

PORFOLIO OF CERTIFICATE COURSE OF SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

[CCSSD]



BY
R.V.R.S VITHARANA
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Career Guidance Unit-University of Ruhuna

Acknowledgment

First of all, I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to Dr. N.W. Prins the previous career advisor of the Faculty of Engineering, , it is because of them that we are motivated for this. And also, I would like to give my deep and sincere gratitude to Dr. Prabath Weerasinghe the present career advisor of Faculty of Engineering, Mrs. Vindya Welihena career counselor of University of Ruhuna and T.S.L.W. Gunawardana Director career guidance unit at the University of Ruhuna for giving me this kind of opportunity for providing me with this thoughtful chance to improve my soft skills. I may learn and explore new things throughout this training. I will also be able to recognize myself. It will greatly benefit both my personal and professional lives.

Declaration

I hereby confirm that this portfolio is the result of my own work and efforts. To the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person, nor any material that has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma at this or any other institution of higher learning, except where proper acknowledgment has been made in the text.

Signature of the student:

Name of the student: Vitharana R.V.R.S.

Registration number of the student: EG/2021/4896

Date: 08/12/2024

Certification

This is to certify that this dissertation submitted by Vitharana R.V.R.S. EG/2021/4896 in fulfilment of the requirement for the Certificate Course of the Soft Skills Development in Career Guidance Unit of the University of Ruhuna is a record of the own work carried out by the student under my supervision. This portfolio has been submitted with my approval.

.....

Career Counsellor

Mrs. Vindya Welihena

Career Guidance Unit

University of Ruhuna

.....

Director,

Career Guidance Unit

University of Ruhuna

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About me

My name is Rishika Vitharana, and I'm from Panadura. I'm currently a third-year undergraduate student studying civil and environmental engineering at the University of Ruhuna. I chose this field because I enjoy working with people, and it offers many opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving, which I find rewarding.

Outside my studies, I'm passionate about music and have been playing the violin for years, performing at various university events. Public speaking is another interest of mine, and I've had the opportunity to announce at several university events. As a member of the "Voice Your Dream" Toastmasters Club, I continue to develop my communication and leadership skills.



Figure 0.1 Speaking at the Leadership Camp



Figure 0.2 Play violin at University Function

Leadership plays a key role in my life. I served as the batch representative for the Certificate Course of Soft Skill Development and am currently the President of the Career Guidance Students' Society, where I lead initiatives aimed at helping students grow professionally.

In addition to music and leadership, I played football at the university and am also a member of the weightlifting team. I like to maintain my body neatly, and these experiences have helped me build teamwork, perseverance, and discipline.



Figure 0.3 Toastmasters Area Contest

During my school years, I was a prefect and a member of the school senior brass band. I've engaged in various volunteer activities, including the Mehewara project, which is organized by the university to teach math to students who do not have many facilities. I love teaching and find it rewarding to help others learn and grow.



Figure 0.4 Volunteering in Mehewara Project

I consider myself friendly and enjoy meeting new people, which is why I love traveling around the country to make more friends. I'm also interested in learning, enjoy watching movies, and always try to stay happy. My goal is to continue growing personally and professionally while making a positive impact on those around me.

Executive Summary

This certificate program on soft skills development has been incredibly beneficial in shaping me as a civil engineering undergraduate. The module on **Self-Evaluation** helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses, which is crucial for setting realistic goals and improving my abilities. **Managing Resources** taught me effective strategies for utilizing time, finances, and other limited resources, skills that are vital in managing engineering projects. The **Stress Management** module provided me with practical tips to handle academic pressures and tight deadlines efficiently. Through the module on **Effective Study Skills and Goal-Directed Learning**, I developed better learning strategies, enabling me to master technical concepts and stay focused on achieving my objectives. The **Decision-Making and Problem-Solving** module enhanced my analytical thinking and taught me structured approaches to tackle challenges, both in academic and professional

contexts. **Communication Skills** were another key focus, equipping me with the ability to convey ideas effectively and collaborate with diverse teams. **Interpersonal Skills** taught me how to build strong relationships and work effectively in a team environment, which is essential for success in multidisciplinary engineering projects. The module on **Leadership Skills**, complemented by a leadership camp, gave me insights into managing teams and inspiring productivity, skills that will be crucial in my future career. Finally, the **Job Searching Strategies** module prepared me for the professional world by teaching me how to identify opportunities, prepare for interviews, and present myself confidently. These modules have collectively enhanced my academic journey and prepared me for a successful career in civil engineering.

Carrier Guidance Philosophy

The roots of career guidance can be traced back to the early 20th century, a time when industrialization and technological progress began reshaping the world of work. This transformation highlighted the growing need for individuals to navigate an increasingly diverse range of career opportunities and make informed decisions. This necessity gave rise to early practices in career guidance.

Initially, career guidance focused heavily on vocational pathways, providing individuals with insights into specific trades and professions. The emphasis was on aligning a person's skills and aptitudes with the demands of the labor market. Guidance counselors played a pivotal role in this process, using tools such as aptitude assessments and standardized tests to offer recommendations tailored to individual capabilities.

Over time, the field evolved to address the limitations of its early, vocation-centric approach. Recognizing that career choices are deeply influenced by personal values, aspirations, and life goals, career guidance embraced a more comprehensive perspective. This shift emphasized the need to balance occupational considerations with individual preferences and long-term objectives.

In the contemporary world, career guidance continues to adapt to new challenges and opportunities. The modern workforce is marked by rapid technological change, automation, and globalization, creating dynamic and non-linear career paths. Today, career guidance extends beyond traditional vocational advice, focusing on concepts such as career exploration, self-awareness, adaptability, and lifelong learning.

The digital age has further revolutionized career guidance. Tools like online resources, interactive platforms, and virtual career events have enhanced accessibility and reach, empowering individuals to access guidance regardless of geographic or socioeconomic barriers. These innovations have democratized career guidance, ensuring that more people can explore and pursue fulfilling career paths.

This evolving philosophy underscores that career guidance is not merely about choosing a profession but about equipping individuals with the tools and insights needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

1. Module 01 Self Evaluation

This module is consist of many thing that helped me to identify my skills and strength by using following methods,

- Attitudes, Skills, and Strengths
- Values and Behavior
- Opportunities within and outside the University
- Johari Window
- Personality Traits
- Personality Development
- Personal Branding
- Career Plan
- MBTI

1.1 What is SWOT analysis?



Figure 1.1 SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis for individuals is a strategic planning tool that helps assess personal attributes and circumstances. It involves identifying four key components:

1. **Strengths:** These are the internal qualities and skills that give an individual an advantage, such as leadership abilities, communication skills, or technical expertise.
2. **Weaknesses:** These are internal factors that may hinder personal growth or success, such as limited experience, lack of confidence, or language barriers.
3. **Opportunities:** These are external factors or situations that an individual can leverage for growth, such as networking possibilities, educational resources, or job openings.
4. **Threats:** These are external challenges that may pose risks to an individual's goals, such as economic instability, competition in the job market, or changes in industry demand.

By analyzing these components, individuals can gain valuable insights into their current situation, set realistic goals, and develop strategies to enhance their strengths, address weaknesses, seize opportunities, and mitigate threats.

1.2 Why is it important?

SWOT analysis is important for individuals as it provides a structured framework to evaluate their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. By conducting a SWOT analysis, individuals gain a clearer understanding of their unique abilities and areas for improvement, allowing them to make informed decisions about their personal and professional development. This self-awareness helps them identify opportunities for growth, such as pursuing new skills or networking, while also recognizing potential challenges they may face. Ultimately, SWOT analysis empowers individuals to create strategic plans to achieve their goals, navigate obstacles effectively, and enhance their overall success in various aspects of life.

1.2.1 Strengths

I have strong leadership skills that enable me to guide and motivate those around me effectively. My passion for learning drives me to seek out new knowledge and experiences, keeping me self-motivated and eager to grow in both my personal and academic life. I take pride in my organizational skills, which help me manage my time efficiently and keep track of tasks and deadlines.

My positive attitude allows me to connect easily with others, fostering a friendly and supportive environment. I have a good understanding of the English language, which enhances my communication skills and helps me express my thoughts clearly. I embrace challenges as opportunities for growth and view them as ways to test my abilities and improve.

I also enjoy being independent and taking responsibility for my actions and decisions. My strong academic performance reflects my dedication to excellence and my commitment to putting in the effort required to succeed in all my endeavors. Overall, I believe these strengths contribute significantly to my success in both my studies and my interactions with others.

1.2.2 Weaknesses

I recognize several weaknesses that I am actively working to improve. I find it difficult to work overnight, which can impact my productivity during demanding periods. Additionally, collaborating with individuals who have different attitudes can be challenging for me, often leading to a loss of focus. My impatience for results sometimes hinders my ability to appreciate the gradual nature of progress. I also struggle with saying no, which can lead to overcommitting myself. Lastly, public speaking anxiety affects my confidence when presenting in front of an audience, even though I am committed to enhancing this skill through practice and experience.

1.2.3 Opportunities

Under the opportunities section of my SWOT analysis, I recognize several key factors that can support my growth and success. I have access to valuable connections through my university, which can open doors for internships and job placements in civil and environmental engineering. My family's supportive status provides a solid foundation, allowing me to focus on my studies and personal development without significant financial strain. Additionally, there are numerous opportunities for further study and skill enhancement, including workshops and online courses. These resources will enable me to gain valuable knowledge and experiences that will help shape my future career and personal goals.

1.2.4 Threats

In my SWOT analysis, I recognize several weaknesses that may impact my journey. The current economic situation in my country can limit job opportunities in civil engineering, making the job market quite competitive. Additionally, the pressure to excel among my peers can be

overwhelming at times, affecting my confidence and focus. I also face challenges due to limited resources, which may restrict my access to advanced tools and technologies necessary for practical learning. These factors combined create an environment where competition is high, making it crucial for me to find ways to overcome these obstacles and enhance my personal and professional development.

1.3 What is goal setting?



Figure 1.2 Goal Setting

Goal setting is the process of identifying specific, measurable, and achievable objectives that an individual or organization aims to accomplish within a defined time frame. It involves outlining clear targets, breaking them into actionable steps, and creating a roadmap to achieve desired outcomes. Goal setting provides direction, focus, and a sense of purpose, enabling individuals to align their efforts with their aspirations.

1.3.1 Why is Goal Setting Important?

- It helps to define what is important, allowing individuals to focus on meaningful tasks and avoid distractions.
- It inspires consistent effort and provides a clear sense of direction for actions.
- It ensures time and resources are used efficiently by setting priorities.
- It fosters personal growth by encouraging individuals to step out of their comfort zones, build skills, and gain confidence.
- It offers a sense of accomplishment when goals are achieved, boosting self-esteem and positivity.
- It serves as a guide for making decisions that align with long-term aspirations and values.
- It enables progress to be tracked and measured, making it easier to adjust strategies and stay on course.

Goal setting plays a crucial role in achieving success and maintaining focus in both personal and professional life.

1.4 SMART Goals



Figure 1.3 SMART Goals

1.4.1 What Are SMART Goals?

SMART goals are a framework for setting clear, achievable, and structured objectives. The acronym **SMART** stands for **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Achievable**, **Relevant**, and **Time-bound**. This method ensures goals are well-defined and practical, making it easier to stay focused and motivated while working toward success.

- **Specific:** A SMART goal should be clear and precise, answering questions like "What do I want to accomplish?" and "Why is this goal important?"
- **Measurable:** It should include criteria to track progress and measure success, ensuring you can evaluate your accomplishments.
- **Achievable:** The goal must be realistic and attainable, considering available resources and constraints.
- **Relevant:** The goal should align with your broader objectives, values, and long-term aspirations.
- **Time-bound:** A SMART goal includes a specific timeline or deadline, creating urgency and keeping efforts focused.

1.4.2 Why Are SMART Goals Important?

- They provide clarity, ensuring you know exactly what you're working toward.
- They create a sense of accountability by incorporating measurable outcomes and deadlines.
- They encourage realistic planning and resource allocation, preventing overwhelm or unattainable expectations.
- They align efforts with broader objectives, making progress purposeful and meaningful.
- They increase motivation and focus by breaking larger goals into manageable steps.

By adopting the SMART framework, individuals can set goals that are actionable, trackable, and achievable, significantly enhancing the likelihood of success.

In following I mentioned 3 goals that I steted and why I set these goals, what I do right now to pursue those goals and what time that I wish to pursue those goals.

1. My primary goal as a university student is to excel academically and achieve a good grade in my civil and environmental engineering degree. To accomplish this, I put consistent effort into my studies, attending every lecture, participating actively in practical sessions, and staying disciplined in my academic journey.

This goal is important to me because it serves as the foundation for my future career as a civil engineer, allowing me to gain the knowledge, skills, and qualifications necessary to contribute to the field and achieve professional success.

To ensure my goal is attainable, I follow the SMART criteria:

- **Specific:** My goal is to achieve a strong academic performance and complete my degree successfully.
- **Measurable:** I track my progress through grades, feedback, and personal assessments after each semester.
- **Achievable:** By maintaining a consistent study routine and seeking help when needed, I ensure my efforts align with my capabilities.
- **Relevant:** This goal is directly aligned with my ambition to become a successful civil engineer.
- **Time-bound:** My aim is to complete my degree by the year 2026, which provides a clear timeline to work within.

With dedication, strategic planning, and persistence, I am committed to achieving this goal and setting a strong foundation for my future endeavors.

2. My goal is to become a skilled public speaker, which is essential for both my personal growth and future career. To achieve this, I have joined Toastmasters, where I actively participate in speaking sessions and practice my communication skills. Additionally, I read English books, watch related videos, and study vocabulary to improve my language fluency and presentation abilities.

This goal is important because being an effective speaker will enhance my leadership potential, improve my ability to present ideas clearly, and increase my confidence in professional and social settings.

To make this goal attainable, I follow the SMART criteria:

- **Specific:** My goal is to become a confident and effective public speaker.
- **Measurable:** I measure my progress through feedback from Toastmasters, self-assessment, and improvements in my presentations.
- **Achievable:** By consistently practicing through Toastmasters, reading, and studying vocabulary, I ensure steady improvement.
- **Relevant:** This goal supports my ambition to develop leadership and communication skills, which are crucial for my career in civil engineering and beyond.
- **Time-bound:** I aim to achieve this goal and be a proficient speaker by the time I graduate in 2026.

With dedication, continuous practice, and a focus on improvement, I am confident that I will reach this goal and become an effective and engaging speaker.

3. My goal is to become a great leader in a reputed civil engineering company. To achieve this, I have taken on leadership roles, particularly as the President of the Career Guidance Students' Society at my university. I am also actively involved in sports and extracurricular activities, which help me develop teamwork, decision-making, and leadership skills.

This goal is important to me because strong leadership is essential for driving projects, inspiring teams, and making a significant impact in the civil engineering field. By honing my leadership abilities, I aim to guide teams effectively, make informed decisions, and contribute meaningfully to the growth of my future company.

To ensure I reach this goal, I apply the SMART criteria:

- **Specific:** My goal is to become an influential leader in a renowned civil engineering company.

- **Measurable:** I track my leadership progress through the success of projects I lead, feedback from peers and mentors, and the development of my leadership skills.
- **Achievable:** By taking on leadership roles in university clubs, sports teams, and extracurricular activities, I am gaining practical experience in managing teams and responsibilities.
- **Relevant:** This goal aligns with my passion for civil engineering and my desire to make a positive impact through effective leadership.
- **Time-bound:** I aim to establish myself as a strong leader by the time I graduate in 2026.

Through my active participation in university activities and leadership roles, I am preparing myself to step into a leadership position in a prestigious civil engineering company and make meaningful contributions to the industry.

1.5 What is MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator)?

ESTJ Ti Ambition Si Discipline Se Experience Te Pragmatism	ESTP Sp Spontaneity Tp Inventiveness Se Experience Te Pragmatism	ESFP Sp Spontaneity Tp Honesty Se Experience Fe Romantic	ESFJ Si Discipline Fj Kindness Se Experience Fe Romantic
ISTJ Si History Ti Accuracy Sj Discipline Tj Ambition	ISTP Si History Ti Accuracy Sp Spontaneity Tp Inventiveness	ISFP Si History Fj Honesty Sp Spontaneity Fj Honesty	ISFJ Si History Honesty Inventiveness Fj Kindness
INTJ Ni Philosophy Ti Accuracy Nj Vision Tj Ambition	INTP Ni Disciplinarity Ti Accuracy Tp Variation Tp Inventiveness	INFP Ni Disciplinarity Ti Honesty Nj Variation Fj Honesty	INFJ Ni Disciplinarity Fj Honesty Nj Vision Fj Kindness
ENTJ Ne Opportunity Te Pragmatism Nj Vision Tj Ambition	ENTP Ne Opportunity Te Pragmatism Nj Variation Tp Inventiveness	ENFP Ne Opportunity Fj Romantic Nj Variation Fj Honesty	ENFJ Ne Opportunity Fj Romantic Nj Vision Fj Kindness

Figure 1.4 MBTI

The **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** is a popular personality assessment tool designed to help individuals understand their psychological preferences and how they perceive the world, make decisions, and interact with others. Developed by **Isabel Briggs Myers** and her mother **Katharine Cook Briggs** based on Carl Jung's theory of personality types, the MBTI categorizes people into 16 different personality types, based on four pairs of opposing traits.

1.5.1 The Four Dichotomies of MBTI:

1. Extraversion (E) vs. Introversion (I):

- **Extraversion:** People with this preference are energized by interaction with others and enjoy being social and active.
- **Introversion:** Those with this preference prefer solitude or small groups and are energized by time spent alone.

2. Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N):

- **Sensing:** Individuals who prefer sensing focus on the present and are detail-oriented, using their senses to gather information.
- **Intuition:** People who prefer intuition look at the bigger picture, focusing on patterns, future possibilities, and abstract concepts.

3. Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F):

- **Thinking:** Individuals with this preference make decisions based on logic, facts, and objectivity.
- **Feeling:** Those with this preference make decisions based on personal values, emotions, and how decisions will affect others.

4. Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P):

- **Judging:** People who prefer judging like structure, organization, and planning, preferring to make decisions quickly.
- **Perceiving:** Those with this preference are flexible, spontaneous, and open to new information and experiences.

1.5.2 How MBTI is Used:

The MBTI helps individuals gain insights into their own preferences and behaviors, as well as how they interact with others. It's commonly used in personal development, career counseling, team-building, and leadership development. By understanding their MBTI type, individuals can leverage their strengths, work on areas of improvement, and communicate more effectively with others.

1.5.3 Importance of MBTI:

- **Self-Awareness:** It promotes greater understanding of one's strengths, weaknesses, and natural preferences, leading to personal growth.

- **Improved Relationships:** By understanding different personality types, individuals can improve communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution with others.
- **Career Development:** The MBTI can help individuals identify career paths that align with their personality preferences, leading to more job satisfaction and success.
- **Team Dynamics:** In work environments, understanding different personality types can help teams collaborate more effectively, with each member contributing their strengths.

Overall, the MBTI is a valuable tool for increasing self-awareness, improving relationships, and fostering personal and professional development.

I am an **ENTJ** personality type, which means I have a natural inclination toward leadership, organization, and strategic thinking. I am driven to achieve my goals and constantly seek opportunities to improve myself and others. As an ENTJ, I am often seen as decisive, focused, and goal-oriented, and these traits influence both my academic and personal life.

For example, my role as the president of the Career Guidance Students' Society at my university showcases my leadership skills. I am responsible for managing a team, making decisions, and guiding others toward their professional development. I enjoy being in charge, planning events, and ensuring everything runs smoothly, which is a clear reflection of my **Extraversion (E)** trait. I am energized by interacting with others and thrive in leadership positions that allow me to make a significant impact.

My approach to academics also reflects my **Intuition (N)** and **Thinking (T)** preferences. I focus on the long-term goals of my degree and my career in civil engineering, which motivates me to stay organized and disciplined in my studies. I carefully analyze problems and think about solutions in a logical, efficient way. I rely on my ability to look at the bigger picture and find innovative solutions, rather than just focusing on the immediate task.

Additionally, my **Judging (J)** preference is evident in how I structure my time and set clear goals. I am committed to finishing my degree by 2026, and I work diligently to stay on track, balancing academics, extracurricular activities, and leadership roles. I plan ahead, stay organized, and aim to meet deadlines, which helps me maintain focus and achieve my objectives.

Being an ENTJ allows me to lead confidently, make well-informed decisions, and stay motivated to pursue my goals. It drives me to take charge in various situations, whether in leadership roles, academic challenges, or personal development, and always work toward achieving excellence.

1.6 Johari windows

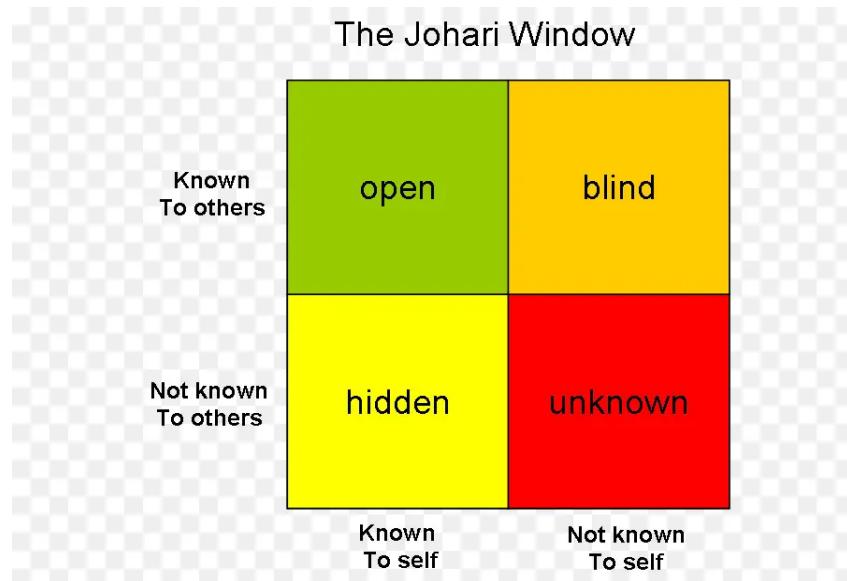


Figure 1.5 Johari Window

The **Johari Window** is a psychological tool that helps individuals improve self-awareness and mutual understanding in relationships. It was developed by **Joseph Luft** and **Harry Ingham** in 1955 and is used to facilitate communication, personal growth, and group development. The model is represented as a 2x2 grid, with each quadrant representing different aspects of self-awareness and how others perceive us.

The Johari Window is divided into four main areas:

1. Open Area (Arena):

This area represents information about yourself that both you and others are aware of. It includes traits, behaviors, and feelings that are openly shared and easily accessible, like

your personality, skills, and hobbies. The larger this area is, the more transparent and effective your communication and relationships are.

2. Blind Spot:

The blind spot represents information that others know about you but that you are unaware of. This could include habits, behaviors, or characteristics that are visible to others but not to yourself. Receiving constructive feedback from others can help you become aware of these aspects.

3. Hidden Area (Façade):

This area includes information about you that you are aware of but choose to keep hidden from others. This might involve personal secrets, fears, or feelings that you prefer not to share. The smaller the hidden area, the more open and authentic you are in your relationships.

4. Unknown Area:

The unknown area represents information that neither you nor others are aware of. It may include untapped potential, unconscious behaviors, or undiscovered talents. This area is often explored through self-reflection, experiences, and interactions with others.

1.6.1 Why the Johari Window is Important:

- **Enhances Self-Awareness:** By reflecting on the different areas of the Johari Window, individuals can gain insight into their own behaviors, strengths, and areas for growth.
- **Improves Communication:** Understanding how others perceive us and sharing more about ourselves can improve the quality of communication and trust in relationships.
- **Fosters Personal and Professional Development:** Expanding the Open Area by soliciting feedback and sharing more about ourselves can lead to personal growth and better teamwork, which is especially important in leadership and collaboration.
- **Facilitates Teamwork:** In group settings, the Johari Window helps create an open and honest environment where people can give and receive feedback, leading to improved collaboration and performance.

In summary, the Johari Window is a valuable tool for increasing self-awareness, improving communication, and enhancing relationships, both personally and professionally. By expanding

the open area and reducing blind spots and hidden areas, individuals can foster better understanding and stronger connections with others.

2 Module 02 Managing Resources

The **Managing Resources** module focuses on equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively manage both personal and organizational resources. This module emphasizes the importance of resource management in various contexts, from time and finances to human resources and materials. In university, this is particularly relevant as students juggle multiple responsibilities, such as academics, extracurricular activities, and personal development.

2.1 Clubs and Societies

In this module, we learned about the various **clubs and societies** available at the university, exploring how they function and the resources they manage to support their activities. We delved into how these organizations utilize resources like time, funding, and human capital to achieve their goals and contribute to the university community.

Moreover, the module provided insights into **strategies for managing these resources** efficiently. By studying real-life examples from university clubs and societies, we gained a deeper understanding of how to allocate resources effectively, ensure sustainability, and optimize productivity in both group settings and individual pursuits. Through this learning, we developed practical skills that will be essential in both our academic and professional lives, where resource management plays a key role in success.

Our task for the **Managing Resources** module was to explore the **Student Counselor Unit** at the university, which plays a vital role in supporting the well-being and development of students. To gather detailed information, we had the opportunity to interview **Dr. Ruwan Appuhami**, the Senior Deputy Counselor of the university, and **Dr. Anuruddika Jayasinghe**, the Counselor for the Civil Engineering Department.

During our interviews, we were provided with comprehensive insights into the services and programs offered by the **Student Counselor Unit**. Both counselors emphasized the importance of mental health and emotional well-being in academic success. The unit provides a range of services,

including one-on-one counseling sessions, group counseling, and workshops aimed at managing stress, anxiety, and other personal challenges. They also help students with career guidance, time management, and decision-making, all of which are essential for balancing academic responsibilities and personal life.

In addition, we learned about various support mechanisms available for students in need of guidance, such as peer support programs, crisis intervention services, and workshops focused on building resilience and coping strategies. These services are designed to ensure that students have access to the resources they need to thrive both academically and personally.

Through this task, we gained valuable insight into how the **Student Counselor Unit** effectively manages its resources, including the time and expertise of counselors, to provide essential services to students. We also observed how the unit collaborates with other departments, like the Civil Engineering Department, to address the specific needs of students within various faculties.

By learning about the management of human resources, time, and support services within this unit, we gained a deeper understanding of how to effectively manage resources in both academic and professional settings. This experience also highlighted the importance of providing students with the support they need to succeed and grow in all areas of life.

Here is our presentation.

Moon Walkers – Group 1

Student Counsellor Unit

Group members

R.V.R.S.Vitharana	EG/2021/4896
W.G.T.S Wijerathne	EG/2021/4874
K. Thushalika	EG/4896/4836
K.A.B.H. Wijerathna	EG/4896/4869

Introduction

- ❖ Mainly this unit starts to welfare students. This unit mainly helps students to solve their problems in their academic life as well as work in the industry.

Structure

- No permanent staff
- 10 members appointed to each department.
 - ✓ Senior student Counsellor
 - ✓ Civil department
 - ✓ Mechanical department
 - ✓ Electrical department
 - ✓ Librarian

Office Bearers

Senior Student Counsellor

- Dr. J.M.R.S. Appuhamy

Civil and Environmental Department

- Dr. Anuruddhika G. Jayasinghe
- Dr. T. M. Rengarasu
- Dr. N. H. Priyankara

Library Representatives

- Mr. J.J. Garusing Arachchige

Electrical and Information Department

- Dr. N.W.J.A.L. Prins
- Dr. C.K.W. Seneviratne

Interdisciplinary Studies Department

- Dr. W. T. G. Samantha

Mechanical and Manufacturing Department

- Dr. K. J. C. Kumara
- Dr. B. Annasiwaththa

Vision

- ❖ To create well-being engineers in the world who can manage stress.

Mission

- In financial issues give scholars.
- help students who have addicted to mobile phones, games, and drugs.
- Give solutions for students' personal issues.

Programs

- From Time to time conduct several workshops/ activities.
 - ✓ Drugs prevention programs.
 - ✓ Time management and Stress management programs
 - ✓ In covid season awareness sessions and entertainment programs.

Procedure

- Through advisor meets a Counsellor.
- Without contact advisor direct contact Counsellor
- Mobile numbers and emails of counsellors are available on websites.

Participation

- Average of 10- 12 students come to this unit annually.
- Difficult situation 2 or 3 sessions for each student.
- This unit helps not only students but also staff members.

Importance

- Train students to manage stress.
- Counselling is very important to manage every work, using time efficiently in work as Engineers
- Not only Financially, physically, or mentally, it helps students find solutions to any problem.
- Students are helped even after university life.

References

- **Lectures**

1. Dr. Ruwan Appuhamy- Senior Student counselor (interviewed date- 2022.08.28)
2. Dr. Anuruddika G. Jayasinghe (Interviewed date- 2022.08.18)

- **Students**

1. T. Thasmitha (EG/2021/4827) (Interviewed date- 2022.08.30)
2. L.A.D.Y. Mewan (EG/2021/4675) (Interviewed date- 2022.08.30)

Reference Websites

- Student counselor unit website

<http://eie.eng.ruh.ac.lk/fac/student-life/student-support/student-councillors/>

From other group presentations, we were able to learn about the procedures and functions of various clubs and societies within the university, such as **Gavel Club**, **AIESEC**, **Sports Council**, **Student Union**, **REF Media**, and others. Each group shared valuable insights into how these organizations operate, manage their resources, and engage with students.

For instance, the **Gavel Club** presentation highlighted the importance of public speaking and leadership development, outlining the processes for hosting meetings, organizing events, and managing resources such as time and materials for speeches and training. Similarly, **AIESEC** provided an overview of its international exchange programs and how it prepares students for global careers. They also discussed their recruitment processes and resource management for organizing events and programs.

The **Sports Council** shared their strategies for managing university sports teams, organizing events, and ensuring student participation in various sports activities. They explained how they coordinate with different sports associations and handle logistics, scheduling, and resource allocation to support student athletes.

The **Student Union** highlighted its role in advocating for student interests, organizing social events, and addressing student issues. They emphasized their approach to managing student feedback, organizing campaigns, and ensuring effective communication with both students and university administration.

Lastly, the **REF Media** group provided an insight into how they manage media-related resources, including photography, video production, and social media outreach. They shared their strategies for content creation, team coordination, and ensuring that media services are accessible to other university clubs and societies.

By learning about the procedures of these various clubs and societies, we gained a better understanding of how to manage resources effectively, collaborate with others, and create impactful initiatives. This knowledge will be helpful in managing resources in our own activities, both within the university and in future professional environments.

2.2 Personal Finance Management

Personal finance management is the practice of overseeing and controlling one's finances to achieve financial goals and enhance overall financial health. It involves a variety of key areas such as budgeting, saving, investing, debt management, and planning for the future. Below are some essential principles and strategies for effective personal finance management:

1. **Create a Budget:** The first step in personal finance management is to analyze your income and expenses. Develop a budget that allocates funds for essential needs, savings, investments, and discretionary spending. Regularly review and adjust your budget to ensure you're staying on track with your financial goals.
2. **Track Your Spending:** Keeping a close eye on your spending is crucial. Use apps or spreadsheets to track your daily, weekly, and monthly expenses. Identifying areas where you can cut back or make adjustments will help you better manage your finances.
3. **Build an Emergency Fund:** It's essential to set aside money in an emergency fund to handle unexpected expenses or financial setbacks. Aim for saving at least three to six months' worth of living expenses to provide a financial cushion during challenging times.
4. **Pay Off Debt:** Focus on paying down high-interest debts like credit cards and personal loans. Using strategies such as the avalanche or snowball method can help you stay motivated and eliminate debt more efficiently.
5. **Save for Retirement:** Begin saving for retirement as early as possible. Contribute to retirement accounts such as a 401(k) or an individual retirement account (IRA). This allows you to take advantage of compounding interest and employer matches to secure your financial future.
6. **Invest Wisely:** Educate yourself about different types of investments, such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and real estate. Diversify your investments to minimize risk and consider consulting a financial advisor to tailor an investment strategy that aligns with your goals.
7. **Review Insurance Coverage:** Assess your insurance needs, including health, life, and property insurance. Ensure that you have adequate coverage to protect yourself and your assets in case of emergencies or unforeseen events.

8. **Minimize Unnecessary Expenses:** Look for opportunities to reduce unnecessary expenses. This could include canceling unused subscriptions, negotiating better rates for services, or cutting back on impulsive purchases. Saving on small daily expenses can add up to significant long-term savings.
9. **Continuously Educate Yourself:** Stay informed about personal finance trends and strategies by reading books, attending seminars, or following reputable financial resources. The more you know, the better equipped you'll be to make informed financial decisions.
10. **Set Realistic Financial Goals:** Establish specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) financial goals. Regularly monitor your progress and adjust your strategy as needed to stay on course toward your objectives.

This module has taught me the importance of managing my time, money, and energy efficiently. I have learned how to set financial priorities, track expenses, and budget wisely. Additionally, I've gained an understanding of how to invest for the future, secure retirement, and build a strong financial foundation. Mastering personal finance management has helped me become more organized, financially responsible, and prepared for the future.

3 Module 03 Stress Management

Stress management is the process of recognizing and reducing stress in one's life to maintain a healthy balance between work, rest, and personal well-being. This module has been particularly significant for us as engineering undergraduates, as we often face a heavy workload and high-pressure situations. By exploring stress management techniques, we gained valuable insights into how to manage stress effectively in our academic and personal lives.

One of the key topics covered was **Mental Health**, which refers to a state of well-being where an individual can realize their potential, cope with normal life stresses, work productively, and contribute to society. Good mental health is essential for overall well-being and quality of life.

Stress itself was examined in detail, highlighting its definition and the types of stress we encounter. Stress is a physiological and psychological response to demands that exceed our ability to cope, and it can be categorized into acute stress (short-term) and chronic stress (long-term).

We also explored the **physical symptoms of stress**, which can include headaches, fatigue, muscle tension, and digestive problems. Chronic stress, if not managed, can lead to serious health issues such as heart disease and depression.

The module introduced several **stress prevention and management theories**, such as the transactional model of stress, which suggests that stress arises when individuals perceive an event as threatening and feel they lack the resources to cope with it. Techniques for managing stress, including relaxation exercises, time management strategies, and cognitive-behavioral therapy, were also discussed.

To **manage stress**, we learned how to identify its sources, develop coping strategies, and make necessary lifestyle changes. Practices like deep breathing, meditation, exercise, and social support were emphasized as effective tools for stress reduction. It's also important to prioritize self-care and seek professional help when needed.

The relationship between **mental health and stress** was highlighted, as chronic stress can lead to mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Similarly, mental health problems can

contribute to increased stress. Prioritizing mental health is essential for maintaining overall well-being and effectively managing stress.

As part of the module, we were assigned a task to deliver a speech on the topic "What is Stress?". The task focused on content, performance, and time management. I received constructive feedback regarding time management and pronunciation, which will be valuable for improving my public speaking skills in the future.

This module has helped me understand the nature of stress, its effects on physical and mental health, and the strategies available to manage it effectively. It has provided me with the tools to balance my academic, personal, and career responsibilities while maintaining my well-being.

Under the Career Guidance Students' Society, we have organized and conducted several seminars aimed at addressing critical issues such as preventing suicide and promoting mental health awareness. These seminars provided valuable insights into mental well-being, stress management, and how to cope with the pressures of university life. We collaborated with experts and professionals to share resources and strategies that can help individuals manage emotional struggles and seek help when needed. These initiatives were designed to raise awareness among students and provide them with tools to support their mental health, ensuring a supportive environment in which they can thrive academically and personally.

One of the key sessions conducted under the Career Guidance Students' Society was led by Mrs. Bagya Abesinghe. The session focused on important topics such as preventing suicide, managing mental health challenges, and recognizing the signs of emotional distress. Mrs. Abesinghe, with her expertise, provided valuable insights into how students can cope with academic and personal pressures, encouraging them to seek help and support when needed. The session also emphasized the importance of mental well-being in achieving success in both personal and academic life, creating a safe and supportive space for students to discuss their concerns and learn effective coping strategies.



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Uma Fernando
Moderator

**WORLD
SUICIDE PREVENTION
DAY (SEPTEMBER 10)**



Speaker

**Mrs. Bhagya
Abeysinghe**
(Counseling Psychologist)



Career Guidance
STUDENTS' SOCIETY
Faculty of Engineering University of Ruhuna

4 Module 04 Effective Study Skills and Goal Directed Learning

Effective study skills and goal-directed learning are fundamental to achieving academic success, especially for university students. These skills work together to optimize the learning process and help students reach their desired academic outcomes.

Effective study skills involve various strategies that enhance comprehension, retention, and application of knowledge. By employing techniques such as active reading, note-taking, summarization, and self-testing, students can improve their ability to retain and recall information. These methods help students process complex material more efficiently, making it easier to understand and remember key concepts.

Goal-directed learning, on the other hand, focuses on setting clear, specific, and measurable academic goals that provide direction and motivation. By creating SMART goals—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound—students can break down their larger academic objectives into manageable tasks. This approach helps them stay focused, organized, and motivated as they work towards accomplishing their goals. It also allows students to track their progress and make adjustments along the way to stay on course.

Creating a study schedule is another important aspect of effective study skills. A well-structured schedule helps students prioritize tasks, allocate time for study sessions, and ensure they stay on track with assignments and exams. It also promotes consistency and discipline, helping students avoid procrastination and manage their time effectively.

Incorporating feedback is crucial for improving study skills. Feedback from professors, peers, or tutors provides valuable insights into areas of strength and areas that need improvement. Students can use this feedback to adjust their study strategies and enhance their performance.

Minimizing distractions is another essential element of effective studying. With distractions like social media, smartphones, and other external factors, students can struggle to maintain focus.

Implementing strategies such as turning off notifications, creating a quiet study environment, and using apps to limit distractions can help students stay on track during study sessions.

Lastly, self-care is vital for academic success. Students should prioritize their physical and mental health by getting enough sleep, eating nutritious meals, exercising regularly, and managing stress. Taking care of oneself ensures that students have the energy and focus needed to succeed in their studies.

In our lecture, we learned valuable techniques to improve our academic performance. These strategies are especially beneficial for university students who often face demanding coursework. By adopting these techniques, students can better manage their time, enhance their understanding of the material, and achieve academic success in university.

4.1 Cooperative Learning



Figure 4.1 Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is an instructional approach that involves students working together in small groups to achieve shared learning goals. It is based on the principle that students can learn more effectively when they collaborate and support one another in a structured environment. In cooperative learning, each group member is responsible for both their own learning and the success of the group, fostering a sense of responsibility, teamwork, and mutual support.

Key elements of cooperative learning include positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face interaction, and group processing. Positive interdependence ensures that all members rely on each other to succeed, while individual accountability ensures that each student contributes to the group's learning. Face-to-face interaction encourages communication and collaboration, while group processing allows members to reflect on how they can improve their teamwork and learning outcomes.

Cooperative learning offers several benefits, including improved academic achievement, enhanced social skills, and increased motivation. It encourages students to engage actively with the material, promotes critical thinking, and helps develop problem-solving abilities. Additionally, it fosters a sense of belonging and community, as students work together towards common goals.

In a cooperative learning setting, students may engage in various activities such as discussions, problem-solving tasks, peer teaching, and project-based assignments. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating these activities, providing guidance, and ensuring that each student participates actively and equitably.

Overall, cooperative learning enhances the learning experience by promoting collaboration, improving communication skills, and encouraging active participation, which can lead to deeper understanding and better retention of the material.

4.2 Experiential Learning



Figure 4.2 Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is a process of learning through direct experience, where individuals actively engage in a learning activity, reflect on their experiences, and apply new knowledge or skills in real-world situations. Unlike traditional classroom-based learning, which often emphasizes theoretical knowledge, experiential learning focuses on learning through action, problem-solving, and reflection.

This type of learning is based on the idea that individuals learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process, rather than passively receiving information. It encourages learners to take risks, make decisions, and learn from both their successes and failures. Experiential learning is often seen as more engaging and impactful because it connects theory to practice, making the learning process more relevant and meaningful.

Key components of experiential learning include:

1. **Concrete Experience:** The learner engages in a hands-on activity or real-life experience, such as internships, fieldwork, or practical exercises.
2. **Reflective Observation:** After the experience, the learner reflects on what happened, analyzing and making sense of the experience.
3. **Abstract Conceptualization:** The learner draws conclusions from their reflection, forms theories or concepts, and connects the experience to existing knowledge.
4. **Active Experimentation:** The learner applies the newly acquired knowledge and theories to future experiences, testing out new ideas and refining their understanding.

Experiential learning can take many forms, such as internships, laboratory work, case studies, simulations, role-playing, and service learning projects. It is widely used in fields such as engineering, medicine, business, and the arts, where practical skills and real-world problem-solving are crucial.

By engaging in experiential learning, students not only acquire academic knowledge but also develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills that are highly valued in professional environments. This type of learning fosters deeper understanding and prepares

individuals for real-life challenges, making it an effective approach for both personal and professional growth.

4.3 Mind Mapping

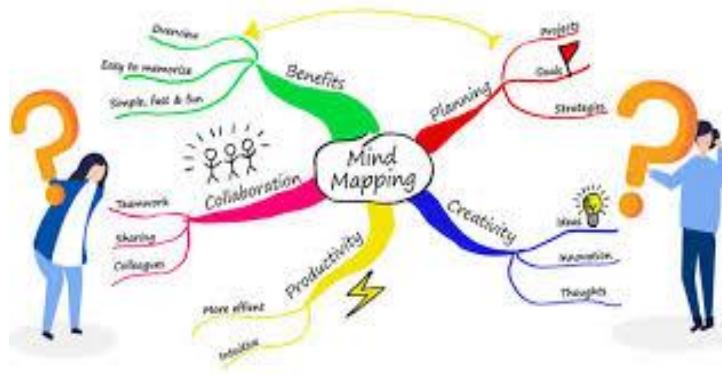


Figure 4.3 Mind Mapping

Mind mapping is a visual technique used to organize information, ideas, or concepts in a structured and easy-to-understand way. It involves creating a diagram that represents thoughts, ideas, or concepts around a central theme or topic. Each idea or concept is connected to the central theme through branches, which can be further expanded with sub-branches, creating a tree-like structure.

Mind maps are typically created using keywords, short phrases, symbols, and images that help simplify complex information. The use of colors, lines, and shapes enhances the visual appeal and aids in better recall and understanding.

This technique is widely used for brainstorming, problem-solving, note-taking, planning, and studying. By organizing thoughts visually, mind mapping encourages creativity, helps identify relationships between different pieces of information, and makes it easier to understand complex topics.

For students, mind mapping is particularly beneficial for organizing study material, outlining essays, preparing for exams, and generating ideas for projects. It helps break down large amounts

of information into manageable chunks, making studying more efficient. Moreover, it promotes active engagement and improves memory retention by encouraging both the left (logical) and right (creative) sides of the brain to work together.

In summary, mind mapping is a powerful tool for organizing and visualizing information, fostering creativity, and enhancing learning and comprehension. It provides a clear, organized, and memorable way of representing complex concepts, making it an effective tool for students and professionals alike.

4.4 VARK Learning

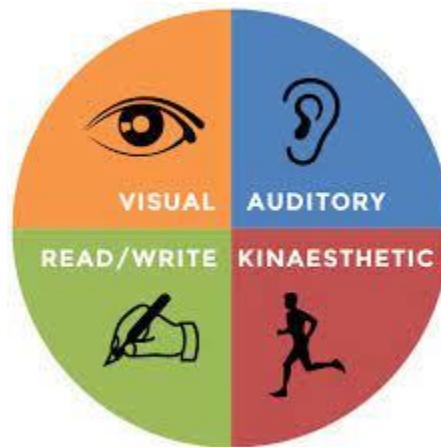


Figure 4.4 VARK Learning

VARK learning is a model that helps individuals identify their preferred learning styles, enabling them to understand how they absorb and process information most effectively. VARK stands for Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic, the four primary learning preferences that people tend to favor when acquiring new knowledge. Understanding one's VARK learning style can enhance study techniques and improve learning outcomes.

1. **Visual Learners:** These learners understand and retain information best when it is presented visually. They prefer diagrams, charts, graphs, and other visual aids. Using color-coded notes or watching videos can help visual learners grasp concepts more effectively.

2. **Auditory Learners:** Auditory learners excel when information is delivered through sound. They prefer listening to lectures, discussions, podcasts, and audiobooks. Repeating information out loud or discussing topics with others also helps auditory learners retain information.
3. **Reading/Writing Learners:** This group of learners benefits from reading and writing activities. They learn best through written materials, such as textbooks, articles, and taking notes. Writing out summaries or engaging in written exercises can reinforce their understanding.
4. **Kinesthetic Learners:** Kinesthetic learners thrive when they can engage in physical activities. They learn by doing, experiencing, or experimenting. Hands-on activities, role-playing, and experiments are effective ways for kinesthetic learners to absorb new information.

By identifying your VARK learning style, you can tailor your study methods to match your strengths. This personalized approach increases the efficiency and effectiveness of your learning, helping you retain information better and perform well in your academic pursuits. Understanding VARK also promotes flexibility, as students can adapt their learning strategies to fit different types of content or teaching methods.

4.5 SQ3R Method and Memory Test

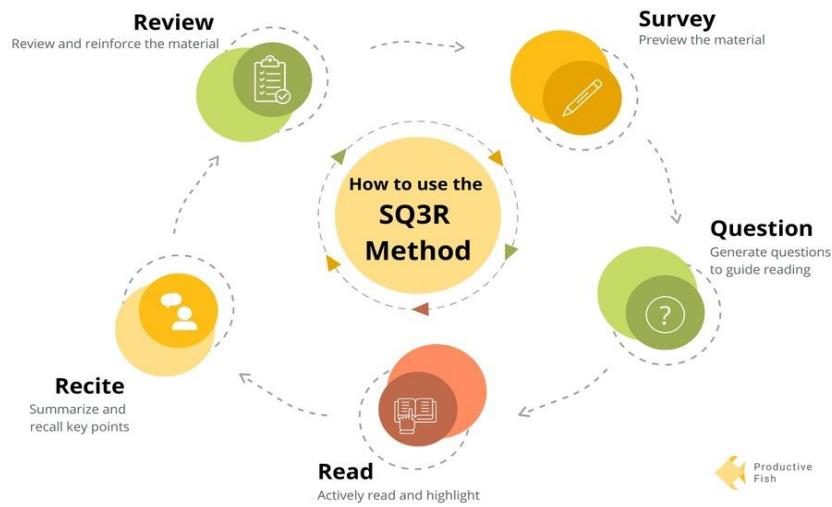


Figure 4.5 The SQ3R Method

The **SQ3R Method** is an effective study technique designed to help students improve comprehension and retention of reading material. The acronym SQ3R stands for **Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review**, and it outlines a systematic approach to studying that can enhance understanding and memory. Here's how each step works:

1. **Survey:** Before diving into the reading material, skim through the text to get an overview. Look at headings, subheadings, images, captions, and any highlighted or bolded text. This step helps you familiarize yourself with the structure of the content and prepares your mind for what to expect.
2. **Question:** Turn the headings and subheadings into questions. This process engages your mind and sets a clear purpose for reading. By asking questions, you create a mental framework for understanding and remembering the material.
3. **Read:** Read the material actively, focusing on answering the questions you've created. As you read, try to understand the concepts rather than memorizing them verbatim. Make sure to break down the material into manageable sections.
4. **Recite:** After reading a section, pause and try to summarize the key points in your own words. This step helps reinforce the material and test your understanding. Speaking out loud or writing down the key ideas can improve retention.
5. **Review:** After reading and reciting, review the material by revisiting your notes or the text. This helps solidify the information in your memory. Reviewing also allows you to identify areas where you may need further clarification or additional study.

The **SQ3R method** encourages active engagement with the material, leading to better understanding and longer retention. It is particularly useful for academic subjects that require memorization or deep comprehension.

4.5.1 Memory Test:

A **memory test** is an assessment used to evaluate an individual's ability to recall or recognize information. These tests can be in various forms, including written, verbal, or visual formats. They typically measure different aspects of memory, such as short-term memory, long-term memory, and working memory.

1. **Recall:** This type of memory test asks the individual to retrieve information from memory without any cues. For example, you might be asked to list items from a previous lesson or recite a piece of information without looking at your notes.
2. **Recognition:** In contrast to recall, recognition tests present a set of options, and the individual must identify the correct answer from the provided choices. For example, you might be shown a list of terms and asked to identify the one that best matches the definition.
3. **Free Recall:** This requires recalling information in any order. It's often used in cognitive psychology to test how well individuals can retrieve information from long-term memory.
4. **Serial Recall:** This involves recalling information in a specific order. For example, recalling a list of items in the order they were presented.
5. **Paired-Associate Learning:** This involves remembering pairs of related items, such as word pairs or number pairs, and is often used in memory research.

Memory tests are important tools for assessing how well you can remember and apply information. By practicing techniques like the SQ3R method and engaging in memory tests, you can improve your ability to retain and recall key concepts more effectively.

5 Module 05 Decision Making and Problem-Solving Skills

In my perspective, decision-making skills can be described as the ability to choose the best possible option by considering all relevant factors that could influence the situation. Similarly, problem-solving skills refer to the capacity to recognize a problem, analyze it, and apply the most effective solution. These two skills are closely linked, and someone who excels in both possesses a unique set of abilities.

Throughout this module, we focused on several key areas:

- **Effective Decision Making**
- **Challenges and Problems**
- **Alternatives and Opportunity Cost**
- **Problem Solving Tools and Techniques**
- **Win-Win Solutions**

Decision-making is essentially the process of selecting the optimal choice from a range of alternatives. It requires careful cognitive thinking before finalizing any decision. This process can be broken down into two primary stages:

1. **Cognitive Thinking Phase:** In this stage, the decision-maker begins by analyzing the situation and gathering all necessary information. The objective is to define the problem clearly, establish goals, and collect relevant data. It is important to assess the advantages and disadvantages of each option and consider potential alternatives. Cognitive thinking promotes a logical, critical, and emotion-free approach to decision-making.
2. **Decision-Making Phase:** With the information gathered during the cognitive thinking phase, the decision-maker proceeds to evaluate the various alternatives. They must weigh the pros and cons, consider possible consequences, and make an informed choice. It's advisable to consult with others and get their input before making a final decision.

Confidence and consistency are essential during this stage to ensure the best choice is made.

We also explored ways to improve decision-making skills, learning several techniques to make better, more informed decisions. Some of these key skills include:

- **Defining the Problem:** Clearly identifying the problem helps focus on the issue at hand and uncover its root cause.
- **Gathering Information:** Gathering detailed and relevant information allows for a clearer understanding of the situation.
- **Evaluating Alternatives:** Once all information is collected, evaluating the pros and cons of each option helps identify the best possible solution.
- **Considering Consequences:** Every decision has both positive and negative outcomes. Choosing the option with the best overall impact is crucial.
- **Creative Thinking:** Creative solutions often emerge when we think outside the box.
- **Seeking Input from Others:** Engaging with people who have relevant expertise can provide different perspectives and highlight potential blind spots.
- **Making the Decision:** After evaluating all alternatives, it's time to make a decision while being open to new information or changing circumstances.
- **Taking Action:** Implementing the decision and monitoring its outcomes helps identify areas for improvement in future decisions.

In essence, the process of decision-making involves evaluating the problem, considering alternatives, and acting while continually learning from the results. This structured approach enhances decision-making and problem-solving, ensuring more effective and thoughtful choices in various situations.

Decision-Making Process

Risely

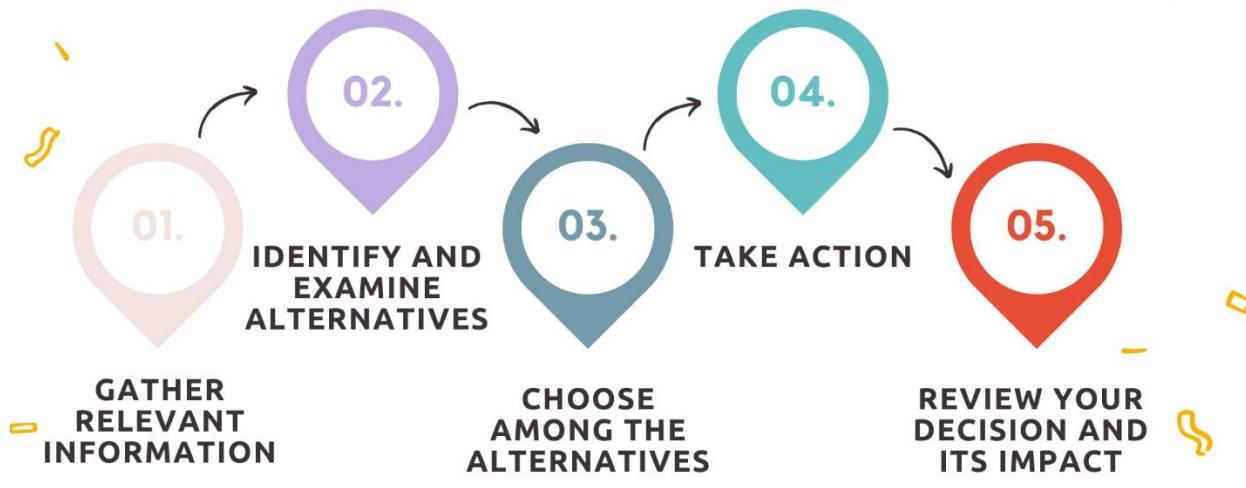


Figure 5.1 Decision Making Process

Depending on the situation and the available resources, individuals or teams can choose from various decision-making methods. Each method has its own set of advantages and drawbacks, so it's important for the decision-maker to select the most appropriate one for their specific needs.

Additionally, we learned the importance of considering the opportunity cost of each option when making decisions. Opportunity cost refers to the potential benefits that could have been gained by choosing an alternative option. This concept was illustrated in a case study about Ambani, a poor boy who succeeded in life by making thoughtful choices rather than focusing only on the immediate benefits. His success story highlighted how his decision-making skills, which involved considering opportunity costs, played a crucial role in his journey from poverty to wealth. We analyzed each key decision Ambani made and how it led to his eventual success, making the case study both inspiring and emotionally powerful.

In this module, we also focused on problem-solving skills, which are essential for engineers to develop. Some of the key skills for improving problem-solving abilities include:

- **Creativity:** Finding innovative solutions to problems.
- **Critical Thinking:** Analyzing situations and thinking logically to identify solutions.
- **Decision-Making Skills:** Making informed choices based on analysis.
- **Communication Skills:** Effectively conveying ideas and solutions to others.
- **Adaptability and Flexibility:** Adjusting to changing circumstances and challenges.
- **Analytical Skills:** Breaking down complex problems to understand the underlying issues.

By developing and applying these skills, we can tackle complex problems more effectively. The problem-solving process involves identifying the issue, analyzing it, and resolving it in the most efficient way possible, ensuring that solutions are both effective and sustainable.

In the classroom, we engaged in numerous activities to enhance our decision-making skills. These activities were designed to help us practice and refine the process of making thoughtful and informed decisions. Through group discussions, case studies, and simulations, we explored various decision-making methods and techniques. We also had the opportunity to analyze different scenarios, weigh the pros and cons of each option, and make decisions based on careful consideration of all available information.

These activities not only helped us develop our ability to make sound decisions but also encouraged us to think critically, collaborate with peers, and consider the potential consequences of our choices. By participating in these exercises, we gained practical experience that we can apply in real-life situations, improving our decision-making abilities both personally and professionally.

6 Module 06 Communication Skills

6.1 objectives of communication

Communication skills are essential for every undergraduate to develop and improve. Without effective communication skills, it becomes challenging to thrive in any environment. These skills are valuable in both our personal and professional lives, as they help us share and receive various types of information. Communication can be categorized into different methods:

- **Oral Communication:** This is the most common form of communication and involves speaking and listening. It includes face-to-face conversations, phone calls, video calls, presentations, lectures, meetings, and more.
- **Written Communication:** This involves conveying messages through written language. Examples include letters, emails, memos, reports, blogs, social media posts, etc.
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** This type of communication does not rely on words but conveys messages through facial expressions, gestures, body language, tone of voice, etc.
- **Visual Communication:** Visual aids are used to simplify complex information and make it more accessible. This includes images, graphs, charts, diagrams, videos, animations, and other visual tools.
- **Electronic Communication:** This involves digital tools such as instant messaging, email, video conferencing, and social media for communication purposes.

The objectives of communication include:

- Informing
- Educating
- Training
- Motivating
- Integrating
- Relating
- Promoting
- Entertaining

- Facilitating decision-making

The communication process consists of several elements:

- The Sender
- Encoding
- The Message
- The Channel
- Decoding
- The Receiver
- Noise
- Feedback



Figure 6.1 Secret Queue

In the classroom, we did an activity where students stood in a queue, and the last student was given a secret message. The student then whispered the message to the person in front of them, and so on, until the message reached the first student. At the front of the line, the first student announced

the message aloud. The goal was to see how much the message had changed as it passed through each student in the line. This activity demonstrated how communication can often get distorted or altered when passed through multiple people, highlighting the importance of clear and effective communication.

Through this experience, we realized the importance of soft skills in connecting and engaging with others. Developing these skills enables individuals to communicate more effectively, build stronger relationships, and achieve better results both personally and professionally.

During the course, we attended webinars on effective communication and participated in numerous group discussions. The classroom activities were enjoyable and provided us with valuable experiences. We engaged in fun games and activities, which helped us learn a lot.

Additionally, we had a webinar on written communication, which taught us how to write letters and emails properly. We learned that key elements such as clarity, organization, grammar, punctuation, and formatting are essential when communicating in writing. We also discussed various barriers to effective communication, such as:

- Physical barriers
- Organizational barriers
- Cultural barriers
- Language barriers
- Attitudinal barriers
- Interpersonal barriers

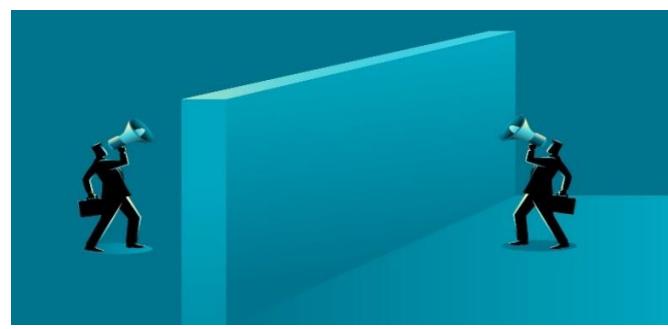


Figure 6.2 various barriers to effective communication

We analyzed these barriers and explored solutions to overcome them, focusing on how to be successful in communication.

Moreover, we explored presentation skills, which are crucial for undergraduates, given the many situations where presentation skills are needed. This module allowed me to enhance my presentation knowledge. I learned tips on creating engaging slides to capture the audience's attention and how to deliver an effective presentation using facial expressions, gestures, and controlling my voice tone. This was particularly helpful, as I could apply what I learned to my own presentations and received positive feedback from the audience.

In this module, we also learned tips for an effective presentation, including voice control, gestures, posture, facial expressions, and grooming. I learned how to plan and structure a presentation for success. We had another activity where we had to give a speech on a topic based on our index number. I spoke about how attitudes influence our lives for about two minutes, which helped me improve my time management and presentation skills.

Lastly, we wrote an excuse letter for a given scenario, learning how to write one properly with the necessary information. This was an important skill for undergraduate life, as writing excuse letters is common. The letter I wrote is also included below.

6.2 Story Telling

We were conducted an online session to read and summarize a story Dr Prins conducted that session and we got a huge knowledge to how communicate our idea properly to the allocated time. Also, we were communicating details of each of our colleagues.

6.2.1 Summary of the Short Story

Sushil was a miser who deprived his family and servants of food. One day, he saw a boy eating a sweet rice dumpling and craved one but refused to ask, as he didn't want to share. His longing worsened, and he fell ill. His wife, Nirmala, learned of his desire and offered to make dumplings for everyone. However, Sushil opposed the idea, insisting no one else should have them. Nirmala

brought him one dumpling, but the situation escalated when the King of Heaven, Sakka, disguised himself as Sushil and invited the town to take treasures from Sushil's house. The townspeople complied, believing the imposter. When Sushil discovered this, he accused them of robbery. At the court, Nirmala asked both the real and fake Sushil whether it was better to be generous to oneself, family, or others. The imposter advocated generosity to all, while Sushil refused generosity entirely. The court deemed the imposter wiser and more deserving of Sushil's wealth.

6.2.2 Feedback from the Workshop and Reflection

During the workshop, we received feedback to avoid filler words like "ah," "um," and "er." I noticed I used "ah" occasionally while speaking. We were also reminded to focus on correct grammar, use gestures and facial expressions, and control our voice clarity. Although I used some gestures, I lacked facial expressions. Since my story didn't include dialogues, I couldn't incorporate dramatic voice variations. Another key point was time management, as I exceeded the limit by three seconds. Despite these areas for improvement, the session provided valuable feedback, which I intend to implement to enhance my future speeches.

New Words Learned

- **Miser:** A person who hoards wealth and spends as little as possible.
- **Clench:** To close one's hand into a tight fist, often showing anger.
- **Devour:** To eat hungrily or quickly.
- **Crumb:** A small fragment or amount of something.
- **Bewildered:** Confused or puzzled.
- **Shriek:** To make a high-pitched, screeching sound.
- **Squeak:** To emit a high-pitched noise or cry.

6.2.3 Was the Session Helpful?

Yes, the session was very helpful. I improved my vocabulary, learned valuable tips for delivering effective speeches, and developed the ability to condense a three-page text into a concise summary.

6.2.4 Do You Think You Can Improve?

Yes, I am confident in my ability to improve. As my goal is to become an excellent public speaker, I am motivated to enhance my skills and believe in my potential.

6.2.5 How Do You Plan to Improve?

I plan to seize every opportunity to speak, ensuring I practice and refine my skills. As a member of the Gavel Club, I regularly get chances to speak and receive constructive feedback. Additionally, the Soft Skills course provides ample opportunities for self-improvement. I also aim to learn new words daily and focus on speaking accurately.

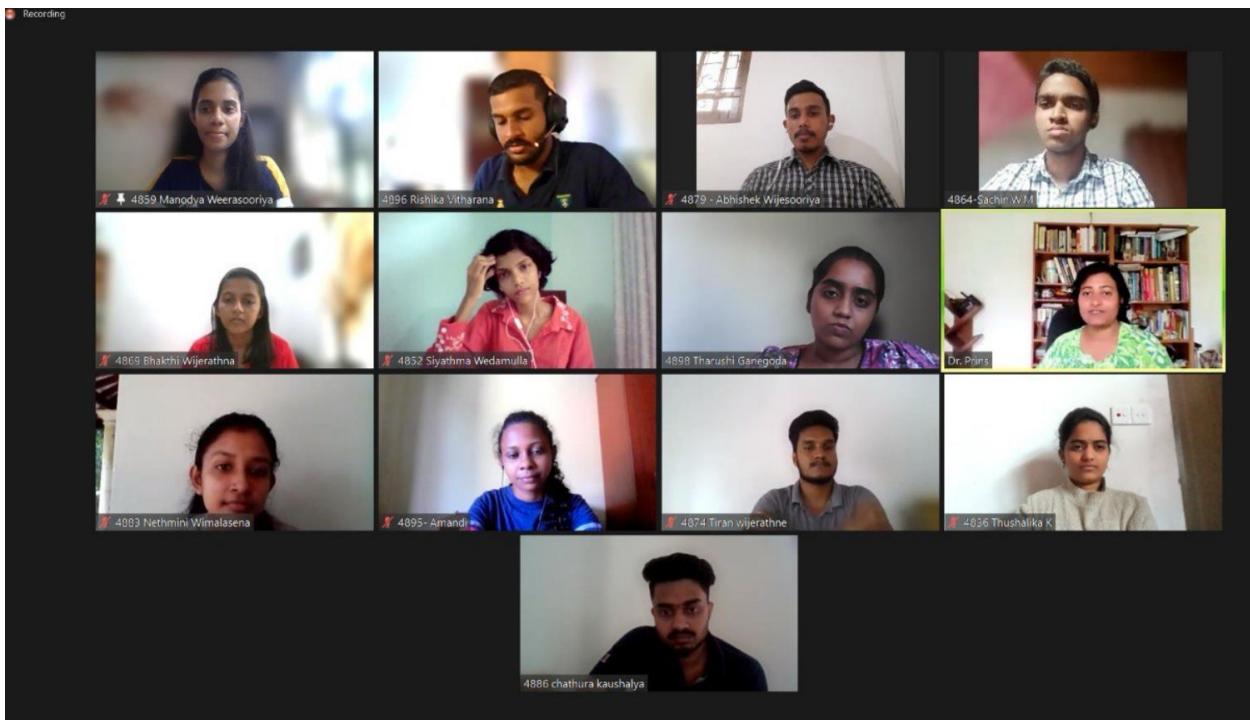


Figure 6.3 Zoom Meeting for Story Telling

6.3 Email & Letter Writing

In our **Communication Skills module**, we were assigned to submit an assignment focused on writing letters and emails. This task was designed to enhance our understanding of effective written communication, which is a crucial aspect of professional interactions. Through this exercise, we gained valuable insights into structuring letters and emails, using proper language, maintaining formality, and ensuring clarity and conciseness.

This assignment not only helped us refine our writing skills but also emphasized the importance of tailoring communication to different contexts, audiences, and purposes. It served as a practical learning experience, equipping us with the knowledge and confidence to compose professional correspondence effectively in the future.



**Faculty of Engineering
University of Ruhuna**

Certificate Course in Soft Skill Development
Career Guidance(CCSD 2022)

Module Code - SSD 06
Programme Name - Email & Essay writing
Module Name - Communication Skills
Assignment No - 02
Students Index No - Eg/2021/4896
Name - Rishika Vitharana
Date of Submission - 10.07.2022

10th July 2022

Vitharana R.V.R.S
EG/2021/4896
vitharana_rvrs_e23@engug.ruh.ac.lk
0773943903

DR.N. W. Prins,
Module coordinator
EE3301 Analog Electronics
Department of Electrical and Information Engineering
Faculty of Engineering
University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka.

Dr B.M.L.A.Basnayake,
Academic advisor
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.
Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna.

Dear Madam,

Excuse for Missing EE Practicals

I faced the CIMA examination on 29th and 30th June 2022 and missed Lab 1 of the EE3301 Analog Electronics module on 30.07.2022. The Admission of the exam is attached herewith. Please grant permission to reschedule the practical.

Thank you

Yours faithfully

.....
Vitharana R.V.R.S
EG/2021/4896

7 Module 07 Interpersonal skills

In the interpersonal skills module, we had the privilege of putting our learning into practice by organizing a health camp at Hiyare Maha Vidyalaya in collaboration with the Karapitiya Hospital. This project allowed us to connect with the local community while addressing essential health needs of the students at the school. We provided eye and dental check-ups, offering the children important health assessments they may not have otherwise had access to. Engaging with the students, teachers, and medical professionals helped me develop key interpersonal skills such as effective communication, empathy, and active listening.

The entire process of planning and executing the event strengthened our ability to work as a team, manage logistics, and coordinate with various stakeholders to ensure a smooth operation. It was not only a learning experience but also a rewarding opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

At the end of the event, we planted a tree as a symbolic gesture to mark the occasion. This act of planting a tree was more than just a physical action; it represented the lasting impact we hoped to have on the community and the environment. It was a beautiful way to remember the day and to signify our collective effort towards creating a sustainable and healthier future.

Through projects like this, I gained a deeper understanding of the importance of collaboration, community service, and the powerful role interpersonal skills play in building meaningful connections. This experience has reinforced my belief in the value of giving back to society, not only in a professional capacity but also in a personal one, where empathy and communication are essential in making a difference.

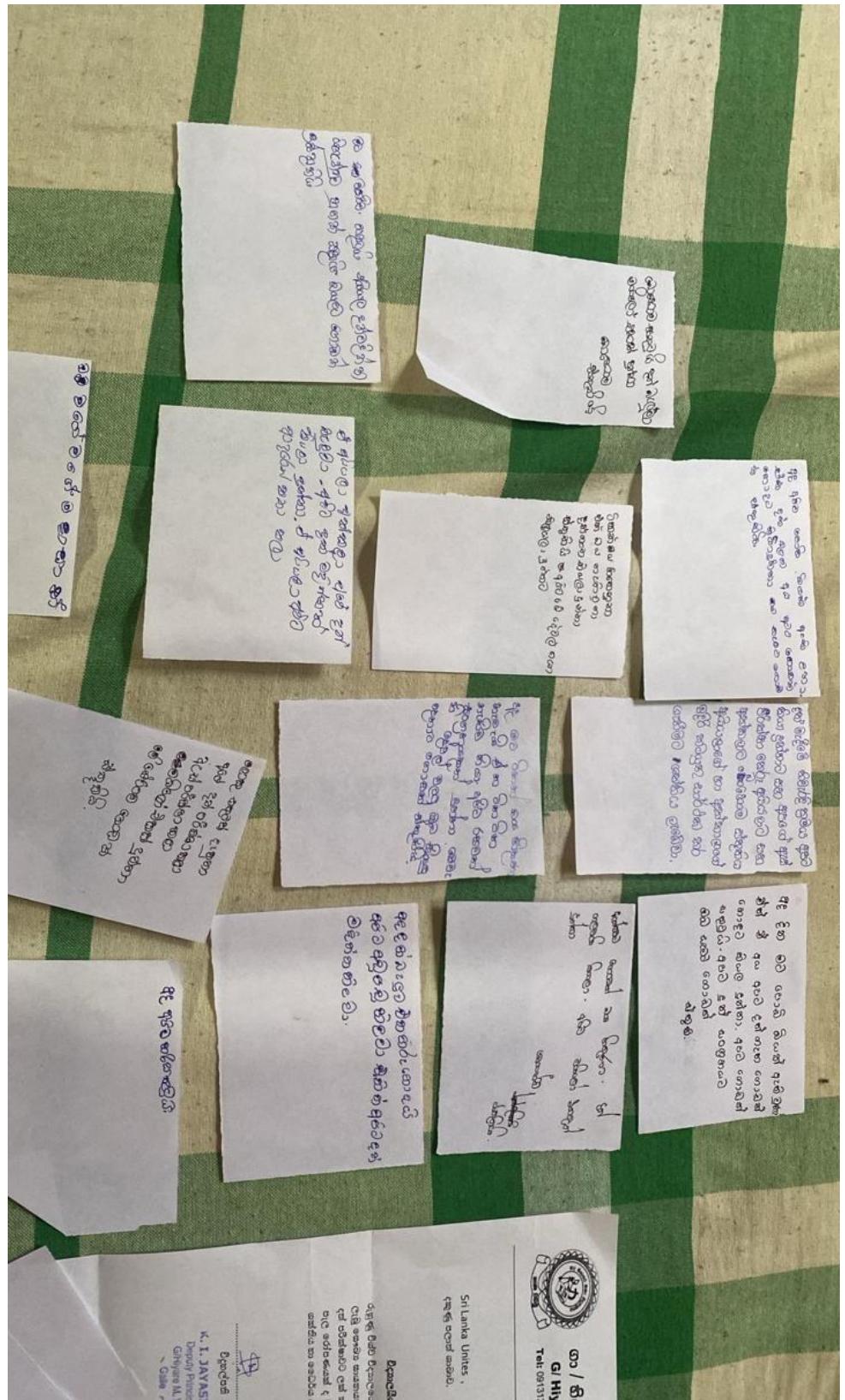


Figure 7.1 Feedbacks Received for the Project



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G/ Hiyare Maha Vidyalaya, Galle

Tel: 0913128028 Email:hiyaremahavidyalaya20@gmail.com

Date :- 23.11.2022

Sri Lanka Unites ,
අභ්‍යන්තර ප්‍රජාත්‍යාමාත්‍රක.

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විද්‍යාල්පති | ගාලේ

K. I. JAYASIRI
Deputy Principal
G/Hiyare M. V.
~ Galle ~

Figure 7.2 Letter from the School





8 Module 08 Leadership Skills

One of the most engaging modules we completed was on leadership skills. This is a vital skill for engineers to develop, as it plays a significant role in an engineer's career. The module was delivered in a unique and interactive way, which helped us understand key leadership concepts, including:

- Leadership Styles
- Characteristics and Responsibilities of a Leader
- Leadership and Teamwork
- Boss vs. Leader
- Leadership Management

In this module, we also discussed the reasons behind the failure of leadership in Sri Lanka. Social, economic, and political leadership in the country has faced numerous challenges. Some causes for leadership failures include corruption, lack of integrity, poor communication, failure to address the needs of various groups, and a lack of accountability. Sri Lanka has also struggled with cultural and religious tensions, which have contributed to poor leadership outcomes.

Additionally, we explored "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People," a book by Stephen Covey. It offers a principle-centered approach for solving personal and professional problems. The seven habits are:

- **Be Proactive:** Taking responsibility for our actions and reactions, rather than blaming others or circumstances.
- **Begin with the End in Mind:** Defining our goals before starting any task, and organizing our actions to achieve those goals.
- **Put First Things First:** Prioritizing tasks based on their importance and alignment with our goals and values.
- **Think Win-Win:** Aiming for mutually beneficial solutions, rather than focusing solely on our own interests.

- **Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood:** Listening to others' perspectives before presenting our own, a key to effective communication.
- **Synergize:** Working collaboratively and valuing the strengths of others to create a result greater than individual efforts.
- **Sharpen the Saw:** Taking care of our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health to maintain peak effectiveness.

By applying these habits, individuals can become more successful in achieving their goals and leading fulfilling lives.

As part of the module, we participated in a two-day leadership camp conducted by Sri Lanka Unites, which enhanced not only our leadership skills but also other essential skills. The camp included numerous group games that taught us valuable lessons in trust-building, planning, communication, critical thinking, and decision-making.

One of the games involved loosening a knot we had made ourselves. This activity helped us realize the importance of listening to others. Another game involved passing a ring using a straw, teaching us the importance of patience and the support we receive from group members. We also played a game where we passed a ball using a cloth, which emphasized the significance of effective communication and decision-making.

A particularly memorable game involved freely falling and trusting a teammate to catch us. This exercise-built trust and confidence within the group. Another fun challenge involved two teams trying to get a bottle placed in the middle without crossing the bottle's path. This game highlighted the importance of trust and confidence, as we had to work closely together to achieve the goal.

Throughout the camp, we participated in a session on gender and leadership, where we discussed female leadership through examples of renowned figures like Mother Teresa, Kamala Harris, and Marie Curie.

The leadership camp also featured a campfire, which was both exciting and enjoyable. The physical activities made the module both fun and successful. Throughout the training, I learned to listen to others, share ideas, and effectively complete tasks. As a leader in my group, I practiced

patience, respecting others' ideas, managing a group, and fostering collaboration. I am confident that this experience has significantly improved my leadership abilities, communication skills, and teamwork.



Figure 8.1 Photos of the Leadership Camp



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Faculty of Engineering
University of Ruhuna

LEADERSHIP TRAINING 2022 November
Career Guidance Cell, Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna



Photographed By
V.Rachsuthan
Vidhura Polgolla



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Faculty of Engineering
University of Ruhuna

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Career Guidance Cell, Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna



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Vidhura Polgolla

9 Module 9 Job Searching Strategy

Searching for a job in today's competitive world can be a challenging experience, especially for engineers. However, the Job Searching Strategy module helped me gain a deeper understanding of the current job market dynamics and the essential skills I need to develop to be a competitive candidate. This module provided valuable insights into new trends and opportunities, along with strategies on how to prepare for them.

The topics covered in this module included:

- **Trends in the Job Market**
- **Creating an Effective CV as a Passport to the Job Market**
- **Writing a Cover Letter**
- **How to Face an Interview**
- **Personal Grooming**
- **Organizational Culture**
- **Balancing Personal Life and Professional Life**
- **Career Development**

One of the key lessons was personal grooming, which is crucial when navigating the professional world. I gained a clear understanding of how to dress appropriately for various occasions, from interviews to business meetings, and learned about the significance of colors in attire. I have applied this knowledge in my own life, ensuring that I dress appropriately for competitions, presentations, and other professional events. Additionally, I learned how to maintain a professional LinkedIn profile, which can significantly enhance my visibility to potential employers.

We also learned about organizational culture and how it shapes employee behavior and attitudes. A positive organizational culture encourages high employee morale and productivity, while a negative culture can lead to low confidence and disengagement. The module also introduced us to labor laws, which was an insightful session that broadened my understanding of workplace rights and regulations.

A particularly useful component of the module included sessions conducted by Uconnect, where they provided detailed guidance on how to craft an effective CV and cover letter. These sessions helped me understand what employers look for in candidates and how to present my qualifications and experiences in the best possible way. Furthermore, we had a mock interview session where we could practice our interview skills in a real-world setting. This allowed us to receive valuable feedback and improve our performance in future interviews, helping us make a positive first impression.

In addition, the module featured a career fair, where we had the opportunity to interact with potential employers and learn more about available job opportunities. The fair provided insights into the job market and allowed us to network with professionals from various industries, enhancing our career prospects.

Moreover, the module also included group discussions where we compared personal life and professional life, discussing how to balance both and achieve success in each. These discussions helped us understand the challenges of balancing work and personal responsibilities, and how to manage our time and energy effectively.

Overall, this module equipped me with the skills and knowledge to navigate the job market with greater confidence, and I am now better prepared to face the challenges of job searching in the competitive engineering field.

RISHIKA VITHARANA

Civil and Environmental Engineering Undergraduate

✉ rishikavitharana123@gmail.com

📞 0773943903

📍 257/8, Batadombathuduwa Road, Alubomulla., 12500 Panadura

🔗 linkedin.com/in/rishika-vitharana-856843266

OBJECTIVE

I am a second-year undergraduate seeking a challenging trainee civil engineer position where I can utilize my academic background in civil engineering and gain hands-on experience in structural design, and construction practices. Eager to contribute to innovative projects while continuously learning and developing my skills under the guidance of experienced professionals.

VOLUNTEERING & ACTIVITIES

Participated as a demonstrator at TECHNO 2023, on behalf of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, demonstrating my ability to simply convey complex ideas.

Participated leadership development program organized by the Career Guidance Society in collaboration with Sri Lanka Unit in 2022

Participate mentor training camp organized by Sri Lanka Units. (2023)

Volunteered with the Mehewara project organized by the Faculty of Engineering to conduct O/L and A/L Mathematics seminars, contributing to educational outreach and community engagement initiatives.

Participated in a team-based sustainable building design competition in 2023, organized by the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna.

EDUCATION

B.Sc Engineering (Hons.) in Civil and Environmental Engineering (UG)

Feb 2022 – Present

Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna

Sri Sumangala College, Panadura

2008 – 2020

G.C.E Advanced Level (2020) in Physical Science stream

SGPA (3rd sem) = 2.68

LEADERSHIP

Batch Representative

Aug 2022 – Present

Certificate Course in Soft Skill Development

Committee Member

Feb 2023 – Present

Career Guidance Unit, Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna

Co-chair of the organizing committee of the mock interview 2024

COURSES

Training Course on AutoCAD

2022

University of Colombo, School of Computing

Diploma in Information Technology

2019

Esoft Metro Campus

REFERENCES

Dr. (Mrs.) S. N. Malkanthi

Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna

0772869264, snmalkanthi@cee.ruh.ac.lk

Ms. Vindya Welihena

Career Guidance Counselor, Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna

0716900463, vindyawelihena81@gmail.com

1 of 2

Job Interview & CV review Evaluation Form

Candidate Name:

Date: 24th April 2024

Interviewer:

Company:

CCSSD Follower:

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Average	Below	For Candidate
Applicant's Greetings:					
• Proper Introduction	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Positive First Impression	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
Applicant's Appearance:					
• Neat, Well-groomed	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Appropriately attired	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
Personality and Poise:					
• Positive, courteous, sincere and confident	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Good posture, gestures, and eye contact	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
Communication Skills:					
• Proper grammar (standard English)	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Good pronunciation and enunciation	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Pleasant voice and tone	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
Responses:					
• Responded with appropriate answers	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Showed knowledge of the discipline	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Asked appropriate questions	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Volunteered information Demonstrated initiative and enthusiasm for involvement in the program	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
Skills:					
• Showed evidence of career preparation	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Showed evidence of good work habits	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Showed evidence of problem-solving abilities	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
Close of interview:					
• Expressed a thank you	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	
• Concluded interview effectively	10 9	8 7	6 5 4	3 2 1	



Please give each candidate feedback on 3 areas of improvement. You can write it briefly here and discuss it with the candidate. For example, “too much detail”/“not enough detail”/“telecommunication content”/“confidence”/etc.

I feedback on CV and Areas for Improvement:

I area for Future improvements in technical skills:

I area for Future improvements in soft skills:

.....

Signature

24/04/2024

For the candidate:

My plan to improve the above mentioned aspects of my life.

Please scan a copy of this and submit with the feedback form.
A scanned copy should be submitted with the CCSSD portfolio.
The original should be brought for the next interview.



10 Module 10: Introducing portfolio

This module was specifically designed to assist me in creating a professional portfolio that highlights my skills and experiences to potential employers. Through this module, I gained insights into the ideal structure for a portfolio, the essential information to include or leave out, and techniques for presenting my work in an attractive and organized manner. The workshop, led by Mrs. Vindya Walihena, Career Counsellor at the Faculty of Engineering, University of Ruhuna, provided valuable guidance on portfolio writing. Crafting a portfolio is crucial in the job search process, as it distinguishes me from other candidates and provides employers with a clearer understanding of my abilities and work ethic. I am excited to build my personalized portfolio and use it as an effective tool in the competitive job market.

11 Conclusion

Throughout this career guidance course, I have had the chance to explore various modules that have equipped me with a diverse range of knowledge and skills to enhance my personal and professional growth. From the introductory module on self-evaluation to the final one on job-searching strategies, each module has provided valuable insights and tools to help me navigate the dynamic and competitive job market.

The self-evaluation module helped me understand the importance of reflecting on my strengths, weaknesses, interests, and values. It provided me with greater self-awareness and a deeper understanding of my career aspirations, helping me identify areas for improvement and focus on what truly matters to me.

In the managing resources module, I learned how to efficiently manage time, finances, and other essential resources. This module offered practical strategies to prioritize tasks, cultivate effective study habits, and avoid procrastination. I also gained a better understanding of budgeting, financial planning, and managing debt.

The stress management module taught me valuable techniques to cope with stress and avoid burnout. I learned how to identify stressors, regulate my emotions, and develop resilience while maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

The effective study skills and goal-directed learning module equipped me with strategies to set achievable goals, improve study habits, and track progress. The importance of feedback was emphasized, allowing me to stay on track with my learning objectives.

In the decision-making and problem-solving skills module, I honed my critical thinking abilities and learned how to make informed decisions. I gained insight into various problem-solving strategies and the role of creativity and innovation in finding effective solutions.

The communication skills module enhanced my ability to communicate clearly, listen actively, and build rapport with others. I developed the confidence to express my opinions, handle difficult conversations, and communicate effectively in professional settings.

Through the interpersonal skills module, I learned the value of trust, active listening, and empathy. I improved my ability to build positive relationships, give and receive constructive feedback, and resolve conflicts in a healthy manner.

The leadership skills module empowered me to lead teams effectively, offering strategies for creating a shared vision, delegating tasks, providing constructive feedback, and motivating others towards common goals.

Lastly, the job-searching strategies module equipped me with the tools to identify job opportunities, write compelling resumes and cover letters, and prepare for interviews. I also gained valuable insights into networking, attending career fairs, and negotiating job offers.

Overall, this course has been a highly enriching experience, providing me with essential skills and strategies that will support my personal and professional development. This portfolio allows me to showcase my progress and growth throughout the course. I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in this course and look forward to applying the skills I've learned in my future career endeavors.

