Personal Analysis

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Abstract

The lessons and skills obtained during one's time in college is expected to prepare them for the professional world by shaping the skills they already have and aiding them in developing new ones. Students are often asked to use themselves as the subject in assignments, especially when they can use their assignment as a professional piece. Some of the most straining assignments I have been given during my time at Winthrop University all have a common factor: myself. How do I want to market myself? What are my strengths and weaknesses? How do I want my brand to look? What work should I include in my portfolio? All of these are questions I have been asked by professors in order to get a better understanding of myself from a professional perspective, and in my opinion, they have always been some of the most difficult questions to answer. This paper will contain a thorough S.W.O.T. analysis on myself as a creative professional utilizing opinions gathered from peers, professors, mentors, and experiences from my personal collegiate experience. By completing this analysis, I will more likely be able to create an effective brand and professional portfolio from my deep understanding of my personal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth, and potential threats to my success.

Personal Analysis

Throughout my educational experience, I have heard a great deal from instructors that has helped me develop a solid understanding of what my strengths and weaknesses are as a creative professional. While their critiques and guidance have helped me recognize those aspects, I have had to evaluate potential opportunities for growth and threats to my success on my own, which has proven to be a fairly difficult task. Evaluating oneself can be challenging depending on whether we are overly critical or too slack on ourselves from a professional vantage point. While many people are overly optimistic on their abilities, I find it best to be intensely realistic. By utilizing constructive criticism and other feedback from my peers, instructors, and mentors, I feel I have been able to pinpoint certain qualities about myself that are useful for this analysis and could possibly be used to reevaluate my applicant approach.

Strengths

When asked what my strengths are, I always begin by thinking about tasks that I do well or qualities that could compliment my work, whether that be in my career or personal life. All of my strengths consist of skills I have learned or qualities I possess that have made me a better intellectual, leader, and employee, and have also crafted me into a very driven and hardworking individual. As far as tasks and skills, my strengths include my basic knowledge and experience in graphic design, marketing, and communications. Some of my graphic design skills include my ability to use Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, as well as my photography and basic videography skills. I have been fortunate enough to receive numerous internships and positions during my time in college that have allowed me to utilize all of these together and have even added to this knowledge. For example, one of the skills I have been able to learn through one of my

internships is the ability to use and analyze Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems

to create an individual marketing experience; I consider this one of my strengths because so few

people are able to view and understand this type of information. The skills and lessons I have

learned from my mentors are extremely valuable and beneficial to me because they will

hopefully help me in my endeavors after graduation and make my resume more impressive to

employers.

Qualities that I feel could be considered strengths include my ability to be organized, the

ability to stay on task, and putting my best effort into all of my work, whether it is for school or

for an extracurricular activity. Through my sorority, Alpha Delta Pi, I have been able to serve as

Special Events Coordinator and Public Relations Chair, both of which allowed me to serve as a

committee leader and mentor, while also planning and executing my own events. The positions I

have be fortunate enough to hold in my sorority have allowed me to utilize my strengths and

have also helped me realize and grow the strong leadership qualities that I possess.

Weaknesses

Although my strengths are something I take pride in, I also recognize my weaknesses and

acknowledge them when they arise. Some of these weaknesses are that I can be too picky when it

comes to certain things, such as the way copy is worded or how graphic design pieces are made,

especially during group projects. I find that I either try to do projects myself so that they are to

my liking, or end up having to do countless revisions with my group members. While I do not

doubt other people's strengths and weaknesses, I feel that I am only comfortable putting my

name on things that showcase my strengths as well as their own; for example, if the copy on a

design is weak, I will want to do everything I can to improve it, even if it was assigned to another person in the group.

Another weakness would be that I often put too much stress on myself, whether I procrastinated or not. I personally think this high amount of stress comes from striving for perfection on assignments, like I previously mentioned. While perfectionism can be a weakness, I would argue that it a two-fold quality; it can also serve as a strength since I rarely submit work that does not reflect my best effort, which is something a lot of students cannot say for themselves. Another weakness that has affected my educational experience, and will likely affect my work after graduation, is my fear of public speaking. During past presentations, I found myself getting so nervous that I forgot what I had rehearsed prior to the presentation. I am hopeful that I will be able to outgrow this fear as I know continuing as I am will not assist me in future career endeavors.

<center>Opportunities for Growth</center>

Despite the weaknesses discussed, I feel that there are still many opportunities for growth and improvement. One present opportunity, and possibly the most important, is learning to be less of a hands-on perfectionist when working with groups. I need to learn to let some people have their way, even if I know my decision could be better; not everyone works the same way and I have to learn to work around that and accommodate my group members, rather than trying to lecture them. At the end of the day, either I will learn something from my group or they will learn something from me. Second, I would like to improve my public speaking abilities so that I am a more confident speaker. Since lack of preparation is not the issue, I know that this will take some time to improve. In order to seize this opportunity, I will take it upon myself to accept any

public speaking opportunity that is present and prepare more than I normally would. Finally, I feel there is potential to improve my graphic design work. I generally try to find the easiest way to accomplish projects while still maintaining the high standard I have set for myself, however, I would like to continue to polish the Adobe skills I already have. With elements of Adobe becoming so popular, furthering my knowledge in this area will surely serve me well in the future.

<div align="center">Threats to Success</div>

When considering threats to my success, one word comes to mind: intimidating. Some of my closest friends have told me that I intimidated them when we first met, so they were unsure if we would become friends. Obviously, they realized I was harmless once they got to know me, but this is something that concerns me. How many people will have the same opinion? Is there something about my resting face that makes me appear intimidating? When hearing comments like this, I become easily upset and begin trying to think of ways to appear as someone that people *want* to work with. I personally think this may be linked to my level of determination and perfectionism, since those are not qualities that everyone possesses. In order to solve this and become inviting and easily approachable to my peers, I will try my best to reach out to people I do not usually work with for projects and make them feel that their opinions are heard and validated.

<div align="center">Description of Brand</div>

In order to professionally present myself to future employers and my peers, I have found it necessary to create my own brand. For this purpose, I have decided to develop and adopt a new

logo, branding position, and design my own website to function as an e-portfolio. From the creative brief created, one can easily tell how I plan for my brand to appear and impact my audience. My primary target audience are prospective employers that are willing to hire younger working professionals such as myself. From my experience, I have learned that employers will almost always want to see samples of my print and graphic design work prior to an in-person interview, so it is crucial that my website be able to cater to that.

Another important concept is that I would like my brand to portray my own personality and present the same vibe that I would in-person. To do this, I have chosen a three-shade blue color palette that is calming and sincere, accompanied with headshots that showcase my qualities of warmth and maturity. My logo is crafted using the selected color palette in order to show unity between the website and other pieces that I might present to an employer, such as my cover letter, resume, and business cards. It is my hope that the diamond shape of the logo will illustrate the sharpness and devotion that I have been told I showed throughout my collegiate career and that the website will help with my career search post-graduation.