

Ben_Hawker_Assessment_1_Submission

by Ben Hawker

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L5 – Changemakers: Building your Personal
Brand for Sustainable Employment

(ACCA5035)

Assessment 1

Promotional Website

[14] – [21]

Here's the link to my promotional website that I designed:

<https://benoharaanimation.wixsite.com/ben-o-hara-vfx>

Using the help of a template and placeholder images, I created the design of the website to be minimal but still eye-catching. Using a very limited palette, two fonts and 3 font sizes to keep the design consistent, but I tried to make the most of each colour by alternating the primary and secondary. I also optimised the site for mobile, since after doing some research, I learned that a large percentage of visitors to the site will be using their mobile. I also focused on making the site easy-to-use and still effective so visitors can explore or go straight to where they want to be in only a small number of clicks. And finally, I advertised my most important content on the home page as well as making sure my contact details and socials were omnipresent - located on the footer.

For its future purpose, I intend to utilise this website going forward to help promote myself and my brand in the future, hopefully soon replacing the placeholder images with my own work.

Zander Letter

[1] – [13]

Dear Mr. Zander,

I received my first because I allowed myself to do my best. It came as a result of my having analysed and scrutinised my lifestyle, and then applying suitable changes and techniques to ensure I could complete my assignments to the best of my ability.

The main challenges I faced that hindered me was my poorly managed time, my inefficient lifestyle, and my addiction to gaming. Despite this shaky start to the year however, around November/December time, I began to do research into methods and techniques to improve my productivity and to create good habits; putting them into action is what allowed me to be as productive and happy with myself as I am now.

I firstly wanted to tackle my very large issue with self-confidence. I often held myself to impossibly high standards, and then becoming quickly annoyed at myself when those targets were not met. This meant that I would focus on my own failure rather than the work itself. I carried out some research into fixing this issue and found several ideas and techniques that I decided to employ, the first one being practicing mindfulness. This meant I focused closely on my breathing and allowed my negative thoughts to flow, realising that they are just that and that “I am not my thoughts” [1]. Thinking more rationally about those expectations, whenever I could feel myself being too hard on myself, meant I could put them aside and instead look at what good things I had done and completed instead. This greatly increased not only productivity, but my general mood also.

I wanted to try to be kinder to myself, allowing myself to have off-days and not constantly questioning myself. Instead of those negative actions, I reviewed the work that I had been able to complete and celebrated what I had done. At the beginning, this meant only small bits of work, but as I grew more confident and more used to it, I began to produce more and more work and therefore got more and more pleased with myself. And when I did have the odd off-day, I treated myself kindly and allowed my mind to rest and recover ready for the next day. When distractions happened and I lost focus, I then returned “gently” [2] to the task and not forcefully. Allowing my thoughts to focus more on the work and less on negative ones about myself.

I also took steps to improve my general lifestyle to keep myself healthy and to improve my mindset. Often when work wouldn’t go to plan, I took outdoor breaks, and time to do my other hobbies like photography, learning Spanish, and maybe joining a new club. I worked in a time to exercise, made better sleeping habits, and I even made an evening routine, which helped me more effectively manage my productivity in the latter stages of the day.

When it came to time management, I liked making plans, but I often included too much to do per day. This led to me feeling increasingly disappointed in myself when I would inevitably not finish these plans. Going forward, I changed my plans to include less content and instead more achievable goals, this improved my mood and mindset, and led to me being more productive overall as I would often find that I had more room after completing a daily plan to do a bit extra.

When planning for future projects and anything else, after doing some research, I decided to include these key ideas: small deadlines, SMART targets, and prioritising.

Small deadlines meant creating my own deadlines for assignments that included smaller parts of the main deadline. This meant I would procrastinate less, and it also allowed me to utilise my ability to focus more and work faster while under pressure.

Using SMART targets allowed me to break down my to-do lists into more achievable and rational goals within the set time frame. Then completing said goals greatly improved my mood and productivity.

I also tried the technique of prioritising, whether it meant prioritising items on my to-do list or tasks that I had planned. "Eat the biggest frog first" said Mark Twain [6], aka do the biggest and most important task first (the one that I was most likely to procrastinate over made it to the top of that list often) that way it made my to do lists seem much more manageable and it served to brighten my mood.

In terms of improving my general productivity and organisation, I used the ideas of Stephen Duneier [7] and Francesco Cirillo's "Pomodoro Technique" [6]. Stephen Duneier says to break down your tasks and goals into small steps. He says that as you complete your smaller tasks, you'll eventually complete the big one. The Pomodoro Technique suggests breaking down your time into smaller and more manageable chunks. In this case it's 25 minutes with 5 minutes of rest. What this allowed me to do was to work with more concentration and determination for 25 solid minutes, and then take a break for my brain as any longer and my mind would likely start to lose focus. It also says that after every 4 periods or "Pomodoros", you take a longer break (from 15-30 minutes). This greatly helped my short attention span and general lack of concentration since I only had to focus on working for short periods of time.

My biggest issue was my gaming addiction, here's how I tackled that issue: As previously said, I broke down my necessary tasks into smaller tasks that I could focus on easier; I limited the games I played only to non-time-consuming games; I used games as a reward for completing tasks rather than my main enjoyment; I replaced that hobby with other hobbies such as starting a blog, a YouTube channel, photography, drawing and experimenting with VFX and other online graphics and creative outlets. I also introduced exercise and reading into my routine to limit the gaming that I did. To be more productive, I tried the technique of temptation bundling, which meant I could only play certain games if I had attempted to complete certain tasks, making sure I allowed for flexibility.

To conclude, I am more than pleased with the results I have achieved, but more so that I was able to put myself in a state where I can be so productive and to have such a good mindset. With how confident I am now; I am determined for whatever task is yet to come.

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FINAL GRADE

74/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

1. Engagement With Literature Skills (70%)

A good amount of research has been submitted in a bibliography alongside the e-portfolio. The bibliography covers a range of topics from work ethic to web design. This is good practice academically for next year, but getting into the habit of collecting your research should also enhance the work you produce, and in turn raise confidence in your own abilities. Good work.

2. Knowledge & Understanding Skills (72%)

A good appreciation of the purpose and functionality of a website is evidenced in the work. Navigation tools are intuitive and prominent and each category of content has a dedicated section that can be visited. Placeholder imagery is okay here – we're looking at the design/layout and basic functionality here.

An understanding of the Zander letter as a concept is evident in the submitted work – it is reflective and written in past-tense, with solutions provided for challenges that have been identified. It is an abstract concept to follow but it can be useful when done right.

3. Cognitive & Intellectual Skills (72%)

An analysis of your web design has been provided alongside the website – this is good to see as it provides a bit of context and justification to your design thinking and intentions.

Critical thinking is evident in the Zander letter, with suggestions made to overcome some of the areas you identified as challenges or weaknesses. Inclusion of independent learning is also evidenced, as you have looked at and applied the Pomodoro technique to your work ethic, and followed the advice of Mark Twain and Stephen Dunier about prioritising and breaking big challenges into smaller tasks. This is a very good example of the exercise being completed correctly – hopefully you'll find that your discoveries and methodologies help you in reality to work harder, but most importantly, feel better too.

4. Practical Application Skills (83%)

The website design is clean and easy to navigate with a consistent design for navigation throughout – the ability to move between any part of the site to another is essential. It is also a good 'extra feature' to include an option to navigate to the home page by clicking on your logo. The colour scheme fits in with your other work, so hopefully this will help expand your presence online.

The Zander letter is written clearly and easy to follow, with sources of information and advice obtained from external sources. Good work.

5. Transferrable Skills for Life and Professional Practice (72%)

A well-presented e-portfolio has been submitted via Turnitin within a specified date that satisfies the assessment criteria.

The website uses branding developed earlier in the module – this should help promote a unified and strong foundation for your personal branding.

The Zander letter is presented well, with appropriate referencing and no evidence of significant grammatical errors. Good work.

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