

A reflective writing of the module within the academic year

Education



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BUSTER**

Within the academic year 2012/13, I took on a module named Context of Business. It aims to develop and understand companies' traditional and contemporary management and structural approaches (Chokshi, 2012).

Within the academic year we were tested on our understanding of what was taught. This report is a reflective writing of the year. This will be done by looking critically at the two assignments given to us. First assignment was to give a report of an organisational structure and draw up its chart. The second was to perform a group presentation of two companies of different sizes on various factors.

This report will look in to the process, the challenges and outcome of each assignment. Assignment one: Presented at Week 6 The class was given an assignment to conduct a research of the structure of a business of our choice. We were to present our findings by researching the structure of a business and draw up its organisational chart within six weeks. 2. 1 Outline First of all, I had to look for a business of my choice. This involved in looking into businesses in my local vicinity or further afar. I finally settled on Syngenta, An International agricultural business into crop productivity and protection of environment (Syngenta, 2013).

I then had to start researching into the business to find out what sort of organisational structure it had. For Syngenta it had a matrix style structure, a structure where highly skilled individual form teams for projects (Stanford, 2007). I also had to look into its p of control. Syngenta had a flat structure of operation, a structure where there are few layers of authority and delegation is used to carry out task effectively (The times 100, 2013). From this I was to

prepare an organisational chart, a chart which shows the way the chain of command works in an organisation (The times 100, 2013).

For this I was to take into consideration of the matrix style and its flat structure of operation to draw up its organisational chart. 2. 2 Challenges
There were some challenges I faced while conducting this research. One main challenge was the decision of which company to choose. There was no restriction on what company one could choose and I had to find one for which I would be able to find all relevant information. Another problem faced was distinguishing between the company's organisational structure and its p of control. had to go back to the lecture notes and other readings to find out their differences.

As it was an individual work I had no second opinion on matters and had to be careful that my decisions made were right. The assignment turned out to be more challenging than what I thought. This was due to the depth of research that was needed to acquire specific relevant information and the ability to back them up with substantial evidence. Over a period of time, looking back I can evaluate my performance as being done in a haste. This is due to the fact that, not fully understanding the scope of the assignment given at the start of the work. This went against my time given hence I had to quickly do the work in order to beat the clock.

Fortunately I was able to receive informal feedback from our tutor on our drafts. This helped recognise my mistakes was to give the audience a clear distinction between the organisational structure and the p of control of the company. I was warned on the penalty of improper referencing and

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plagiarism of content used. From what was given in the feedback for the draft I was able to develop on transferable skills such as proper referencing. In the end I was also able to learn new skills such as time management, the ability to plan and prioritise ones workload (The University of Manchester, 2012). 2. 3

Outcome Learning from this assignment, given the opportunity to another work of this type, I will dedicate more time to each aspect of the work. Key lessons that I have identified for this work, is the ability to properly prepare and conduct intensive research. Through practice I will be able to develop these abilities. Looking at the skills learnt, most if not all are invaluable and beneficial transferable skills. These are competencies that could be carried from an activity to another (Graduate prospects ltd, 2013). What might be able to hold me back will be the technicality needed in the referencing.

Referencing is the process of acknowledging sources consulted in pieces of work (London metropolitan university, 2013). For this I can refer to the materials available on the university library services. Assignment two: Presented on Week 22 For our second assessment, we were given a group work to conduct. We were to form groups of 4 or 5 members and give a presentation to the class on the topic of comparing two companies of different sizes. We were to compare and contrast their legal and ethical issues. 3. 1 Outline The first thing I had to do was to form a group. We then had to decide on which companies to choose.

For the sake of comparing them we decided on companies that are within the same industry. Kelloggs, which manufactures and markets ready-to- eat

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cereals and convenience foods (Bureau van Dijk, 2013) and Eat Ltd, a I-JK freshfoodretail company (Bureau van Dijk, 2013). Then from the chosen companies we were to compare them on certain criteria. Them being, their vision, a description of what a business wants to be in future. Their mission statement, a more current description of a company's basicgoals, philosophies and purpose (Chokshi, 2012). Also the size of the companies based on our own elements.

Factors with affected heir mission statements and their legal and ethical issues. We then had to research on each company for information. After which we organised our data and created a draft. After the draft we designed our presentation for practising as a group. On the day of the presentation we made sure we arrived before time. We tested out our equipment and software on the screen and had a dry run so as to know how the actual event will feel like. We then presented our work when our turn approached and stayed within the time limit and allowed questions to be asked at the end. . 2

Challenges I personally encountered some challenges with this project. It proved quite difficult to form a group. We were not automatically placed into groups and the class was being selective with their choices. I was left with a two classmates without a group and a fourth was added under our tutor recommendation. I also had a challenge in my presentation skills.

Presentation according to Oxford Dictionaries (2013) is a speech or talk where ideas or pieces of work are shown and explained to an audience. I when delivering. I moved about too much and spoke too fast.

But through practise and the help of the group I was able to develop on my presentation skills. I realised hat I did not only personally face some problems but also the group as a whole faced some difficulties. One of such was ourcommunicationskills, the ability to clearly and confidently express one view to an audience (University of Kent Careers and Employability Service, no date). As we were mostly new to each other, communication between us proved difficult. Noticing this, I decided we take some time for us to know each other informally such as having chit-chats before meetings.

Boocher (1999) suggested that small talk is a simple tool that helps build rapport and trust with co-workers which in turn helps build communication between them. It helped build a bond between us and in effect our communication increased. Other obstacles observed were our manner of conducting our research. Due to each having different courses, our times did not align and we could not meet to discuss the work as a group as frequently as desired. We then went about this using phones and emails and dividing the work and organising our finding when we do meet.

We also had the challenge of getting our presentation right. We had to make sure it did not sound robotic and was interactive with the audience without losing the content of the presentation. Looking back and evaluating my performance; I would say we had a good performance. Even though we had many challenges and obstacles it was the fact that we were able to overcome them that determined our performance. We received some informal feedback form our tutor at the end our presentation which was

helpful as she said that it was well executed and needed few minor adjustments.

Also after the marking we received a formal feedback both as a group and individually. As a group we were told that our time allocation for each aspect was good but areas of more importance needed more time than others. As an individually, I was told my communication with my team and audience was good but I needed to speak more clearly and assertively. 3. 3 Outcome In order for me to improve, the next time I will do some aspects differently, such as having frequent group meetings to prevent work being done in a hurry.

Some key features that I have identified were my leadership skills. This is being able to motivate others and inspire them to take your lead (Graduate prospects ltd, 2013). Though it was a group work, I was able to personally oversee some aspects of the project which helped me develop such abilities. I was also able to develop my communication skills. Even as strangers to one another we were able to communicate efficiently between ourselves by the end of the project. By abiding to the 10 minutes limit we were able to develop our time management skills.

In future, if I was to encounter other group works, the prospect of working with strangers might hold me back. In some cases this might be inevitable but it is the ability to adapt to this and establish a relationship that will help in the execution of the work. All in all, being given this assignment has had its difficulties and obstacles to overcome but it has also developed my skills

and taught me new ones. All which are critical skills needed in most career paths in this modern day.