

Module Name :Professional Career Development

Lecturer :Joanna Walsh

Student Name : Valentina Obreja

Student number :1808708

Executive summary

Understanding professional development and implementing the same in life is a good example of using educational skills in real life. The present work shows my own reflection while establishing and working in a construction company that I and my husband is running. It is a small business, and I aim to make it big and expanded to make more profit. The current work will highlight different aspects of construction industry and its development.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
-------------------	---

Discussion.....	3
Analysis	4
Conclusion	17
References.....	18
Appendix.....	21

Introduction

My name is Valentina Obreja and I am 31 years of age. I run a construction business with my husband. The strength of employees in our company is 12. We want to expand our business and increase profit and surpass our competitors. In a world which is inspired and led by competitiveness, a technical diploma is essential since it indicates that a person has minimum understanding of construction as a subject since they were able to complete their coursework and prove their competency. Joining the family business may be incidental but a full-fledged degree and a personal development plan can help someone in gaining the kind of knowledge required in the competitive world of employment opportunities. Trying to achieve a formal degree was the first step towards achieving a major academic goal or unlocking of a major milestone. Abraham Maslow in the year 1970 suggested that every individual must have an internal need in regards to personal development occurring through the process of self-actualisation (Fitzgerald, 2016). The theory or model says that every individual needs to see themselves as someone autonomous and competent having limitless potential for growth. It somehow strongly corresponds to my area of concern which is Continuous Personal Development (CPD).

Discussion

Identification of problem

Being in a profession of construction, I have faced many problems, while running my small construction organization. Such as:

- 1. Practical knowledge:** Though I have theoretical knowledge about the construction business, but I lack practical knowledge of working in this business sector. Therefore I need to improve this aspect through more working opportunities to make BCM construction a success.
- 2. Management of data and documents:** This business needs handling a lot of business related documents (Ilin *et al.*, 2016). Managing these documents is not an easy task, and I need to know how to manage every document related to the business. Through this approach, data management for BCM construction will become easier.
- 3. Finance management:** Running a business highly depends on the efficient finance management of the company. I am new to this business, and therefore I need to know about all the details of finance management to make the BCM construction successful in monetary returns.
- 4. Accountability:** As I am new to this working field with no previous experience, therefore my accountability for performing the duties related to my post may create question on my accountability. I need to develop personal skills to make BCM construction successful using my own capability of business generation.

Application of tools and techniques

To solve the above mentioned problems, I have gone through many suggestions and applied the following techniques:

- I am putting more effort to gain practical knowledge by going to the construction site and learning things.
- I am using different financial software to help me in managing financial works related to the company.

- Earlier, I used to schedule the works manually and faced many problems regarding it. But now with the advent of technology, I use project management apps that make the schedule perfectly balanced with all the associated factors.
- As regularly I come across the changing demand of the home owners, I also add “change cost” in the estimates, so that I can cover up the extra charges.
- To manage the huge amount of documents related with the business, I use Microsoft office, Microsoft excel sheets and save all the documents in cloud system. This way, I save all information related with the business without any fear of loss of information (Goulding *et al.*, 2015).

Analysis

Before working in a construction company, I analysed myself for my qualities that may act as my strengths and weakness. There are also many opportunities and threats while taking up this as a profession. I have a degree on this subject and therefore confident about the theoretical knowledge of construction that can give me a desired outcome. As the requirement of more houses and other constructional operations are increasing due to rapid urbanization, it will help me to earn profit for the business. I know that the quality of work speaks the last word in the service sector. Therefore I focus on the use of technologies that ensure this quality. I also have good designing skills that will help me to achieve good customers. The weakness that I have is the practical knowledge that can give my competitors advantage Smart use of theoretical implementation can help me to solve any problem (Pimenova *et al.*, 2016). To grow my business, I need to make a good choice of vendors and suppliers as they give raw materials. Also, choice of good safety system and insurance policy is important to stay out of any danger and make more profit from the business (refer to appendices).

Overview of the company

I and my husband have jointly established a construction company, named as BCM construction, which has its head office at Westminster, London (BCM 2019). Presently, the company has only 12 workers, and categorized as a small enterprise, but we have a goal to make this company bigger so that we can deal with bigger projects and make us fortune. Our company always uses latest technology such as use of virtual realities, drones and devices such as metal exoskeletons,

Construction wearable to ensure both the workers safety as well as quality work that can satisfy any customers need (Bui *et al.*, 2016). We have already established our reputation in this sector and with better idea and designs, plans and skilled workers; we hope to spread our name, so that we can get more projects to work with. Our working method based on turnkey solutions, has generated a good brand image and thus more potential customers are showing interest in our company. We work dedicatedly to improve our company reputation and revenue.

Self-evaluation life in time

To enrich my qualities as a construction business owner, I need to develop new skills and increase my understanding on this subject, so that I can gain competitive advantages over other companies and gain the trust of my workers. I have made a self-evaluation of life in time.

Daily evaluation	Target	Information	Evaluation process
Communication skill	Improve within two months	I have good communicational skills but I need to brush it up as the business demands more effective communication due to dealing with many people	Participate in group discussion
Mathematical knowledge	Improve within 3 months	In my educational course, I had mathematics as a subject, but I need to work on the practical problems that may come up during the designing of a structure. More practical implementation of theoretical knowledge is needed	Participate in online mathematical tests specially designed for construction purposes

Construction knowledge	Improve within two months	I have done my degree in this subject, and I enjoy construction works. But I know that there is a huge difference between practical and theoretical knowledge. Therefore I may need more knowledge to develop an insight about the subject.	Participate in more construction design making and show then to the teachers or other learned person to know about the mistakes and can make improvements through it.
Negotiation skills	Improve within one months	I am not a good negotiator in life. But in business, this holds immense importance, as regular dealing with suppliers, vendors, workers, home owners are required.	I need to practice it with other people to test my improvements
Computer knowledge	Improve within three months	I am not a very tech savvy person, therefore I need to make improvements	I shall take some computer courses that will help me to master over the different applications that may come handy during my day to day operations in business. These institutes arrange tests, which will make me understand my personal improvements in this regard.

Leadership skills	Improve within two months	I need to improve this skill, as due my age and	I shall evaluate myself through taking
		gender, I might be not taken seriously.	participation in different debates and extempore, so that I can build prompt speaking capability. Also I shall read more books on leadership, to gain more knowledge about it.

Table 1:Self-evaluation life in time

(Source: Created by author)

Personal development plan

Complete improvement also demand the sketch and implementation of a personal improvement plan which will guide me to improve in particular areas, to understand my goals and to make step by step progress. It is actually an action plan that helps to improve knowledge and personal abilities (Dainty *et al.*, 2017). The illustrative example of my personal development plan is given below:

Long term goals: Develop capabilities to run the construction business in an efficient form and to expand our business and grow our profit (Alaka *et al.*, 2016). Gain more experience to build competitive advantages

Short term goals: To improve leadership, public speaking, negotiation skills, computer and other technological knowledge related with construction business

Goals	Objective	Resources required	Measurement	Target date

Improve leadership	Establish myself as the leader of the business so	Training on leadership skills, reading books,	Successful completion of the training and	31/10/2019
--------------------	---	---	---	------------

	that managers and employees have faith on me and work according to my direction	journals on this subject	obedience of staff	
--	---	--------------------------	--------------------	--

Public speaking	Preparation and delivery of presentations on daily basis in front of people	Connection of the business with the stakeholder, improvement understanding and knowledge about the business and its associated effects	Successful completion of the presentation, positive feedbacks, constructive and suggestive questions from the audience	30/09/2019
-----------------	---	--	--	------------

Negotiation skills	Establish myself as a good and practical negotiator, s that I can make good deals with the vendors, suppliers, workers, home owners and other stakeholders	Connection with business persons, assignment with project management duties	Successful deal finalization with the vendors and business associates, making profit for the company	30/09/2019
--------------------	--	---	--	------------

Computer knowledge	Clear the conception about different applications,	Training and certification course	Successful of completion of the training	31/10/2019
	programs that help the business system and make it easy to operate. To know the importance and implementation process of these application, use of web			

Technological knowledge	To make timely development in technological sector, to give the worker a safe environment as well as ensuring timely completion of the work	Training and certification course	Successful completion of the training	31/10/2019
Practical experience	Successful delivery of at least 5 projects	Assignment to project management duties	Schedule variance, successful budget making, good design making, good terms with stakeholders	31/10/2019

Table 2: Personal development plan
(Source: Created by author)

Review of the word of work expectations

A lot of expectations are created from the business owner in a construction company. There are certain objectives' in every business and our construction business has focused on two goals. One is to expand our small business to every area of the country and make the name common in household, and the second is to grow revenue with this business (Behera *et al.*, 2015). Therefore to meet the goal, I need to align my own skills with the objectives so that it becomes clear to me that which of my qualities are acting as my strengths that can help the company to grow and the loopholes that are creating weaknesses for the business that I need to improve. My business also requires me to lead my small pack of staff, so that they can collaboratively finish a work within a

time without wasting any resources. Therefore, my communication skill will help them and my knowledge in this subject will guide them about the work process. Also it's my duty to make deals with the sub-contractors and vendors which I need to perform through good negotiation skills. My improvements in this section are very essential to make good deals for the business. I need to establish good communication among the workers so that any work can be completed without any conflicts. In order to grow the business, I need to recruit more staff in the business, for which I need to select potential workers based on their experience and skills. I expect that my experience with time will give me competitive advantages that will help me to build my own market and gain the trust of the customers.

Skill for particular profession

There are certain skills that are required to do well in any profession (Liu *et al.*, 2016). For the construction industry, there are also some skills and expertise required as described below:

Building and Mechanical Knowledge: This is the first and foremost thing that comes as the strength and stamina of the construction business. It is essential to know how to do the job which a person can develop through training courses and apprenticeships (Ozorhon and Oral, 2016).

Strength and Stamina: It is very important to understand that construction work needs much physical input that needs much stamina and energy to deal with. To meet the physical tasks of the job, a construction worker should be well built to withstand the labour (Chirkunova *et al.*, 2016).

Math and Language Literacy: The construction designs are full of different mathematical designs, structures and calculations. Therefore, good understanding of mathematics, algebra is needed so that a worker understands well the use of raw materials in a proportionate way and dimension related structural designs (Lee *et al.*, 2016).

Communication: Any construction work is done involving many people. Therefore, it is very essential to make good coordination among them so that no misconception or ambiguity arises while performing the job (Pekuri *et al.*, 2015). Good practice of oral as well as written skill is important to manage these situations. All the workers should express their doubts to the manager or leader so that no mistake happens. Also, they should report the manager on daily basis, if there is any serious issue that can hamper the speed or quality of the work.

Adaptation with Technology: With the advancement of technology, new machines and new software, apps, and devices are coming into existence that is making construction business easier and seamless. Therefore, the worker should be comfortable and curious enough to learn and use these technologies to for their various advantages and to save time (Abuzeinab *et al.*, 2017).

Critical Reasoning Skills: The worker should have good reasoning skills to understand the difference between right and wrong. This also helps to avoid any accident in the work place. This also requires less supervision and is considered as an important quality that helps to make good career in this profession.

Learning ability: It is important to learn new things on a daily basis, as in every project new application of technology, design and other things are done which increases the knowledge of the worker (Ulutaş *et al.*, 2016).

Organisation: Construction works are related with many tools, appliances, equipment etc. Therefore, organising them in such a way, that everyone gets access to it is important.

Profession development plan

Professional development plan is an important document that helps to identify career development strategies to meet organizational goals as well as improve personal skill of meeting targets. This roadmap helps to outline the strengths and weaknesses, needs to improve the present situation and guide to use available resources (Rostamiet *al.*, 2015). Writing my own PDP required a lot of selfanalysis and self-awareness and through step by step progress; I have made the plan as described below:

Step 1: Current position	The company is very small right now, just having a head office and 12 working staff. The company manages small works which requires additional help from the subcontractors
--------------------------	---

Step 2: Future position	The company has potential to grow and expand. As the business owners of the company, I want to grow the business in many parts of the country to make a good brand that ensures good quality of services with better and innovative designs and make strong revenue structure.
Step 3: Gather information	As the business owner, I understand that to grow the business, at first we need to grow our knowledge and learn different competitive aspects that can give the company an essential boost. Vast information about the use of latest technology, use of safety measures, lowest
	premium insurance schemes etc. are needed to make good decisions regarding the company. Also list of good suppliers and vendors are needed to make fruitful contracts. Information about the construction needs are required to make timely move to get new contracts for the business

Step 4: Set goals	It is important to set goals before starting the work. In the construction business it is very important. The goals of the business are i) to finish a work within time frame ii) To implement good design iii) To deliver customers satisfaction through quality of the work iv) To make a good action plan and budget plan that serves the organization goal of profit generation
Step 5: List of skills and experience	There are a lot of people associated with the construction business and therefore there is a huge list of skills and expertise that this service business requires. As an example, all the construction workers should be well built as this needs much physical tasks to be completed. This also requires good mathematical knowledge to understand the different designs.
Step 7: Identify possible resources	In construction business, a lot of dealing with the resources is encountered on a regular basis. The first need is the skilled workers, that are collected from agencies or direct interview

	method. Next are the raw materials that are cement, brick, iron, plaster etc. which should be of good quality and bought with a standard rate from the supplier. This knowledge is important and negotiation plays a major role here.
Step 8: Development of action plan and timeline	Development of the action plan and budget plan are done in this next step as these are important to make the estimation of time and cost to finish a project. The final deal between the home owner and the company is finalized on the basis of these two. Therefore meticulous checking is important so that no error remains in the plan. The action plan is framed keeping in mind the requirements and the design of the work, whereas the budget plan is done to estimate the probable cost, so that the profit calculation could be done in advance.
Step 9: Execution of plan	After making the plan of work and after getting the sanction for it, now comes the time of action. This time, all the staff work in a collaborative way, strictly following the work plan and report if any deviation or error is detected. The workers work aiming to finish the work within time without compromising the quality.

Step 10: Assessment of progress	After the project is finished, it is time for the assessment of the project, in the form of feedback. The satisfaction of the customer ensure more business and companies should ensure this by quality control
---------------------------------	---

Table 3: Professional development plan

(Source: Created by author)

Specific of the profession

In a construction business, there are a lot of people associated with the business. Our company searches for the most efficient and skilled labour so that we can give the highest quality of service, through their dedicated work methodology (Leow and Mao, 2017). These workers can be categorised as:

Carpenter: Carpenters deal with the cutting, shaping, outlining and installing basically wooden materials during the construction phase with different techniques such as hammering, drilling, nailing sawing etc (Tan *et al.*, 2015). Though they are synonymous with the wooden work, but now they are also using other materials as there is availability of other durable materials that the customers want to install in their homes.

Electrician: These people make the wiring and makes circuit in a building from the very preliminary phase of any construction. They also remodel electrical systems per the customer's demand. They make several ideas which fit the requirement and make amenities for the electrical system.

Mason: They make the building blocks and any construction business is incomplete without them. They take a serious role while making the blue print of the construction and using brick, cement, marble and stones they bring the dream into reality. They understand the whole design as units and glue these units to make one final structure.

Plumber: Just as electricians, plumbers also play an important role in construction business, while making channels for drinking water, sewage, and draining. They also install pipes and rework systems in the first phase of a construction, so no later rebuilding is needed to complete the structure.

Welder: With the help of electrical power, they blast a superheated electrical current—to fuse materials together. Basically it is used to fuse metals for designing or safety purposes. They also need specially designed clothes and eye wares to protect themselves from the high energy flashes.

Glazier: They are associated with the glass cutting and fitting services, which are very essential as wood is being replaced in many apartments and offices due to change of tastes (Lu *et al.*, 2015). They make windows, skylights, display cases, and with the advent of time, an increase in making the entire exterior surface of towering office buildings and condos with glass has been noticed, making them inseparable from the construction business.

Plasterer: After completion of the whole work, these persons plaster the walls and colour the walls and other parts of a building to make it good looking and presentable (Ojelabiet *al.*, 2018). Their choice of colours and design making capability ensures their position in the industry.

Our company has all the associated workers, which are best of the category. We dream to expand our business by using their skills.

Conclusion

I have come to realise that I have it in me to align myself with the core values of the company which is being on the safer side, caring for the customers and taking pride in the company's level of success. To narrow down everything that has been explained beforehand, the company wishes to excel or ace in every venture that they undertake. As far as career manoeuvres are concerned, I am still developing my ideas about what position I want to be in and the personal development plan helps me achieve that. The most important aspect of it is that my expectations from my own self are very realistic since I am fully aware of the kind of work related problems there exists in this field. Since the company (BCM Construction Ltd) has won awards being a principal contractor and being a leader in design, electrical and civil engineering services I want to make sure I make no compromises while serving for the same. Documentation of the personal development plan is

a useful way of tending to my own needs for achieving perfection. The reflection that I have made may help me in learning new skills in the future. I have come to understand that goals cannot be framed to be achieved without factoring in time therefore I have set out to make this plan rather made it in a time-bound way (corresponding to SMART objectives in business which is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Applicable, Realistic and Time-bound).

References

- Abuzeinab, A., Arif, M. and Qadri, M.A., 2017. Barriers to MNEs green business models in the UK construction sector: An ISM analysis. *Journal of cleaner production*, 160, pp.27-37.
- Alaka, H.A., Oyedele, L.O., Owolabi, H.A., Ajayi, S.O., Bilal, M. and Akinade, O.O., 2016. Methodological approach of construction business failure prediction studies: a review. *Construction Management and Economics*, 34(11), pp.808-842.
- BCM 2019. *About* Available at: <https://www.bcmconstruction.co.uk/about/> [Accessed 29 July, 2019]
- Behera, P., Mohanty, R.P. and Prakash, A., 2015. Understanding construction supply chain management. *Production Planning & Control*, 26(16), pp.1332-1350.

Bui, N., Merschbrock, C. and Munkvold, B.E., 2016. A review of Building Information Modelling for construction in developing countries. *Procedia Engineering*, 164, pp.487-494.

Chirkunova, E.K., Kireeva, E.E., Kornilova, A.D. and Pschenichnikova, J.S., 2016. Research of instruments for financing of innovation and investment construction projects. *Procedia Engineering*, 153, pp.112-117.

Dainty, A., Leiringer, R., Fernie, S. and Harty, C., 2017. BIM and the small construction firm: a critical perspective. *Building research & information*, 45(6), pp.696-709.

Goulding, J.S., Pour Rahimian, F., Arif, M. and Sharp, M.D., 2015. New offsite production and business models in construction: priorities for the future research agenda. *Architectural Engineering and Design Management*, 11(3), pp.163-184.

Ilin, I.V., Kalinina, O.V., Levina, A.I. and Iliashenko, O.Y., 2016. Approach to Organizational Structure Modelling in Construction Companies. In *MATEC Web of Conferences*(Vol. 86, p. 05028). EDP Sciences.

Lee, K.W., Han, S.H. and Park, C.Y., 2016, January. A data-driven approach to country classifications in the international construction market. In *Construction Research Congress 2016*(pp. 1332-1342).

Leow, Y.S. and Mao, X., 2017. Forecasting Corporate Business Failure with an Innovative Model: An Application on UK Construction Companies.

Liu, G., Li, K., Zhao, D. and Mao, C., 2016. Business model innovation and its drivers in the Chinese construction industry during the shift to modular prefabrication. *Journal of management in engineering*, 33(3), p.04016051.

Lu, W., Ye, M., Flanagan, R. and Ye, K., 2015. Corporate social responsibility disclosures in international construction business: trends and prospects. *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management*, 142(1), p.04015053.

Ojelabi, R.A., Afolabi, A.O., Oyeyipo, O., Tunji-Olayeni, P.F. and Adewale, B.A., 2018. Data exploration of social client relationship management (CRM 2.0) adoption in the Nigerian construction business. *Data in brief*, 18, pp.1471-1476.

Ozorhon, B. and Oral, K., 2016. Drivers of innovation in construction projects. *Journal of construction engineering and management*, 143(4), p.04016118.

Pekuri, A., Pekuri, L. and Haapasalo, H., 2015. Business models and project selection in construction companies. *Construction Innovation*, 15(2), pp.180-197.

Pimenova, A., Kuzmina, S., Morozova, N. and Mottaeva, A., 2016. The functional model approach to the consulting for vertically-integrated construction group. In *MATEC Web of Conferences* (Vol. 73, p. 07018). EDP Sciences.

Rostami, A., Sommerville, J., Wong, I.L. and Lee, C., 2015. Risk management implementation in small and medium enterprises in the UK construction industry. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, 22(1), pp.91-107.

Tan, Y., Ochoa, J.J., Langston, C. and Shen, L., 2015. An empirical study on the relationship between sustainability performance and business competitiveness of international construction contractors. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 93, pp.273-278.

UlutaşDuman, D., Giritli, H. and McDermott, P., 2016. Corporate social responsibility in construction industry: A comparative study between UK and Turkey. *Built Environment Project and Asset Management*, 6(2), pp.218-231.

Appendix

Strengths	Weaknesses
• I have an educational degree which helps me to understand the business more precisely • I have always tried to make innovative construction designs that suits the taste of the home owner as well as budget friendly • I have chosen a sector of work, which is very essential from the point of view of growing population and rapid urbanization • I ensure that all the services are high quality, and done within given time frame ensuring customers satisfaction • I have focused on the turnkey solutions that will help to grow the business	• As I am working based on my theoretical knowledge, therefore it may lag me behind dealing with practical problems. • I am not a technology savvy person, so understanding new technologies regarding the business, causes lack of confidence in me.

Opportunities	Threats
• I have chance to grow the business and create a good brand image, so people come to us with their projects. • Though I have theoretical knowledge, this can give me advantage, if I can apply the knowledge perfectly to solve any problem. • I can use assistant to manage with the technology related problems, so that I can put more emphasis on the design	• I need to be more careful while dealing with suppliers and vendors about the raw materials, so that they do not supply substandard material, that can cause reputation issues. • There are a lot of other small construction companies arising in the market
making part, which I am confident about.	• The cost to the company are increasing in terms of insurance and safety measures