**Discussion 2**

Part 1.

My Technology Risk Assurance internship at EY started in June this year; hence, the first few weeks back then would not be appropriate to be addressed within this discussion nor fit the period of this course. Therefore, I would like to focus only on the main topics of this week's discussion (i.e., the people, workplace, and means of communication).

     A. The People

The people in my ITRA (IT Risk Assurance) team can be described using the adjective below. It is important to note that these are just some characteristics of my team; they, of course, have a lot more to offer than meets the eye:

**Enthusiasm**: The people in this team are relatively young, so they live their lives to the fullest. When they work or play, they give it their all: in the office, my team would focus on ensuring their daily goals are reached before heading home. In team gatherings, they would chill and enjoy every moment with each other.

**Professionalism**: Going on fieldwork with clients or working within the team, ITRA's people use professionalism to deal with work-related matters. Their professional attitude is shown through their timeliness, attention to detail, and respect for one another.

**Helpful and caring**: Whenever there is a problem with one's work, others will gladly lend a helping hand until the problem is diminished. When the seniors help us interns or other staff with a particular task, the seniors will also teach us how to deal with problems that may arise or show us a more efficient method.

     B. The Workplace

Regarding the physical workplace, it is an honor to be working in one of Saigon's most iconic buildings, the Bitexco Financial Tower. My office is situated on the 29th floor of this building, it is designed with direct communication in mind, as walls of any kind do not separate every desk, and each team member sits close to each other, the desk is relatively spacious, so it is not cramped at all; even the team's higher-ups (managers and the associate partner) sit together in an open cubicle, not a separate room.

This office allows our team to conduct direct conversations (or even debate) with one another without having to travel a great distance, eliminating the risk of miscommunication. Another thing that really makes this office awesome is that we have a high ground overlooking the beautiful city. This scenery is fantastic at any time of the day and is also part of the reason that keeps me going to work every day.

     C. Means of communication

At EY, every team has a similar set-up of communication channels, and our team is no different. We used a variety of tools for different communication purposes:

**Microsoft Teams**: A cooperate classic used by major corporations around the globe. This messaging application allows members of EY (internally) to communicate efficiently. Even though our team's preferred communication method is verbal, we still use MS Teams whenever talking may break the office's silence.

**Outlook**: The official data sender and receiver, when communicating with clients and other external parties, we would utilize this tool to do our bidding. Thanks to the formal nature of email, this tool conveys messages with a sense of respect and urgency, suitable for communicating professionally.

**Telegram and Zalo**: These tools are used to communicate with the client informally; data can be received here, but these are generally used to check up on our client and, in some cases, clarify what the emails may have missed.

Part 2.

My internship Plan took some time to finish as there are multiple factors to consider when creating a plan, which is why I reached out to get help from a few places and resources. Hence, here are some of the tips and findings I gathered:

**Self-Assessment**: Having read the article on 21st century competencies, I have a better understanding of what I am capable of, and with that, I set up goals that can either reinforce my skills or teach myself something new. "The content in the curriculum serves the development of students' general capabilities as well as their knowledge, understanding and skills in the disciplines/learning areas" (McGaw, B., 2013)

**Applying SMART**: This abbreviation stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound. Using this principle, I am able to figure out what my goals should look like in detail, as well as how to keep track of and commit to them. "Consistently aligns with and supports organizational and individual professional goals" (O'Neill et al., 2011).

**Advice from senior**: My manager has been very helpful and patient when I asked for his advice on what I should expect and achieve after the internship. With his insight and experience, he helped me answer many of my questions regarding my future.

I found that these steps helped me configure realistic and achievable goals, as I have an internal and external perspective of myself and what I wanted to get out of this internship. The goals I set for myself will be one of the many steps I need to take to become a better and better person.

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**Discussion 3**

**Definition of workplace culture and the 'surface' aspect of it.**

**Workplace culture**

We often view culture as an identity of a particular area; it is the "sum of shared ideas, practices and material objects that people create to make sense of, adapt to and thrive in their environments" (Furze et al. 2012, p. 54). This saying applies to every region of the world; however, it does not only stop there but also holds even when applied to a smaller arena, i.e., a company or a workplace. Just like how societal culture sets the identity of an area, the workplace culture (albeit it can be interpreted in many ways) still "refers to the shared values, beliefs, and behaviors by members of a given organization" (Kwantes, CT & Glazer, S 2017).

Culture exists because people use it to make sense of their world. In the workplace, culture is formed in the process of people following a pre-defined set of rules and/or procedures. This sort of rule can be flexible as it does not only include the actual rule the firm set up but also the social rules that exist within a collective (this can also be considered as the social norms). "The nature of a culture is found in its social norms and customs, and that if one adheres to these rules of behaviour, one will be successful in constructing an appropriate social reality" (Morgan 1986, p. 129).

* **The 'surface' aspect of culture**

The term' surface aspect' can be understood as physical, visibly seen elements of a workplace (LaConte, 2018). Some examples of this are:

* + Office layouts: The way the workplace is organized.
  + Dress code: How the employee dress
  + Symbolism: Logos, icons, slogans, etc.
  + Gathering: How the employees behave outside work hours

It is important to keep in mind that the surface aspect of an office can't tell the whole story, and we should not form a definitive idea without looking deeper into the "hidden" culture of the office.

**Observation of the 'surface' aspect of culture**

* **Individual behaviour**

Each and every person within my team always strives to do their best every day. Whenever working on a project, they try to use their time effectively; this is observed via the fact that everyone tries to create deadlines for themselves in order to complete a task promptly. Moreover, their professionalism shines even when they have tight deadlines, as they are always trying to present the best possible result and making sure little to no mistakes are made in their work.

* **Team dynamics.**

The description of my team was given in the 2nd discussion, and I want to add a few more things to that. The ITRA team values efficiency and synergy; in a team, they will support and cooperate with other people, and with clients, they try to find solutions that can benefit both parties. This also aligns with EY's value of bringing timely, tailor-made solutions to our clients.

* **Your relationship with team members.**

I like to think that I've built a strong connection with my team members during the time we have been working together. We have been through good and bad times, and I am starting to understand everyone more. It is an extraordinary experience every time I work or play with my team members. I do admit that sometimes I might have a lot of questions, but they are still eager to help me out when they are able to do so.

* **Interactions between your team and other teams/departments.**

To be frank. I have not interacted with other teams as much as my seniors, but as observed, they maintain a strictly professional attitude when dealing with the other teams. We work closely with the Financial Auditing team; their job is to provide us with IT systems to check up on, and our job is to support them in reconciling financial data. The EY ecosystem is a dynamic and packed one; we need to support other teams, and they need to support us, too, which also reinforces the teamwork ethic that the firm holds dearly.

* **Your team's performance track record.**

The EY firm has a centralized approach to evaluating the performance of an employee, and quarterly, every employee would be evaluated by the senior ups on their performance. I cannot give the exact criteria for evaluating, but it generally boils down to the following:

* + The hours you actually worked.
  + The engagement between you and other employees/ clients
  + The quality of your work. (measured by the time it took to do a task and the quality of documentation you did)

Every day, we try to do our best to reach these criteria, and in my opinion, it is a very effective and subjective form of evaluation.

* **People's approach to conflict resolution.**

Conflict and tension are inevitable in our field of work, whether within the team or when working with a client. However, my team, in particular, has some very interesting ways of dealing with conflict.

Within the team, I saw that when people conflict with a project, they would lay down their ideas one by one and then find a common ground to work on. Sometimes, people use the firm's resources to make sure that they are just working according to the policy.

When conflict arises with clients, our team wouldn't back down, but they instead stand their ground and try to find a solution that would benefit everyone. Sometimes, when the tension is too much, our team would offer a timeout to discuss internally on strategies to deal with the client.

**Reflection**

* **How clear are you about the organization's espoused values and how these are expected to reflect in staff behavior?**

"Every excellent company … is clear on what it stands for." (Peters, T. J., & Waterman, R. H., Jr. 1982). EY holds a lot of values and has high expectations that their staff will follow them. Out of every value that EY is built around, they take pride in their professionalism, client-centricity, and synergy, which are relatively well reflected in their staff. I would say that from clothing to work manners, every EY member of staff represents the firm in a professional and reliable sense.

* **What are the values/beliefs and assumptions which actually drive your team's behaviour?**

To be frank, I think the main benefactor that keeps the ITRA team afloat is each other; just like I've discussed in the last discussion, our motto is "We are family". No matter how tough it may get, we know that others are there for us, and when issues happen to someone, we are there to help them, too. Furthermore, the firm has also treated the employees well with their benefits (diner cards, team vacation, etc.). In a way, it is also a good driver. I think that those drivers help the team push through many busy seasons (which are known for being notorious)

* **How well do you believe the team your working with values/beliefs align with the corporate (or organization-wide) values?**

ITRA's and EY's values are very similar to one another, and I can confidently say that my team lives up to the firm's expectations; not only do we treat every work-related situation with a professional mindset, but we also exude an enthusiastic attitude when working. Not only that, but we are also eager to cooperate with clients and other teams to deliver the best possible outcomes for each project.

* **Intercultural Communication and Adaptation**

Thanks to EY, I have the opportunity to work abroad for a week in Cambodia (my project is related to an insurance company of that country), and it has opened my mind on many things. Some of the cultural aspect of Cambodia gives me a little culture shocks, but I did not understand then at that time. Thanks to the material that this course provided, I am able to make sense of some of the etiquette and behavior of Cambodian.

* + **Greetings**: I notice that the people here are very friendly, when they greet each other, they use a formal pre-fix to show everyone their respect.
  + **Clothing**: Their style of clothing is similar to us Vietnamese, at least in Phnom Penh. I haven’t had the opportunity to explore the rural area and see their fashion style.
  + **Conversations**: they are great listeners, whenever I communicate with them, they would listen carefully and would try to help me understand their answer also.
  + **Physical space**: they are just like Vietnamese, keeping the normal distance Vietnamese would, nothing special regarding this entry.
  + **Eating**: Cambodian don’t bring food into their office, not even snack as far as I am concerns.

The time working in Cambodia was not long enough for me to pick up any of the people’s cultural habit, however, it was still an eye-opening experience, and I would relish a chance of getting back there either for work or just holidays.

In any case, that was my sharing on this discussion topic. Thank you for reading this post, I hope you find your adventure on the intern ship (puns intended) smooth sailing. Best regards.

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**Discussion 4**

Hello there, another week passed, and another discussion occurred on the intern ship. This week, I will focus on articulating my professional identity. But before heading into the meat of the discussion, I would like to go over what is professional identity.

According to Neary, "Professional identity is the concept which describes how we perceive ourselves within our occupational context and how we communicate this to others."(Neary, S. 2014). With this in mind, it becomes evident that this concept is becoming progressively more significant as we advance through life. As we approach the age of employment, it is imperative to project a professional demeanor, enhancing our credibility and competence. And to express my professional identity effectively, I will tackle the questions provided in the discussion topic.

**How can I describe and articulate my professional identity to a wide audience?**

**Obtaining/Creating a professional identity:**

We must walk before we can run, and in this context, in order to convey my professional identity, I must first build one for myself. “One of the strategies frequently employed by interlocutors to construct their identity is to emphasize membership in a specific group” (Schnurr, Stephanie 2012). As an IT Auditor, I place myself in the position of a member in a professional group, and I recognize the importance of aligning myself with the principles and standards that define the field. “Identity formation must be addressed explicitly in the formal curriculum and learners must be aware of the nature of professional identity and understand the process of socialization through which an identity is formed.” (Cruess, S. R., et al 2019). Just as a well-constructed building requires a strong foundation, my professional identity must be built upon a solid understanding of these core concepts:

* Foundational Knowledge in the field
* Professional communication with other parties
* Ethical and Professional Conduct
* Continuous Learning and Skill Enhancement
* Effective Communication Skills

With the principles for effectively manifesting a professional identity, I myself need to commit to achieving these goals. Moreover, I must frequently revisit and update my understanding of the pre-defined principles in order to maintain my identity throughout my career.

**Articulate professional identity to a wide audience:**

Establishing a strong professional identity involves several key aspects that contribute to effective communication and a positive perception within a broader audience.

* Firstly, possessing in-depth knowledge in my field is fundamental. This not only boosts my credibility but also enhances the overall value of my speech. By showcasing my expertise, I create a foundation of trust with my audience.
* Additionally, it's crucial to demonstrate my capabilities to a wider audience or another individual; since it illustrates that I am aligned with the values I advocate for. “"Showing" done by members of one's "tribe” (e.g., one's immediate supervisor, fellow members of one's department, or workgroup) may be particularly impactful in shaping members' perceptions of the organization as a whole” (Ashforth and Rogers, 2012). This emphasizes the importance of not only knowing my stuff but also strategically showcasing it to those around me.
* Effective communication is a linchpin in articulating my professional identity. Ensuring that my audience not only hears but truly understands my message requires a structured approach. By organizing my thoughts coherently, I enhance the likelihood of successful communication, facilitating a deeper connection with a diverse audience.
* Lastly, navigating the nuances of context and culture is essential for persuasive and confident communication. Understanding the cultural backdrop and adapting my delivery accordingly enriches the reception of my ideas. “Rules, conventions and assumptions that regulate interpersonal interactions, including both verbal and non-verbal communication, vary across cultures.” (Ward, Colleen, et al 2001), Hence, having cultural awareness will not only bolster my professional identity but also contributes to the broader effectiveness of my communication strategies.

**How can I do this in a short amount of time so that it is clear, engaging and straight to the point, meeting my audiences' needs?**

In effectively communicating my professional identity, I concentrate on expressing key strengths, values, and achievements that align with the expectations and interests of my audience. To ensure clarity for individuals with diverse backgrounds, I steer clear of unnecessary complexity and industry-specific jargon. As Patoko and Yazdanifard (2014) noted, the use of jargon can hinder effective communication, impacting the conveyance of ideas and information. Following Johnston et al.'s suggestion that "Stories, and the words that comprise them, have a unique power to resonate with the people who hear them," I incorporate storytelling into my communication, enabling me to share my professional journey in a relatable and memorable manner. Employing an active listening approach, I dynamically adjust my message to meet the unique needs of my audience.

**How can I use reflective practice to help me document this journey?**

* + - Review skills and lessons:

I have to continue to be proficient both within and outside of the industry since the knowledge and abilities I have gained are the foundation upon which I may grow. Therefore, reflecting on the technical skills makes me more conscious of my own professional development and guarantees that I appreciate the significance of the experiences I have.

* + - Set future goals:

Based on the things I have learned, I could use them to set goals for my future self to accomplish, these could be as small as learning a new tools to something grand like mastering a niche in the industry.

* + - Ask for feedback:

“ … This is what the educational literature refers to as ‘formative feedback’. The purpose is to help trainees identify their abilities and strengths, as well as areas that need improvement.” (Chur-Hansen, A., & Mclean, S. 2006). Feedback from my supervisor would be a valuable resource to help me improve myself further and push myself harder when applicable.

* + - Document Changes and Growth:

Keeping a diary-like documentation, helps me see my progress and the knowledge I've gained in a visual way. This allows me to focus on both my strengths and weaknesses. From this, I can develop a more polished strategy to assist me on my journey at EY.

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**Discussion 5**

Hello there, we passed the halfway mark of the course and I’m glad we are going through this trip together. Going into the topic for this week’s discussion, we are going to talk about challenges that we faced throughout the internship, more specifically, challenges regarding communication and conflicts resolution.

**Communication challenges:**

During my time at EY, I have encountered two challenges regarding communication. The first one is about **mishearing**. “This type of misunderstanding happens when the participant perceives one or more phonetic/ phonemic features differently.” (Hua 2013). Since I work in an international workplace, meeting new and foreign people is an inevitable story, which is why when I first started communicating with people outside my team, I found myself struggling to understand what my discussant is saying. Especially when I travelled to Cambodia for a field trip, I can only discuss my work with the client very briefly before having to inquire them to clarify their ideas to me. This caused a great deal of lost time and sometime, I could not get a satisfied answer to what I’m asking.

The second issue I encountered would be my **lexical comprehension** ability. As an intern, I am only a newbie into the field, so I am easily overwhelmed by the advanced technical knowledge that my seniors and clients use in discussions. “The use of jargon words can be defined in knowledge stickiness, in the sense that knowledge stickiness entails a process that is difficult to transfer knowledge, the difficultly attributed to the way the information is encoded” (Patoko, N & Yazdanifard, R 2014). Often time I get lost halfway through a meeting as its scope has gone further than my comprehension ability and I cannot follow the flow of the meeting since.

I understand that due to the nature of accent and language, I cannot expect others to speak in a clear and easy-to-understand tone, but for myself, I would like to do my part in order to minimize the effect that these misunderstanding could have on my work. I plan to fix these problems by:

* + Continuous learning: Equipping myself with more technical knowledge and skills by deep diving into my current skills set, exploring new methodologies and staying up to date with trends within the field. This will ensure that I can follow the conversation between the parties much more effectively.
  + Active listening: As Rogers and Farson suggest, we should listen for the total meaning (attitude, feeling and context), Note all cues (verbally and non-verbally), etc. I think that being proactive in catching what the speaker is putting down would be a great benefactor in helping me clearly understand them.
  + Clarify and confirm: When I want to ensure that I've understood a conversation correctly, I make it a point to clarify any points that seem unclear. I also confirm the information we've been discussing with the interlocutor to avoid any potential misunderstandings.
  + Rephrase information: When seeking a specific answer and the response isn't quite hitting the mark, I find it helpful to rephrase my questions. I include hints about my understanding to guide the other person in providing a response that aligns more closely with what I'm looking for. This way, communication becomes clearer and more targeted.

**Conflict challenges:**

“The ability to deal with conﬂict positively acknowledges conﬂict is an inevitable part of interpersonal and group interactions in the workplace.” (Dwyer & Hopwood 2015)

In both internal team dynamics and client interactions, I've observed that our team, particularly the senior members, adeptly manages conflicts. I've yet to witness a conflict escalate beyond control. Our team places a strong emphasis on collaboration, aiming to frame conflicts more as debates than confrontations. Since I'm not directly involved in conflict resolution, my insights are from an observer's standpoint. I've noticed that our team's conflict resolution aligns closely with the 7-step model outlined by Levine in 1998. We approach conflicts with an open mind, share our perspectives, actively listen to others' ideas, and collaboratively develop solutions satisfactory to all parties involved. This approach has effectively addressed tense conflicts and prevented unnecessary ones, both within the team and with clients.

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**Discussion 6**

Dear reader.

We have come a long way in our journey, and we are almost at the end of our intern journey. As per the weekly tradition of discussing our experience, today, we will discuss the concept of remotely working. Starting with defining what remote work is and then delving into its influence on the culture and norms of workplace, its pros & cons, and finally, its impact on communication and interpersonal skills of human.

Everyone in the world has endured the 2019 - 2021 covid era hence, the concept of remote working and studying is not thing new and indeed, even before Covid, remote work has been a concept adapt and implement by various organization, albeit in a minimal scale. As a formal description the 2018 findings by PPOFR WORK describe remotely working as the employment relationship in which the employee performs his duties without being physically present at the workplace but using information and communication technologies.

New Cultural Conditions and Norms in the Online Workplace:

The induction of remote work presents a mutual relationship between virtual collaboration and increased flexibility. In the modern day in general and in the EY office in particular, working online has not been an unfamiliar concept to anyone, we use online tools outfitted with collaboration and sharing capability to effectively perform our duty, e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Office, OneDrive, etc. Therefore, I think that if there are to be a shift towards an online workspace expanding into remote working, I believe that is only a matter of time.

Within my firm EY, we are fortunate enough to have the resource to facilitate personnel working from home or working from different places, the resource in picture is in the form of virtual machines and personal laptop given to each employees, moreover, EY VPN allows us to retrieve resources available only on EY’s network, and year-round IT support to assists us when problems arise. However, all good thing comes with some string attached, with the blessing of online and home working capabilities, certain rules are to be expected, as of the moment, these are just rules that are expected and not written in stone, however, others would appreciate if we follow them. As I drawn from my experience, those rules are expected to be:

* + Show up on communication channels earlier: With a more flexible work schedule combining with the need for commuting, everyone is expected to be present on time, without any excuses.
  + Respond timely to emails, messages: Due to the fact that direct communication is limited to almost none, people would like timely update on the status of work done by any given person so as to keep track of progress and ensure a smooth workflow.
  + Don’t get too distracted: Within the convenience of our home, it can be easy to be distracted from work, hence, this is a rather strict rule that applies to everyone.
  + Work until the tasks are completed: As stated before, the flexible work hours has made the culture shifted a bit into the result-oriented approaches, this would require employees to complete jobs at once, which could result in prolonged work hours.

Benefits of Remote Work:

Remote work has gained prominence in recent years, with its benefits extending across various dimensions. One significant advantage lies in the flexibility it affords employees. The ability to choose work hours contributes to an improved work-life balance, enhancing job satisfaction (Bloom et al., 2015). This flexibility is particularly valuable in accommodating diverse individual preferences and needs, fostering a more adaptable and content workforce. As Tuyo (2020) mentioned, The flexibility embedded in the workday contributes to the overall happiness of teams, despite external challenges, and effective communication ensures the completion of tasks on a daily basis.

Working remotely without the direct supervision of managers can build trust among employees, which in turn can create a sense of appreciation (DeSanctis, 1984). This trust helps to develop a commitment among employees not to disappoint managers, leading to a positive organizational attitude (Diab-Bahman & Al-Enzi, 2020), boosting workforce morale, and ultimately allowing employees to have more autonomy while minimizing privacy intrusions (Suh & Lee, 2017).

On the organisational level, it can benefit from cost savings by reducing infrastructure expenses (Diab-Bahman & Al-Enzi, 2020). Due to remote work and unoccupied office spaces (Wood, 2016), there is a significant decrease in costs associated with utilities and cleaning. As employees work from home, separating their professional and personal lives can be challenging, leading to longer working hours (DeSanctis, 1984), which is advantageous for companies.

Limitations and Frustrations:

Remote working, despite its benefits, is not without its limitations and frustrations. According to Yang et al. (2021), the main challenges that prevent employees from embracing remote work are related to physical separation. As a result, limited interpersonal interactions can negatively impact individuals' well-being (Yang et al., 2021). Additionally, insufficient communication with peers and superiors often leads to a reduced sense of team belonging (Hafermalz & Riemer, 2020), lower organizational identification (Diab-Bahman & Al-Enzi, 2020), and can hinder career advancement due to a lack of visibility (DeSanctis, 1984). This limited visibility can also prompt leaders to resort to intrusive and irrational monitoring practices that violate employees' privacy (Charbonneau & Doberstein, 2020).

Even though EY had formed a specialized team to troubleshoot technical issues, they sometime could be limited by various factors. The technical issues and dependency on digital tools are additional sources of frustration in remote work. Internet connectivity problems, software glitches, and reliance on virtual platforms for meetings can lead to disruptions and hinder the seamless flow of work. These technological challenges may result in decreased productivity and job satisfaction.

Communication and Interpersonal Relationships:

The strong relationship between communication channels and the growth of interpersonal skills in the age of digital communication is evident. When I take part in virtual meetings for example, deliberate and targeted communication approach is required due to the increased need for clear articulation and active listening. Throughout my time, I noticed that the nuances of nonverbal cues are frequently obscured by screens and most of the time, cameras are not even turned on, this demerits highlight how crucial it is to communicate verbally clearly and to understand digital body language skillfully; I think this also helps makes up for all the non-verbal communication that is lacking when engaging in virtual meetings.

Furthermore, the cooperative nature of digital platforms encourages users to not only work as a team but also to move quickly around shared virtual spaces, participate thoughtfully in conversations, and accept other points of view. In my opinion, the development of communication in the context of remote work acts as a stimulant for honing and broadening interpersonal abilities, creating a rich tapestry of relationships that surpasses geographical constraints.

In conclusion, the concept of remotely working has reshaped traditional work cultures, introducing new norms and conditions. While there are notable benefits, there are also challenges related to communication, collaboration, and maintaining a strong sense of organizational culture. Striking a balance between flexibility and structure is essential to ensure the success of remote work arrangements.

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**Discussion 7**

Hello there,

We have rejoiced to discuss our weekly progress in the internship, staying true to the nature of this course, this week we would look back into the beginning of the internship and dissect our internship plan that we have set for ourselves to see if we have achieved any of our goals yet. In addition, we would reflect on the skills we have garnered during the internship using the provided framework.

**Part 1:**

I set 3 goals that I needed to achieve for myself within the internship planning document and they are as follow:

* + Become a better worker.
  + Learn more about the IT industry, especially the IT Audit branch.
  + Expand Networking and Professional Development.

I can safely say that I have achieved all of these with some degree of success, I am aware that they may seem simple, as I have purposely set them at this level to make them more realistic and achievable in my book, which also closely follow the SMART goals. Let’s explore how I was able to set up and achieve my plan.

**Objective 1**: Become a better worker.

Throughout this internship, my primary objective is personal and professional development, learning how to use tools, manage my time, and learning communication are the milestone I set to achieve the bigger goal.

So far, I have had contact with a lot of tools introduced by EY in my work, I can now use Microsoft Office’s tools quite adeptly, enabling me to finish the job faster and with greater accuracy. Even as an intern, my workload has been rather substantial, a good description for the it would be the boulder of Sisyphus, as I finish one task, another arises. This challenge prompted me to reach out for more tools like Microsoft planner and Calendar; through them, I have learnt to divide the workload and assign them a specific time to finish them, making me more prone to track job’s progress and finish them on a strict deadline.

Looking back to when I first started, I was rather shy and relatively afraid of communicating with other people I don’t already know. As Berman and Dira Berman (2012) has mentioned, the effective communication skills in the workplace is a crucial component of becoming a more effective and competent worker. Since then, I have grown a lot more confident and I am able to hold conversations, conduct interviews and speak with more volume, this is a great if not the best thing I have learned throughout this journey. This skill in itself is the final milestone that marks my goal of becoming a better worker completed.

**Objective 2**: Learn more about the IT industry, especially the IT Audit branch.

While working, I have had a great deal of experience and familiarity with the IT field as a whole, on the surface I was able to learn the role that IT serves in the operation of a business, on the inside, I learnt how IT is configured and built to fit a function (i.e., how network can be configured, the implementation of CICD, and application of cybersecurity, etc.). I believe that my knowledge of IT has been improve rather far, however, as audit, I only get to understand the theoretical ways IT could be implement, I lack the practical experience of being able to get to play around with IT systems to learn about them in-depth.

On the IT audit hand however, I had the opportunity to both study the theory and practice them in the day-to-day work. I find stuff like finding insight in the IT general controls and determine whether they fit the current effective framework or not, analyzing, processing data had given me the opportunity to further advance my skills not only in the workplace but also in IT auditing. Per achieving this goal, I think I have achieved only 70% of it, since I could only approach the IT concepts from the top down, and not the other way around, which made me feel like I could not get what I wanted yet, however, to mitigate this, I would spend some time after the internship to further develop my IT understanding and skills so as to achieve my goal.

**Objective 3**: Expand Networking and Professional Development.

So far, I've conducted extensive fieldwork in both Vietnam and Cambodia, connecting with numerous IT professionals and maintaining their contacts for seamless work-related discussions. While achieving this goal, it required me to enhance my communication and interpersonal skills. As mentioned in goal number 1, my time at EY has significantly boosted my confidence, allowing me to actively participate in conversations and seek assistance when needed. This newfound confidence has played a crucial role in expanding my network. Furthermore, I've embraced a professional ethos and mindset, enabling me to think and act like a seasoned professional. This involves delivering information swiftly and succinctly, adapting to diverse environments, and viewing challenges as valuable lessons. These attributes not only enhance my value as a worker but also elevate my professional standing, which helps me achieved my final goal in the internship plan.

Out of my three goals, I have only achieved completion of two of them, my second goal proves to be rather complicated to achieve, at least with my current level of working and understanding. However, it is safe to say that my journey has bare fruits, and I am glad to have achieved what I currently have; I would still try to achieve my second goal, but I think it now belongs to a long development plan, rather than that of my internship due to the fact that it has almost ended.

**Part 2:**

While the goals of mine had involved the development of a few skills, those are only a few parts in my toolbox, I have gained a lot more experience with other things, which is why I would use the Gibb’s reflective cycle and the ACSF to think back on and assess the skills I have learnt throughout this internship.

**Gibb’s Reflective Cycle:**

My reflection and rating would not be possible without the help of this tools here, it introduces a practical and easy-to-understand model to help an individual reflect on themselves. The models include 5 specific and intuitive steps as follows:

* + Description: In this step, the model asked the user to articulate the details of the situation or experience, providing a clear and comprehensive account of what occurred.
  + Feelings: Here, it is important to delve into the emotional aspect, expressing and acknowledging the feelings associated with the described situation, whether they are positive, negative, or mixed.
  + Evaluation: This step involves an objective assessment of the situation, considering both its strengths and weaknesses, allowing for a balanced understanding of the experience.
  + Conclusions: Building upon the evaluation, meaningful conclusions can be drawn, extracting insights and lessons that contribute to personal growth and understanding.
  + Action: The final step focuses on actionable steps derived from the conclusions, outlining specific measures or changes to implement based on the reflections, fostering continuous improvement and development.

I will use these 5 attributes along with the ACSF to evaluate my skills to determine my proress in the internship.

**Australian Core Skill Framework:**

According to the ACSF, there are:

5 core skills and their description are outlined by the ACSF:

* + Learning: Learning is an active process of gaining understanding and developing skills. Learners draw on their prior knowledge and experience as they shape meaning.
  + Reading: Articulate a purpose for reading and pose questions that reading may answer, select texts and locate information appropriate to needs and interests, draw on, and make connections with, prior knowledge and experience.
  + Writing: Writing performance is influenced by whether the writing fulfils its purpose and meets the needs of its intended audience. Writing performance at higher levels includes the ability to write for an increasing range of purposes and audiences.
  + Oral Communication: Oral Communication involves both transactional and interpersonal exchanges. Transactional exchanges are primarily practical in purpose, while Interpersonal exchanges involve an engagement of the speakers with each other and focused on connection.
  + Numeracy: Is about using mathematics to make sense of the world and applying mathematics in a context for a social purpose.

Those skills belong to 3 different domains of communication:

* + Personal and community
  + Workplace and employment
  + Education and training

There are 5 different levels of performance of those skills that go from low to high, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

Include 4 performance variables, these variables are what influences an individual performance at any given time:

* + Support
  + Context
  + Text complexity
  + Task complexity.

From my perspective, out of these 5 skills, I would pay attention to oral communication as I believe it is the foremost important skill that an individual engaging in the job market could pay attention to. Maes et al. 1997, also confirms that oral communication skill is the most important skill for entry-levels job seeker.

Henceforth, I will be evaluating my oral communication skill with the help of the ACSF framework focused on the workplace and employment domain, the performance variables and finally I would rate my oral communication skill from 1 to 5.

**Support:**

Oral communication skill in the workplace serves as one of, if not the best tool to assists other people as well as seeking help for myself. Throughout my engagements, there are countless situations where I need to communicate and exchange information with other team members, clients, etc. in order to carry out a coherence workflow. Hence, I use the power of transactional exchanges to inquire about data, work schedule and items; on the other hand, whenever I wanted to connect with, and share my stories to others, I would enlist the help of interpersonal exchanges. This duality has helped me contribute my support to other people as well as myself in more meaningful ways.

**Context:**

There are a plateau of context when dealing with day-to-day communication workplace, and it is an important aspect in determining one’s ability to understand nuances and contribute to a conversation. For me, I have learned to contribute to conversations only when I have had a good understanding of the overall context of it; I have had a few instances where my input are ignored as it is completely irrelevant to what is being discussed, and it is through these instances that I learnt my lesson of reading and understanding the room before talking.

**Text and task complexity:**

While engaged in oral communication, text complexity represents itself as mishearing and misunderstanding, and while it can be hard to “fix” the speech of another person, I find it useful to actively listen and make seldom inquiry to make sure I understood what they say. As per task complexity, when I first stated engaging in client interviews, some of the concept being discussed flew right out of my head, but since then I have known to study my clients as well as the IT systems they are using beforehand in order to grasp a better understanding when interview are conducted.

If I had to rate my performance based on the scale of 1 to 5, I would give myself a 4/5, not because I am showing off, but because I underwent and understood my journey, so when I reflect upon it, I learnt that I have came a long way, and this rating is earned.

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**Discussion 8**

Hello everyone,

We made it after a long 8 weeks, and it is time to look back on the whole journey and tell our story.

**What was the best part of your internship?**

Undoubtedly, the highlight of my internship journey was the people. The camaraderie and support from the ITRA team elevated my experience to a whole new level. The colleagues I worked with were merely colleagues; they became mentors, collaborators, and friends. Their willingness to share knowledge, provide guidance, and foster a positive working environment made every day enjoyable and enriched my understanding of teamwork.

**What was the most challenging?**

On the flip side, the most challenging aspect revolved around navigating uncharted territory – diving into new concepts (IT Audit, Accounting, Finance, etc.), engaging in client interactions, and learning the intricate dance of proper workplace functioning. While demanding, these challenges were instrumental in pushing me beyond my comfort zone and, ultimately, contributed significantly to my professional growth.

**What was most surprising about this experience?**

One of the most pleasantly surprising aspects of this experience was the way I was treated within the team. Rather than being confined to the label of an intern, I was embraced as a valuable member of the staff. This inclusivity not only enhanced my sense of belonging but also empowered me to contribute more meaningfully to projects and discussions. It was a paradigm shift that highlighted the importance of fostering a collaborative and inclusive workplace culture.

**Has this experience changed your understanding of the industry you are in?**

Reflecting on the overall impact, this internship has unquestionably reshaped my understanding of the industry I am venturing into. The initial entry into the job market not only transformed my skill set but also broadened my perspective on the intricacies and dynamics of the industry. Witnessing firsthand the practical application of theoretical concepts and experiencing the day-to-day workings of the industry has been invaluable, leaving an indelible mark on my professional journey.