# Business Skills

## Introduction

For each and every student, performing a self-evaluation is largely recommended during the course of learning. According to Orsmond and Merry (2013), personal evaluation and reflection enables lifelong learners to identify and recognize their strengths and weaknesses. Likewise, Self-evaluation and reflection allows students to learn in a comprehensive manner, enabling them to acquire ideal skills that are deemed essential in their future careers.

This paper is fundamentally geared towards providing a critical personal evaluation and reflection, to help me recognize the skills and abilities that I have amassed in this course. Drawing lessons learnt from ‘The Group Presentation’ and ‘My Personal Brand’, and with the help of the Holland’s Personality Test as well as the Shein’s Career Anchor, I will be able to comprehensively identify the necessary skills that are integral for my future career upon completion of my undergraduate studies.

## The Group Presentation

In the course of the semester, I got the privilege to take part in a Marshmallow Challenge in the Business Skills Course. In groups of four people each, we were given twenty spaghetti stills, one yard of tape, a piece of thread, and a marshmallow. The task was to primarily construct the tallest self-supporting tower with the marshmallow on top in a timeframe of eighteen minutes. In an exercise that was characterized by excitement and sheer anticipation, my group managed to construct a tow 27cm long. The sole purpose of this challenge is to allow different teams to experience a diverse approach of doing things, foster teamwork, and effective communication, and enhance critical thinking, creativity and innovative skills as well as long term planning (Suzuki et al., 2016), (Al-Khalifa, 2017), (Wujec, 2015). Thereafter, each and every group was to come up with a conclusive presentation that outlined the strengths of the team and the challenges that were encountered during the task.

The most enjoyable aspect that I delighted in while working in a team was the fact that we were able to complete the marshmallow challenge successfully within the stipulated time of eighteen minutes and managed to construct a 27cm tower. Bearing in mind that the task initially looked virtually impossible given the time limit, the fact that were able to complete the task successfully was enough to make me relish in the whole experience of working together as a team. However, it was not a walk in the park for us. We had to rebound from one idea to another until we finally got the groove of how to effectively complete the task.

Although the challenge was successfully completed, a couple of challenges were encountered during the development of the presentation. I found the team’s diversity in terms of ideologies, perceptions and ways of thinking a very challenging aspect while working in a team. Each and every team member had his or her own way of thinking with regards to the nature of the presentation which caused an intense heated discussion on whose idea to adopt as a team.

Based on the Belbin’s Team Role Model Theory, Belbin posits that in any team setting, the individual members assume different roles based on their personal characteristics (Fisher, W.D. and Semple, 2001). For instance, a team may have a leader figure, a coordinator, a monitor or evaluator, team player or even a specialist (Fisher, Hunter and MacRosson, 2001). The major role I played in the team was being a resource investigator. My mandate was to primarily collect relevant academic journals and books that would in turn, be used during the group discussions for the purposes of developing a final group presentation. In light of this, I was therefore charged with responsibility of going to library and consulting relevant journals for this purpose.

My greatest contribution to the team was my ability to collect and coordinate a comprehensive and wide-ranging list of academic references, which proved to be very instrumental in providing a rich pool of information that was reliable and relevant to the class content in the development of the final group presentation.

In as much as my contribution may have been quite valuable to the team, I am of the opinion that my role would have been perfectly executed if I had been a team player by incorporating my team’s opinion on the potential list of references that the group would eventually use in developing the final group presentation. This would have improved my efficiency, accuracy and precision in comparison to the independent approach I used (Fisher, Hunter and MacRosson, 2002), (Fisher, Hunter and MacRosson, 2001).

In actual fact, I was very contented with the role that I played in the team. However, I would have loved to assume the role of the team leader in the group. I feel that I would have effectively carried out my roles of the team leader in a more decisive way which would optimize the team’s performance. In light of this, in order to become an eligible team leader, I would need to develop skills that are paramount for every team leader. To do so, I would be obliged to improve my communication skills for clear and effective communication with the team members, embrace teamwork among the team members, having ideal planning skills as well as taking initiative to lead others by example. Moreover, by implementing the approach of Belbin’s Team Roles Model of team management and leadership, I would have been able to acquire the necessary skills of leading the team in an effective and efficient way, relative to the findings of (Fisher, Hunter and MacRosson, 2002).

During the entire period in which I worked with the team, my learning experience was very rewarding. The experience was also a complete game changer and a real eye-opener with regards to my self-evaluation and personal reflection in my education. One of the most valuable lessons that I learned from the entire experience is that; in each and every team, every member has a definite role in which they play and contributes, largely, to the effectiveness and efficiency of the team towards the attainment of the common goal or objective (Fisher, W.D. and Semple, 2001). For instance, in this case scenario, I learnt that each and every team member played an instrumental role in making the final group presentation a success. Drawing illustrations from the Belbin’s Team Roles Model, team members tend to assume different roles without necessarily being appointed by anyone to perform the duties of a particular role (Mathieu et al., 2014). Lupuleac, Lupuleac and Rusu (2012) further suggested that team members tend to align themselves with the roles that they feel best at. Thus, in the long run, a team is able to achieve its common objective if each and every one gets to play their roles in an exceptional way.

## My Personal Brand

Upon graduating with a degree in Business Management from the university, I would like to venture into the field of marketing as a prolific marketer. My long term goal is to be a renowned marketing consultant and to establish a fully-fledged marketing firm or consultancy that is geared towards providing marketing solutions to clients.

In preparation for the entry into the job market, creating a personal brand through which one can be identified with is very important. With regards to this, the Holland’s personality test plays a very significant role in enabling an individual discern their personal interests as well as providing a basis through which one can make informed decisions when it comes to making career choices (Woods et al., 2016). The theory, advanced by John Holland in the late 1950s, seeks to shed light on the close association of career choices and individual personalities (Meireles and Primi, 2015). Holland’s personality test posits that there are six different types of personalities; realistic, intellectual, social, conventional, enterprising and artistic (Meireles and Primi, 2015). Having done the test individually by completing a series of questions, my personality scores showed that I was ‘Realistic’, ‘Enterprising’ and ‘Social’. John Holland referred to a Realistic person as one who would rather opt for professions that require expertise, strength and synchronization (Woods et al., 2016). Moreover, He advanced that an Enterprising person thrives in an environment characterized by competition for influence, leadership and statuses (Woods et al., 2016). Likewise, John Holland described a Social person as a helper who would flourish most by being involved in activities geared towards helping other people (Woods et al., 2016), (Reardon and Bullock, 2004).

In light of this, these three interest codes are, to a large extent, relevant to my first job choice upon completion. In order to successfully kick-start my marketing career, these three different personalities will prove to be very significant strongholds in my quest to become a prolific marketer. Based on these personalities, I possess traits such as self-confidence, energetic, approachable, sociable and practicable, which are all ideal characteristics of a marketer.

Besides the Holland’s Personality Test, another approach through which one can utilize prior to making a career choice is the Schein’s Career Anchor Inventory. Although this approach is not commonly used, it forms a reliable basis through which an individual can discover their most probable career choice by establishing an understanding of their own perceptions and career goals envisioned (Leong, Rosenberg and Chong, 2013). The main goal of the Schein’s Career Anchor Inventory is to primarily enable people shape out their career choices on the basis of self-identity, abilities, goals and beliefs (Danziger, Rachman‐Moore and Valency, 2008). Based on my responses to a set of questions in the test, my dominant Schein career anchor was Entrepreneurial Creativity. In light of this, the results of the Schien’s Career Anchor test implied that I should work towards establishing a career that will enable me to exercise my creativity and innovative skills in the field of business and marketing. In addition, Entrepreneurial Creativity being my most dominant career anchor, gives the impression that establishing my own marketing consultancy should be one of my long term goals in my career.

The result of the Schien’s Career Anchor Inventory demonstrate a significant relationship with my first career job choice of being a prolific marketer. Comparatively, there is a close similarity of the results of the Schien’s Career Anchor Inventory Test and those of the Holland’s Personality Test. From an advantageous point of view, both results provide a reference point from which I can be able to make an informed decision on my most preferred career choice. Nonetheless, the reliability of using these tools has often been questioned by various scholars (Cortés Sánchez and Grueso Hinestroza, 2017). For instance, the results of these tests could, at times, not what an individual had envisioned, leading to a wrong career move (Danziger, Rachman‐Moore and Valency, 2008). In addition, it is quite easy for an individual to compromise the results of the test by providing inaccurate responses to the set of questions asked (Leong, Rosenberg and Chong, 2013), (Danziger, Rachman‐Moore and Valency, 2008).

In order to succeed in the field of marketing, it would be paramount for to highlight a couple of skills and qualities in my personal brand. These skills may include, good communication skills, ability to be innovative and creative, being a team player with other members in a team as well as being flexible enough to adapt to different situations (Scott, 2012). Through constant reflection and self-evaluation in my profession, I would be able to gradually inculcate these skills in my career and improve my performance output as a marketer. With regards to promoting my brand, social media presents the most viable opportunity to advertise my personal brand as a renowned marketer to the world. I intend to establish a vibrant social media platform through which I will expose my personal brand to the world. Networking as well as face to face marketing also provide ideal avenues for promoting a personal brand.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this contemplative paper is ideally broken down into two different parts; The Group Presentation and My Personal Brand. Under the first section, it was evident that appreciating the value of team roles in contributing to the team’s success is paramount. By each and every team member playing their roles exceptionally, the team’s success is warranted. I am convinced that our team was well organized and everyone played their different roles well, which contributed to the success of the team. The second section of the essay enlightened me on my traits, qualities and skills that are pertinent to the choice of my line of work upon graduation. The Holland’s Personality Test and Schein’s Career Anchor Inventory tests proved instrumental in defining my unique skills.

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