LIFE SKILLS Model as a Career Planning Guide! (B.Tech..2019.R.CSE.5.19SSK301)

Welcome to the simple LIFE SKILLS Model as a Career Planning Guide!

One could be engaged in fields like hi-tech engineering, R&D, and teaching on one hand, or in disciplines like sports, music, and entertainment, on the other. In either case, professional success in most cases has a lot to do with proper planning.

Experts with rich corporate and industry experience engaged in the profession of career counseling and mentoring, would recommend youngsters to use a simple model as a tool, to help plan professional careers. Here, we present the LIFE SKILLS model.

The basic premise of this model rests on the assumption that at least ten factors need to considered while arriving at a decision on which career to embark upon. Let us examine each of these factors here one by one:

Long term goals
Interests
Family factors
Environment
Skill development / specific talent
Knowledge enhancement
Initiating improvements
Life-long learning
Leadership and team skills
Success orientation

1. Long term goals:
   The starting point in this model is to try articulating one's long term goals. Ideally, while articulating long term goals, it is best to begin with something one is really passionate about. This would help an individual to envision being joyously engaged in doing a particular activity day in and day out. So, if your long term goal makes you imagine as enjoying the role of an aircraft design engineer, you could fine-tune the same by coming up with better clarity and more precise definition of your goal. The secret of looking at your passion and making it your profession, is now an open, well-established fact. This is the ultimate desirable convergence which has resulted in successful professional careers not only in engineering disciplines for professionals like the founders of Microsoft and Google, but also in other fields like A.R. Rahman in music, M.F. Husain in painting and Lionel Messi in football.

   My long term goal is ………………………………… *

   > In the long-term 8-10 years down the line, I want to become a Senior Project Manager or Director for the company so that I can lead multiple projects at the same time. Also I want to contribute to the firm's growth at the business level.

2. Interests:
   "What's your plan – B?" is an oft-asked question that successful planers are posed with. It is always good to have the 'next-best' option when it comes to deciding about anything. If you are not as skilled and talented or lucky as to be able to make your passion as your profession, then obviously, the next good thing to do is to look at your interests.
   This point is best understood if one were to look at it from another angle. If one were to imagine doing something day-in and day-out, which he / she detests, it would be really awful. A grade better would be to undertake a profession that one can 'just tolerate' or 'somehow manage to do'. However, you would surely agree that it would be far better for somebody to take up a job that the person would enjoy doing. This would translate into more cheerfulness at work, and thereby better quality output, resulting in greater satisfaction for stakeholders.

   My interest lies in ………………………………… *

   > I will continue to look for another in the same field to use my experience and utilize my skills. I will continue interviewing in this industry and am confident before long I will end up at one of the top competitors.

3. Family factors:

A key aspect that undergraduate students need to consider in particular is that while it is a good idea to dream big and let the imagination run wild, they should have their feet firmly set on ground realities. More specifically, family factors are a major force to be accounted for, while charting successful careers. This is exemplified in the manner in which the Ambani scions have taken up their painstakingly-built parent business establishment. Another dimension to this aspect is to consider the practicality of one's big dream based on the family situation. Suppose parental income, existing loans and other impending financial commitments in the family are burdensomely looming large, a prudent decision could be to take up a job immediately to start earning, rather than pursue an interesting post-graduation course abroad, which could further compound indebtedness.

Considering the family factors, it will be better for me to .... *

> We are a family of 4, and both my parents are doing good in their respective fields and as a family, we are not having any financial crisis. So in my aspect, there are more gates open to go forward in life. I can go for a job or can do my post-graduation. Therefore my family is not a factor or burden for me in getting a job immediately.

4. Environment:

The eco-system around us that shapes the environment has a tremendous influence on the career planning process. Have you wondered why there are so many textile mills in Tirupur region or what is it that explains the cluster of leather units in Ambur-Vaniambadi region or silk saree makers in Kanchipuram? What made the textile machinery and pump manufacturing companies establish their factories in such large numbers in Coimbatore? The answer is obvious. There are several factors in the immediate environment that may additionally help us in deciding which type of industry to choose for building a career.

The environment / ecosystem is congenial for me to .... *

> The environment/ecosystem is congenial for me to get a job in an IT environment/field. As most of the relatives are working in that field, it helps me in getting more guidance if I work under them, and also I can learn things faster under their guidance as they were experienced so that it enhances my career.

5. Skill development / specific talent:
   Individuals may also be blessed with specific skills or talent. This could be in curricular, co-curricular or extra-curricular disciplines. A brilliant software programmer or app developer may do well to choose the I.T. domain as his / her career path. An excellent communicator could choose between teaching, technical writing and marketing careers pertaining to his / her domain. A skilled puzzle solver may decide to embark on a career of training in the field of aptitude and logical reasoning skills. One could even end up being a sportsperson or musician if possessing awesome talent in the relevant domain. Some of this could be inborn traits, inherited abilities or schooled and skilled to perfection. Whatever be the case, it needs to be projected and showcased so that it may blossom into a successful career. Chetan Bhagat's writing skills remained obscure until he continued as an investment banker.

   My skills are well developed in / I have specific talent in .... *

   > My skills are well developed in the area where the area is creativity dominating. As I could get things in a creative approach. I can plan specially so that it reaches more. I selected the field of Web development where I can plot the design with my creative thinking and ability of coding to help in getting an edge in it.

6. Knowledge enhancement:
   Let us take the case of an individual who is having a specific talent or specialized skill with which he is considering making a career. With continuous practice and by investing more time in the domain, one would develop deeper knowledge in the subject matter and slowly gain the desired level of competence and expertise. To remain at the top level and retain the competitive edge, it goes without saying that one must stay updated with the latest developments, information tools and technologies in the said discipline. This is possible by undertaking various short and medium-term programmes, certifications and online courses available through in-house modules, training centres and Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) options. Thus, knowledge enhancement is an important and necessary component of the career planning model.

   I have been constantly enhancing my knowledge in .... *

   > I have been constantly enhancing my knowledge in the area of web development. I had attended various workshops, webinars, and courses. My improvement at the time of "CS50'S Web Programming" course where the way of teaching and outcome of this course may me from being a beginner to an intermediate person.

7. Initiating improvements:
   Knowing is the first step, but just the beginning. With the enhanced knowledge that one gains by staying updated, the next logical step is to initiate improvement in the environment one is placed, to make a successful career. For people in any domain, what this actually means is to be in a position to apply any knowledge gained recently so as to practically demonstrate the application of the enhanced learning to make things better in the environment. So, if a faster and more efficient process for quality testing is developed, it should be implemented, resulting in better output with reduced rejections. The perceived benefit should be reasonably significant for others to take notice so that it results in career progression. This is an important factor to be considered in career planning.

   I have initiated and achieved significant improvement in .... *

   I have initiated and achieved significant improvement in respecting others. I am gradually improving my way of speaking, body language and I learned a lot in it and continuing it to date. Along with this, I got a drastic improvement in my presentation skills.

8. Life-long learning:
   Good career planning involves staying updated constantly. Thus, the attitude that is required to make a successful career is to be willing and be able to learn continuously from all possible sources. This ensures that one is always at the cutting edge and has competitive advantage as compared to others in the environment. A 'life-long learning' approach results in premium positioning as an expert and is followed up with greater recognition and faster career growth opportunities in the long run. Thus career planning becomes superior with life-long learning. Hence this factor needs to be considered while planning careers.

   My interest for life-long learning in the field is seen in .... *

   Lifelong learning refers to the process of gaining knowledge and learning new skills throughout one's life. My interest in life-long learning in the field is seen in Full-Stack Developer where there were more challenging aspects. And a lot to learn in it.

9. Leadership and team skills:
   A successful career is often the reward reaped by a person possessing good leadership skills and team-playing capability. It is an established fact that in a collaborative environment, everyone achieves more, together. Whenever team members complement each other's skills and there is a good leader to steer the efforts of the group, the result is marvelous. While planning careers, it is important to therefore keep this in mind and hone leadership skills and team skills. This way, the acceptance of one's views by others is also ensured. Thus, leadership is an important factor in planning successful careers.

   I am developing my leadership and team skills through .... *

   > I am developing my leadership and team skills through being honest with myself and with others. This way can avoid countless misunderstandings. I am focused and devoted to my work. Also becoming more reliable, respectful, and patient. I am trying to be loyal, courageous, and optimistic to the work and people.

10. Success orientation:
    Good career planning must result in successful careers. Success itself could mean different things to different people. However, commonly accepted formats include acknowledgement of expertise by a large community of people; an important designation or portfolio in an organization; excellent remuneration; awards, rewards and recognitions; and a host of different things to different people. However, most importantly, a successful career would also mean high job satisfaction and happiness for the individual in his or her achievements and attainments for accomplishing various milestones in the chosen domain. Hence, as a final factor to be considered in the LIFE SKILLS model, one should define what success means to the individual and work towards attaining the same.

    I define success as ...., So, my success orientation is evident in .... *

    > I would define success at work by what I learned from key job assignment experiences and how I was able to use that knowledge for improved results.
    > Success, for me, will always be about making a difference in other people's lives. If I know at the end of the day my work has helped someone find a job or feed their family or turn their life around, then I sleep well at night and wake up eager to start work all over again the next day.

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