

ACADEMIC AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

REFLECTIVE WRITING

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INTRODUCTION

Many times in our life we try to achieve a goal and we fail. It is part of the way, but many of those times could have been different having the knowledge about skills which are useful in every aspect of our daily life.

Reflective writing, critical thinking, research skills and CV writing are subjects that will help us to grow in our career and personal life. The development of those will make a huge difference between failure and success.

In this report you will find a deep reflection about those subjects and the impact they have in our life.

CRITICAL THINKING

In the 21 st century we have many different sources of information, we live in an era where the information is saturated, it is coming to us from the TV, announcements, internet, newspapers... and everywhere we look around there is always an important amount of information coming to us, some of that information can be a lie, wrong related or not accurate. That is why it is so important to have clear our own ideas, and of course, check the sources; the person who wrote it and compare with other articles to decide what is real and to make sure we are receiving the information well. Otherwise we can get the information wrong or they can make us think in their own way and control us in different ways:

- Making us buy products which are useless, don't have value or we just don't need.
- Making us believe in lies in order to get something from it.

Critical thinking teaches us how to think, how to be intelligent, and how to develop the best of our selves. Thinking by our own is for me the way to freedom, being that it is the only thing that they can never take from us.

Also it help me to be aware of the world, of the market and many other things which are important in the century we live in.

Thanks to this skill, I have been able to differentiate between good and bad opportunities and make my own decisions without being influenced by the opinion or the purpose of other than myself.

For example when I was making some researches for assessments, I found out articles where I saw many mistakes such as structure or poor explanations of the subject which can create confusion and seeing this, makes me realize how I don't want to structure my works.

Another example could be when we read the newspapers and each of them is telling the same story but from different view, maybe in one of them the information provided is just one side of the truth, or simply the information related is not the complete story, so when we are critic and we compare the information we can get the reality from their version of the issue.

I am a person who loves reading and writing and I consider myself an analyzer, that's why I am in the constant search for truth. As I mentioned before, many information we

find in the media is a lie or is hiding some information in order to change the sense or to get something from it, they try to sell us many things through marketing and critical thinking is for me the way to don't get yourself manipulated.

But more than that, we can also grow being the first critic that we should make to ourselves, analyzing which mistakes we make and getting to know better our weaknesses in order to achieve success. Of course always in a constructive way, so we can polish our mistakes and get something positive from it.

Getting the opportunity to study such an amazing subject in this university helped to my personal development and my career as much as my daily life. This is in my opinion one of the most important skills. If you know how to use good the information you have around and to analyze it, you can create your opinion about a subject and you can see the things how they really are, because when we know how to make a critic we can split the good information from the wrong one.

REFLECTIVE WRITING

A well reflection helps us to deal with different situations, make sense of and also to realize things that we might not be able to in the moment when the situation is happening. In order to grow as person and to achieve the best of ourselves reflecting a little every day and writing it will help us in our daily life and goals.

When we get information in our studies reflecting is the way to understand better the subject we are studying. In my opinion is much better writing it as it helps you to see the ideas more clearly. For example if I get a huge quantity of information and i just read it, at the beginning is hard to understand and to connect the main ideas, but after a reflective writing I am able to do it and I can get a deeper approach to the subject.

Also it makes me understand better myself and different issues about job or personal life by analyzing. A good idea will be to create your own reflecting journal using the questions that u find more appropriate. It is beneficial as writing will help you to see your thoughts in an easier way and connect them in order to achieve results. You can get some examples on internet or you can create your own and in this way you can personalize it more being that nobody knows yourself better than you so it will be more accurate.

I try to analyze myself and write as much as I can, doing it I visualize the situations in an accurate way and I find the gaps that I need to fulfill and work in, so every time I can give my best and do as better as I am able to.

For example, when we fail in the way trying to achieve a goal, reflecting about it will help us to see what the problem is in order to solve it and do better next time. We could use some questions such us: How can I do better next time? What I need to do it better? Which was my mistake?

Definitely reflection plays an important role when trying to understand issues.

CV WRITING

Nowadays, we have so many opportunities around us and sometimes can be hard to get them if don't have a proper CV. In my opinion it is really important knowing how to prepare a good one being that it shows who we are, what we are interested in, which are our knowledge's and what we can offer. The purpose is to convince somebody that we are the best option for a labor. A well related CV will make us give a good impression and get the goal we are trying to achieve.

Having the knowledge of how to prepare a good CV gave me the opportunity to get a job fast and it also gave the opportunity to be here in London today.

The first time I made a CV I didn't have any knowledge and I made many mistakes such as structure, format and I also didn't know that it was so important to show the company what I could offer them and in my statement I just wrote some key words such as: "I am an organized person and I work hard" and that was basically everything I said about myself, without knowing that I should give more information about myself.

There are examples of people who were applying for a job, and probably they were the best for it but when they were asked for a cover letter, they wasn't able to write it properly so they loosed the opportunity. That's why knowing how to write a cover letter will make a huge difference at the time to get a job.

Also I didn't know it was good to include our hobbies and I used not to think that it doesn't look professional but now I know that sometimes it can be linked to the job we are applying to and it can actually make our CV look more interesting or show that we are people with interest and motivations.

I didn't use a CV in all the jobs I applied for, but it was helpful even in those were I had an interview, as sometimes I was blocked while doing it, but remembering what I wrote I saved the situation. Also thinking what to write while making my CV made me realize some skills I got and I wasn't aware of.

After this course, today I can say I am able to prepare a professional CV well-structured which provides all the information and skills that I have in probably the best way I could show them until now.

RESEARCH SKILLS

Research is our way to get new knowledge about any subject we want, being that we are able to find information about almost every subject through internet, articles, newspapers... Also it helps us to understand different issues; to prove lies and support truths by choosing and analyzing which information is real; to find different opportunities being that we can search new jobs or find sources that will help us to develop our personal career and nourish our minds.

In this module I learnt how to make a good research and most important were to make it. When I was younger I was collecting information from internet and sometimes I took some information which actually wasn't true being that I didn't know how to differentiate a good source from a bad one.

Researching not just made me learn and get information but it also gave me independence, because thanks to it I have the life that I am living now being in another country, as I was able to get all the documents and information that I needed through searching via internet and news. Knowing where to get information will help me in my future development, because I am a person who loves to travel and discover new things and the opportunities in other countries are something you can discover and find searching in many websites; If you know how to search you can always find really cheap ways to travel or nice places to stay and also get other interesting information about the location.

Of course it will also help me not to make many mistakes. First time I came to London it wasn't how I expected because an online company helped me to get and start my life here and given my poor research about that company when I arrived it wasn't what I expected. That's why is indispensable to make more than just one research and know the source properly. Check the feedbacks from the people about different pages have also being useful for me to don't have this kind of situation again.

I think one important key to achieve our goals will be researching as through it we can squeeze the best from all the sources of information we have.

CONCLUSION

By analyzing and searching we already get an important amount of information, but if we also know how to select the information, understand it and be critic about it, we have can have the complete development of our knowledge's and skills. All of them are a base in the learning cycle as with them we develop other skills.

All of them make us think in our own, be more creative, discover and develop our personal skills and career which will make a huge difference in our life.

Learning about this skills in this module changed my vision of life and helped me to achieve many goals as I am sure it will help me in my future.

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APPENDIX

GRAHAM GIBBS (1988)



Reflection before, during and after learning process (Schon, 1983):

Before an experience	During an experience	After an experience
What do you think might happen?	What's happening now as you make rapid decisions?	What are your insights immediately after and when you have more emotional distance from the event?
What might be the challenges?	Is it working out as expected?	In retrospect how did it go?
What do I need to do or know in order to be best prepared to this experience?	Am I dealing with the challenges well?	What did I particularly value and why?
	Is there anything I should do say or think to make the experience successful?	Is there anything I would do different in a similar event?
	What am I learning?	What I learnt?

Blooms taxonomy (1956):

