and pinpoint the chief causal factors that need to be addressed in order to resolve the problem.

Once you've determined what is causing a problem, it's time to come up with possible alternative solutions. Sometimes this involves teamwork, since two (or more) minds are often better than one.

It's rare that a single strategy is the obvious route to solving a complex problem; devising a set of alternatives helps you to cover your bases and reduce your risk exposure should the first strategy you implement fail.

Depending upon the nature of the problem and your chain of command, evaluating the best solutions may be performed by assigned teams, team leads, or forwarded upward to major corporate decision makers.

Whoever makes the decision must evaluate potential costs, required resources, and possible barriers to successful solution implementation.

Once a course of action has been decided upon, it must be implemented, along with benchmarks that can quickly and accurately

determine whether it's working to solve a problem.

Plan implementation also typically involves alerting personnel to changes in their standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Once a solution is implemented, the best problem-solvers have systems in place to ascertain if and how quickly it's working.

This way, they know as soon as possible whether the issue has been resolved or, alternatively, whether they'll have to change their response to the problem mid-stream"(www.thebalancecareers.com,may11 2019).

Decision making is another skill I have been observing you need this skill when working in

a team if you want to efficiently get the job done.

“Decision making is a core skill that every employee will need to use at some stage in their career.

To prove you are good at decision making, you will need to make the best possible choice in the shortest time possible, as well as being able to show reasons that support your decisions.

Generally, the more senior the role, the more difficult these decisions become.

Many employees are forced to make complex decisions routinely as part of their job

description; sometimes these decisions must be made under intense pressure.

Therefore, employers need to know that the people they recruit can take the initiative when required and make good decisions in important situations.

In certain positions (e.g. management), decision making is a fundamental aspect of the role.

Consequently, employers need to measure the capability of an individual to make informed decisions.

Skills tests and activities through an interview or assessment centre are a great way to achieve this.

Of course, decision making is not just confined to a managerial role; it relates to almost every job at every level.

Good decisions are a crucial element of day-to-day business” (www.wikijob.co.uk, decision making, 2007).

Flexibility Is a skill I have been analysing you need this skill to allow you to be flexible when working with your co-workers.

“Flexibility is the capacity to adjust to short-term change quickly and calmly, so that you can deal with unexpected problems or tasks effectively.

Here are a few examples of how you might demonstrate it:

Offer to help another team member if you notice that he or she is overloaded.

Volunteer to cover a colleague's work while he is on leave.

Consider allowing people to work from home to help them achieve a better work/life balance.

When you come across a problem, offer up a variety of solutions that might fix it.

Flexibility involves having an open team cantered attitude and retaining a strong sense of identity and purpose” (www.mindtools.com, flexibility at work, 2014).

Critical thinking is a skill I have been looking at and why it is important to have in a work setting.

“What is critical thinking, it refers to the ability to analyse information objectively and make a reasoned judgment.

Critical thinking involves the evaluation of sources such as data, facts, observable phenomenon, and research findings.

Good critical thinkers can draw reasonable conclusions from a set of information and discriminate between useful and less useful details to solve a problem or decide.

Employers want job candidates who can evaluate a situation using logical thought and come up with the best solution.

Someone with critical thinking skills can be trusted to make decisions on his or her own and does not need constant handholding.

It's no surprise that critical thinking abilities are some of the most sought-after skills in almost every industry and workplace.

You can demonstrate critical thinking by using keywords related to this skill in your resume and cover letter, and during your

interview"(www.lifeskills.com,criticalthinking, february 14 2019).

Feelings

On this learning journey it's been rewarding to learn all the different types of employment skills.

I thought I would find it challenging to learn new skills, but I have been pleasantly surprised that it has been an enjoyable lifelong experience.

Evaluation

The positive thing in this experience is progressing new employment skills that I am hopeful to take what I've learnt and implement it in a business environment.

One of the bad experiences I have had while being on this course is, I've been referred for unfair practice for my academic and employability skills assignment.

I worked very hard on this assignment as I have with all my assessments, so I do not understand why I've had to resit it.

I also thought I would have been given the opportunity for it to be explained to me and I could also explain myself in a face to face meeting as It can be hard to articulate what you mean through an email.

This has deflated me and made me feel very sad, but I will keep on going and do what I need

to do to pass this course as I have not come this far to fail.

On this course I have appreciated learning new employment skills I have had challenging moments but have always been able to overcome them.

Analysis

I have analysed that having these skills will boost my career and will make me someone that an employer would like to have in their team.

Conclusion

There are a lot of different ways of obtaining vital information, what I could have done better is spent more time on my researching.

References

www.lifeskills.com.critical thinking, February 14, 2019

www.mindtools.com, flexibility at work,2014

www.wikijob.co.uk,decision making,2007

www.thebalancecareers.com,may11 2019