

A personal  
development  
progress education  
essay



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A personal development progress will help me to define and explore my goals and to map out ways to turn them into reality. Personal Development Planning Guide 2002: 4 It will allow to practice the skills I am developing, to explore the opportunities in the future. In this reflective report, I will introduce myself firstly, and then focus on my personal development planning in particular.

I studied for my undergraduate degree in Media and Creativities (Film and Television Production Management) at the Zhejiang University of Media and Communications for three years. During that time, I gained knowledge in Marketing and Management, which I believe is a solid foundation for my future graduate studies.

Furthermore, I had the opportunity to study at Coventry University for my final year through a student exchange programmed. The time spent in the UK broadened my horizon and greatly improved my English, especially my speaking and listening skills. It also helped me to gain professional knowledge about Event Management, which will benefit me in my graduate studies.

I became interested in management while working as an intern in my family's company. Whilst in employment I acquired valuable real world knowledge and experience. Through my observation of the company's operation process, I understood how the managerial methods are implemented into actual practice. Through this experience, I had the opportunity to better understand the management system including areas that need improvement. I also had the opportunity to meet talented

individuals from whom I learnt a lot. This made me realize the significance of persons in an enterprise.

Indeed, as an international exchange graduate in 2013, I had much more experience than others, as well as it is seem to more opportunity for me. In contrast, identifying my development planning can be more challenging.

Task reflections

## **Action plans and skills audit**

### **Skills audit**

During this year in the UK, I learned and practiced a variety of key skills that could be used and developed in a wide range of situations. I also realized that employers value the skills with great importance. Basically, skills for individual and group share equal importance in studying and working.

Compared with the students in my university in China, my classmates in the UK have many skills worth learning. Their self-study ability and leadership has left me a deep impression during frequent interaction with them. They always make their own study plan and carry on it accordingly. In addition, they spend lots of time in the library searching for useful books in order to widen knowledge. That is what I learned from here and I believe the intelligence, eagerness and determination are important elements for my future success.

I participated in group studies to learn the different levels of communication, as well as how to send and receive signals in our own unique environment, which is pivotal for me. Rose (2008: 7) asserts that most of this learning is

out of awareness, not consciously immersed in the process of living in a particular group. Trying to communicate with who learn the different language in a group, is one of the best ways to recognise the characteristics of one's own way of communicating. That is one of the main reasons why I go abroad.

## **Action plans**

There are three main stages in this personal development planning. (Personal Development Planning Guide 2002: 16) In stage one, it is necessary to identify what I am 'required' to do in my role, which is always useful to start with my job description and identify what I am required to do in the future. Stage two is to understand the actual skills and knowledge base, and to consider how these reflect on what I need to do yet. Stage three is to compare the required and actual skills, and then reduce the gaps as possible as I can.

Thus, before I came to Coventry University, I considered about the requirements of skills and knowledge that is important to be able to effectively communicate. Improving academic and communicate English skill is the main task though this two years. It is also required broader professional knowledge at this stage, because I want to progress and develop into a new role. More specifically, it is meaningful to meet an academic staff, such as a personal academic tutor, to discuss my academic goals and get useful feedback to improve my plan efficiency.

I studied in Film and Television Production Management in China in the past three year, from which I gained deeper understanding about media than

other event management student does. For year three, I plan to improve skills I already have, as well as acquiring new skills by using what I learned from Film and Television Production Management, in order to prepare for my future work. For instance, to learn from someone who has experience in the area I want to develop. At the same time, tell them my strengths and weakness and ask them to review my personal plan, so that they could help me clarify my goals and achieve targets.

## **A 5 year career plan**

### **2012<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>–2013**

Education for Event Management in China is at least 30 years behind the UK. (Qikanwang. 2012) Getting more comprehensive education is the reason why I study this course here. Another main task for this year is improving my communication skill in English and adaptability in a new environment.

At the same time, it is necessary to obtain a basic understanding of my majors and familiar with the collection and analysis of relevant information, and recognize the relationships between the different areas of what I study. And then begin to reflect on the goals of personal development progress and to adjust my plans in time.

### **2013<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>–2014**

Pursue a postgraduate degree to increase my professional knowledge and to broaden my career option. Make full use of the resource in the University Careers Service. Gain opportunities for part-time, voluntary and vacation work. Volunteer work can provide an outstanding experience as well as give

me extra points on CV. (Personal Development Planning Guide 2002: 22). On top of this, prepare to apply for a work for next year.

## **2014½ž2015**

At the end of the second year, I should have gained much deeper understanding and reflect on my current position. After graduating from postgraduate study, I need to prepare for interviews and assessments and to visit Career Fairs and activities, live and online. And then I could take advantage of the experience and resources to get a job in the UK to promote a high professional standard.

## **2015½ž2017**

There are currently in China more than 100 million people working in the event business (event-related business), among them 15 million as managers. However, the number of event managers with professional skills and talents is less than 200. (Zhou, B. 2011: 147) Meanwhile, in Shanghai along, the event market grows by over 20% every year. ( Docin. 2012)

Shortage of talent and the rapid development of the event market prompted me planning to return to China, which is my best option would be working for an event company full of opportunities, where I can exploit the advanced knowledge and experience that I learned these years.

## **10 actual job vacancies**

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Events Executive

Marketing Executive – Campaign Management

Trade and Exhibition Manager

Events/Communications Manager

Events and PR Manager

Marketing Communications Executive

Creative Services Director

Regional Events and Sponsorship Manager

Exhibition Project Manager

Events and Hospitality Coordinator

### **Detail skills and competencies required for the job**

- Organizational skills
- Leadership skills
- Creativity and innovation
- Design and directing skills
- Production, casting and writing
- Good PC skills, including working knowledge of Microsoft packages
- The desire to creative problem solving and innovate
- Knowledge of economics
- Resilience

- Data analysis and report
- Outstanding interpersonal skills
- Confident and excellent communication skills, both verbal and written
- Regional and budgets management
- Multi-project management skills
- Strong commercial awareness
- Well motivated
- Efficiency
- Knowledge of national marketing
- A confident, convincing and professional presentation style
- A positive attitude and vibrant spirit of teamwork
- Flexible to international travels
- A driving license
- Familiar with network communication channels and print, print production techniques and artwork creation

### **Assessment Centre Exercise and In Tray Exercise**

I participated in an online exercise that turned out to be very useful to me, not only because it tested a wide range of skills and knowledge, but also because this exercise helped me to have a better understanding of the

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process of planning, promotion and performance. By reviewing this exercise with trying to place myself in a real working environment, I not only learned something that is beyond the classes in school, but also noticed some problems I ignored before.

The most essential point in this exercise is to demonstrate my capability of problem solving within a given time. The first step is to understand the employers' requirement during the interviews. This requires me to keep my eyes on the whole picture, and try to answer questions with clarity and sound logic. After this step, it is necessary to have a full preparation and to make specific plans with confidence and enthusiasm. Getting useful information and making notes in keywords during the process is also helpful. During the execution of the plan, I kept in mind that everything I do must maximize use the limited time efficiently as well. Admittedly, leadership and organizing ability are equally important. Each team leader must distribute the tasks efficiently and reasonably.

This process was an opportunity for me to practise organization and communication skills, as well as the ability to deal with contingencies. It also reminds me to keep getting professional knowledge for the future work. My participation in these activities helped me to see the management of an enterprise as a process analogous to the management of any collective activity in which the role of a leader is to keep the team together with a view to achieving a set goal.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this reflective report has summarised and rationalised my personal development progress based on what I learned in this course and self guided tasks and study during this term. It looks back at the career goals, and the strengths and areas need to be improved, assesses the progress towards my targets. It has considered about my background skills, competencies, experience and strengths to make suitable choices and career paths.

It is obvious that, no matter being long-term or short-term, as a benefit for me, I believe that studying in the UK will help me to solidify my undergraduate studies and experience, and to acquire new knowledge to achieve my future career goals. This personal development progress will help me to think about my education in general and then select key areas to focus on.

Weinstein (2008: 37) asserts that no one can predict the future, but planning now could help to enhance the opportunity of finding the perfect career. As a Chinese graduate in 2013, taking the chance to manage my future, using this plan to get a clear picture of what and when I need to do. Finally, setting my goals helps me to achieve future possibilities with motivation.