



Personal Development Plan

by



BCs Cloud Computing

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. PERSONAL OVERVIEW

In a constantly changing social and business environment a personal development for an individual can be quite challenging. Given that, let me tell you something little about myself. My name is [REDACTED] and I come from a small Eastern European country that is Bulgaria. Since young age I have been interested in technology and my father being an electrician always helped develop my curiosity even more. That is how I became an amateur radio operator (or ham radio operator).

Amateur Radio (ham radio) is a popular hobby and service that brings people, electronics and communication together. People use ham radio to talk across town, around the world, or even into space, all without the Internet or cell phones. It's fun, social, educational, and can be a lifeline during times of need (American Radio Relay League, 2018). In short words ham radio is a way of making long distance contacts with other amateur radio operators across the world, using the suitable equipment for that (radio station, antenna, amplifier etc.).

There are different ways (modes) of making a contact. Some of them are simply talking to each other (SSB), sending pictures through radio frequencies (SSTV). But most recently digital mode started to gain higher popularity. In simple words this means we can connect our personal computer to our radio station and using the suitable software we can synchronize our computer to the frequency of the radio and thus send signals away through our own equipment.

These changes imply that amateur radio operators, including myself, should broaden their knowledge in wireless communications, most recent developments in radio electronics, software development etc. One of the most important knowledge foundations of course is physics. Particularly understanding how radio waves work, change and travel across the atmosphere.

All is connected. Amateur radio is all about wireless communication between individuals. Which is closely related to my other passion - networking.

Given all that has been said, in order for me to develop my technological curiosity and connect my two biggest passions I have set some fundamental goals for myself.

This paper is focused on my personal vision on what my future should look like and a personal development plan to help me fulfil my goals. It is based on the PDP presentation exercise conducted in class of Academic and Employability Skills module of Cloud Computing Course.

II. SKILLS EVALUATION

1. PDP PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF KEY SKILLS

Based on the in class exercise mentioned above there are a couple of different sets of skills needed for completing my aims. On one side we have the purely technical set of skills:

Long-term time frame technical skills

- **Network Principals**
- **Software Development**
- **Computational thinking**
- **Information Engineering**
- **Cloud Computing Technologies**
- **Database Management Systems**
- **Network Operating Systems and Security**

All of the listed above and many more are practical and theoretical skills and knowledge that can be obtained from Cloud Computing Course. This is the main reason for me to apply and have the determination to finish the course with high score as this would give me excellent employment prospects in network engineering, network administration and other positions in this field. Another positive aspect is that recent statistics show that the vast majority of graduates from the Computing portfolio are following their chosen career paths within six months of graduating (UWTSD, 2019). Also this set of skills would give me a better understanding on how wireless communications work which would be useful for broadening my knowledge needed for practicing my hobby.

On the other side in long term there are some personality skills which need to be mastered:

Long-term time frame personal skills

- **Creativity**

According to a study conducted by Adobe (2016) about businesses that invest in creativity:

- 78% of the participants say that creativity increases productivity
- 78% have satisfied customers and 80% provide a better customer experience
- 83% foster innovation
- 73% would be financially successful, (Adobe LTD, 2019).

Along with that creativity would contribute to my work on the amateur radio software application which is one of my long-term goals (Table 1). Being more creative means being more innovative, executing more new ideas and enriching the general vision of the project.

Being more creative makes people better...

(% GLOBAL, TOP 2 BOX)

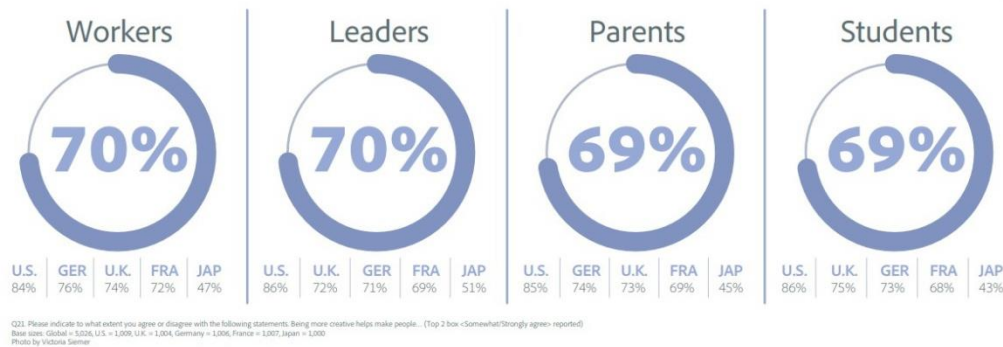


Figure 1

(Source: Adobe State of Create Study, 2016)

- **Problem solving and Decision making**

This particular skill is necessary for both my networking career and developing my personal project. It is fundamental for me to master quick decision making and logical thinking in order to prosper in my desired career path. And resolving issues is the basic skill a person would need starting a new project, developing, finishing and maintaining the project afterwards successfully.

- **Teamwork**

The beauty of networking is the ability to connect to people or devices despite their location, despite the distance and all the limitations of country boundaries. Being able to communicate to people from all around the world gives me an opportunity, a chance to gather a team of knowledgeable, bright and creative people with skills most suitable for my project. People that maybe I would not be able to meet in my daily life. Being able to create a trustworthy and strong relationship between them and myself is key in good teamwork. And good teamwork is key for creating great projects.

Teamwork is effective to follow the targets and goals of the developing the application process. The effective teamwork skill of individual is needed to participate for considering the opportunity to engage with strengths and weakness of individual (Chuang, 2017, May).

- **Leadership skills**

In order to assign the tasks according to the team members capabilities I need to be able to evaluate their skills correctly. Next step is analysing and performing a follow-up review on the completed tasks, which would lead to giving objective feedback for each team member's performance, thus allowing me to improve in general the job performed. All of these processes are directly connected to the level of leadership skills I possess.

2. MIND TOOLS METHOD FOR EVALUATION OF OWN SKILLS

Evaluating personal skills using the Mind Tools - Test Your Skills Questionnaire. Answering 15 statements by giving a subjective and honest opinion about your own capabilities, this simple test helps with identifying one's potential and weaknesses by giving basic directions on how to improve our employability skills. Own results of the test are as shown:

Calculate My Total

Total = 48

Leadership and Management

(Questions 5, 7, 12)

Your score is 13 out of 15

Whether you're in a formal leadership position or not, you need good leadership and management skills if you're going to make best use of the opportunities open to you. (After all, you can get much, much more done when you have the help of other people.) The good news is that you can learn how to lead and manage effectively!

Problem Solving and Decision Making

(Questions 2, 10, 14)

Your score is 4 out of 15

Problem solving and decision making are two areas where you'll need to excel to be a success in your career. (Together with people skills, they're what make up "good judgment" and "wisdom.") Like leadership and management, these two areas are closely related.

Communication Skills

(Questions 9, 11, 13)

Your score is 10 out of 15

The ability to communicate clearly is key to your success, whatever role you're in.

Time Management

(Questions 1, 4, 6, 15)

Your score is 16 out of 20

Time management is one of the most important career skills areas. Not only does it help you to be more productive; you'll also be much less stressed!

It's also important that you avoid procrastination - this is when you put off tasks and activities that you should be focusing on right now.

Personal Mastery

(Questions 3, 8)

Your score is 5 out of 10

When you know how to "lead yourself" and make good choices for your future, you'll be that much further ahead when it comes to the other skills areas that we've already looked at.

No matter how positive you feel now, it's also important to learn how to deal with negative thinking . From there, you can build on your self confidence and self esteem until you can achieve goals that really matter.

(Source of self evaluation test: www.mindtools.com, accessed 03/01/2019)

III. GOALS AND WAYS TO ATCHIEVE THEM

	Long-Term Time Frame		Short-Term Time Frame	
My Goals	➤ Career in Network Engineering ➤ Developing Amateur radio software application		➤ Participate in the hobby ➤ Improve personal skills ➤ Finish Cloud Computing Course	
Skills and Knowledge to be learned	<u>Technical</u> • Network principals • Software development • Database maintaining	<u>Personal</u> • Decision making • Team work • Creativity • Leadership skills	<u>Technical</u> • Radio Electronics • Radio communications regulations	<u>Personal</u> • Communication skills • Time Management • Presentation skills • Interpersonal skills • Improve language vocabulary

Table 1

(Source: Created by author)

In order to fulfil my aims determined in Table 1, I need to improve some technical skills, and also some personal skills based on the self evaluation test in section II. and my own analysis during preparation for my PDP Presentation.

The end goals are clear. For the technical skills, for both long-term and short-term goals I have made the life changing decision to apply for Cloud Computing Course and finish with the highest score possible. But finishing the course itself is not going to be enough. I have created a simple learning plan and also with the help of what I have learnt in Academic and Employability Skills Module I have the intention to master the self-reflective learning method.

My simple action plan includes to incorporate much more outside of the course reading, approximately 2-3 hours a day, at least 4 days a week and keep a self-reflective journal in which I would store my thoughts on the new things I have learnt. Then implement my new knowledge in the lectures from the course. The outside of the course learning itself would include:

- additional practical exercises on what we have studied the same day in class;
- different interpretations of the modules' theoretical parts, for better understanding;
- in addition, reading radio electronics journals;
- practising my hobby and implementing the knowledge I've gained from the course;

For improving the personal skills a quite different approach has to be taken. From the self evaluation test is clear that I scored quite low on Problem Solving and Decision Making section, as well as the Personal Mastery.

• Problem Solving and Decision Making

The team from MindTools.com suggest a few useful techniques to help a person dig into the roots of a problem and eventually get to the right decision. One of them is Root Cause Analysis (Mind Tools LTD, 2006,2015). This method determines five simple steps to getting into the basic cause of the problem. They also give a suitable template for making the process even easier:

Issue				Likely Root Cause			Possible Solutions					
Description	Source	Criticality		Description	Likelihood	Information	Description	Risks			Measure of Success	
		Level (High/Medium/Low)	Rationale		High/Medium/Low	Tests to Clarify		Description	Likelihood	Mitigation	Test	Results
Client not aware of project status	Client	Medium	Doesn't affect delivery but damaging to account	Status reports not being issued weekly because of lack of info from Project Mgr	High	Check with Program Office	Simplify info required for report so less time-consuming for PM to supply	Client feels report lacks detail	Medium	Agree detail-level required for new report with client	Check with client after four weeks	TBA

Table 2

(Source: Mind Tools LTD, 2006-2015)

Another useful tool they suggest is the 5 Whys technique. In its base lies the idea that after determining the basic issue, we can get to the root of the issue by simply asking the question "Why?" and after we get an answer, ask "Why?" again. This way we are to reach to a counter-measure for this problem not happening again. Asking "why?" sounds simple, but answering it requires thought and intelligent application. We need to search for answers that are grounded in fact: they must be accounts of things that have actually happened – not guesses at what might have happened (Mind Tools LTD, 2015).

• Personal Mastery (Interpersonal Skills)

Interpersonal skills can significantly contribute to my career growth. As a person working in the networking field I would be communicating with customers with different requirements, working in different business areas, finding out their interests and helping them in the process of making the right decision. Interpersonal skills would help me develop a strong relationship with customers and gain their trust towards me and my team. About a century and a half, fifty years ago almost all the success literature is focused on what could be called the Character Ethic as the foundation of success -

things like integrity, humility, fidelity, temperance, courage, justice, patience, simplicity, modesty (Covey, 1989, 2004, p. 26). My goal here is building a character around these paradigms.

- **Presentation Skills**

This is a skill that in my own opinion can be improved with practise and useful feedback from a mentor or a lecturer. This is the main thing I learnt from the in class exercise in which I had to prepare and give a short presentation on my Personal Development Plan. Practice builds confidence and confidence is something I lack since childhood.

- **Communication Skills**

Another skill I need to improve according to the self evaluation test is my communication skills. In particular - stage fright. Given that my hobby requires making contact with a lot of strangers on air, this is a skill I need to master. I have already taken a few steps about it. The most significant one is coming to the country and opening myself for new experiences with different people from all around the world, trying to be more sociable. Thus making little steps, talking in English as much as I can, I try to enrich my vocabulary and again gain higher self esteem.

IV. DATA PROTECTION

In the era of information technologies, digital data is everywhere. This makes it vulnerable to outside threats and protecting our own data is crucial for an individual or an organization. There are different types of threats when it comes to information systems.

On one side we have physical damaging or lost of hardware that carries our data. Such as natural disasters, vandalism or theft. Security measures for them are slightly different. While there is specific equipment especially to protect our systems from natural disasters, the security measures for vandalism or theft are going to be physically restricting access to the equipment.

On the other side we have to protect our software assets from outside threats. These would include computer viruses, malware, hacking or accidents caused by incorrect usage of the data software. Different protective measures can be taken here. For example, in order to put accidents to minimum we can determine clear instructions on how the software on our system should be used. We restrict the access only to trusted members of our team. Protection from viruses, malware and hackers in general is best done by installing a virus detection programs, firewall, intrusion detection programs. Other ways of keeping our data safe are creating passwords for sensitive information and encrypting.

Nevertheless encountering all of these threats could cause data loss and there is a common counter measure for that, which is creating backup for it. Concerning the protection of my own projects and work done during my time in university I have established a backup strategy according to which I save my data in three different places - on my personal computer, on a memory stick and on an internet cloud using a personal account. My personal computer is a safe place to store data in sense that it is protected by multiple software applications and passwords. It is stored in a safe establishment. And despite all these measures there is still a possibility of a natural disaster, theft or intrusive software attack. Here comes the use of a memory stick. Its compact, it can simply go into my pocket and it is not accessible for hackers or internet-related threats. But this makes it easy to be lost or even stolen.

And the last place that I would store my work is on the internet. Creating a personal account on a cloud in the global network with restricted access makes it inviolable for physical threats such as, theft, natural disasters or vandalism.

V. TIME MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION

What meaning do we put in the expression "time management"? In an era where we have multiple tips and tricks on how to manage time, where we have so many tools and technology, calendars and check lists to help us win more time and yet it seems like we are always behind on our work. It seems like we can never catch up. In one of his books Rory Vaden (2015) gives a different look on how people in modern day should change their perception of time management. We cannot really manage time, time continues on whether we like it or not. The key is how we manage our day to day tasks so we can open free time for tomorrow. This type of thinking he refers to as "multiplying time". Multiplying time is giving yourself the emotional permission to spend time on things today that will give you more time tomorrow (Vaden, How to Multiply Your Time, 2015). He gives a simple diagram for handling daily tasks in a way that will save us time for the future (Figure 2). If we take a task and think about how significant it is we have four options that we need to think about. First there is the option of elimination. If this task objectively thinking is something that can be eliminated, that means we shouldn't be afraid of saying no to it. If the task is not to be eliminated, then we should think about a way to automate it or delegate it. Automatisations and delegation are an investment in our time. If that task occurs again in the future, we are free of obligation of doing it ourselves because it is already automated or another person that we taught how to do it, would do it for us. This is one of the main ways to multiply our time. When we get to the end of the 'funnel' and none of the options are applicable, then we have two ways out. One is to do the task right now ourselves and the other one is to make the decision to do the task later.



Figure 2

(Source: Rory Vaden, 2015)

This type of approach is what I consider for myself useful. As a person who is trying to juggle between two jobs and university, I made the decision to eliminate one highly time consuming part of

my day to day tasks, which is one of my jobs. For future task management decisions I intend to use Rory Vaden's "Multiply your time" approach.

VI. CONCLUSION

The development of an individual is a long and quite difficult process. It needs a lot of work and time investing in shaping one into a valuable person and it is then when a career development plan can be created. Such that would bring the person to success.

In this paper, weaknesses were determined and ways to overcome them. Various skills were reviewed and also different techniques to improve them. A personal development plan has also been created which would help me improve as an individual in a constantly changing social environment and also shape a future career path full of success.

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VII. APPENDICES

1. PDP PRESENTATION



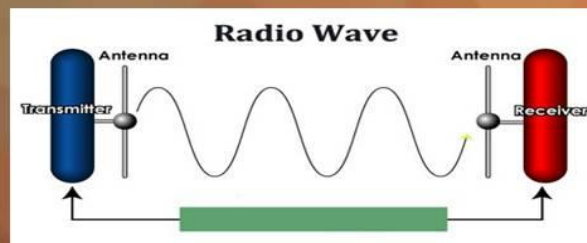
A little background

- Tech enthusiast
- Amateur radio operator
- Network configuration curiosity



Long term relationship with radio waves

- Career in network engineering
- Developing an Amateur radio software application



Skills to obtain or improve

Cloud Computing

- Network Principals
- Maintaining databases
- Software developing

Personal Skills

- Planning and organizing
- Problem Solving
- Team work
- Leadership Skills
- Creativity

Goals and skills to be improved in short term time frame

- Free time to practice hobby —> time management skills —> Academic and Employability Skills module
- Communication skills —> Improve English vocabulary —> socializing
- Presentation skills —> self confidence —> practice



THANK YOU!

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amateur_radio