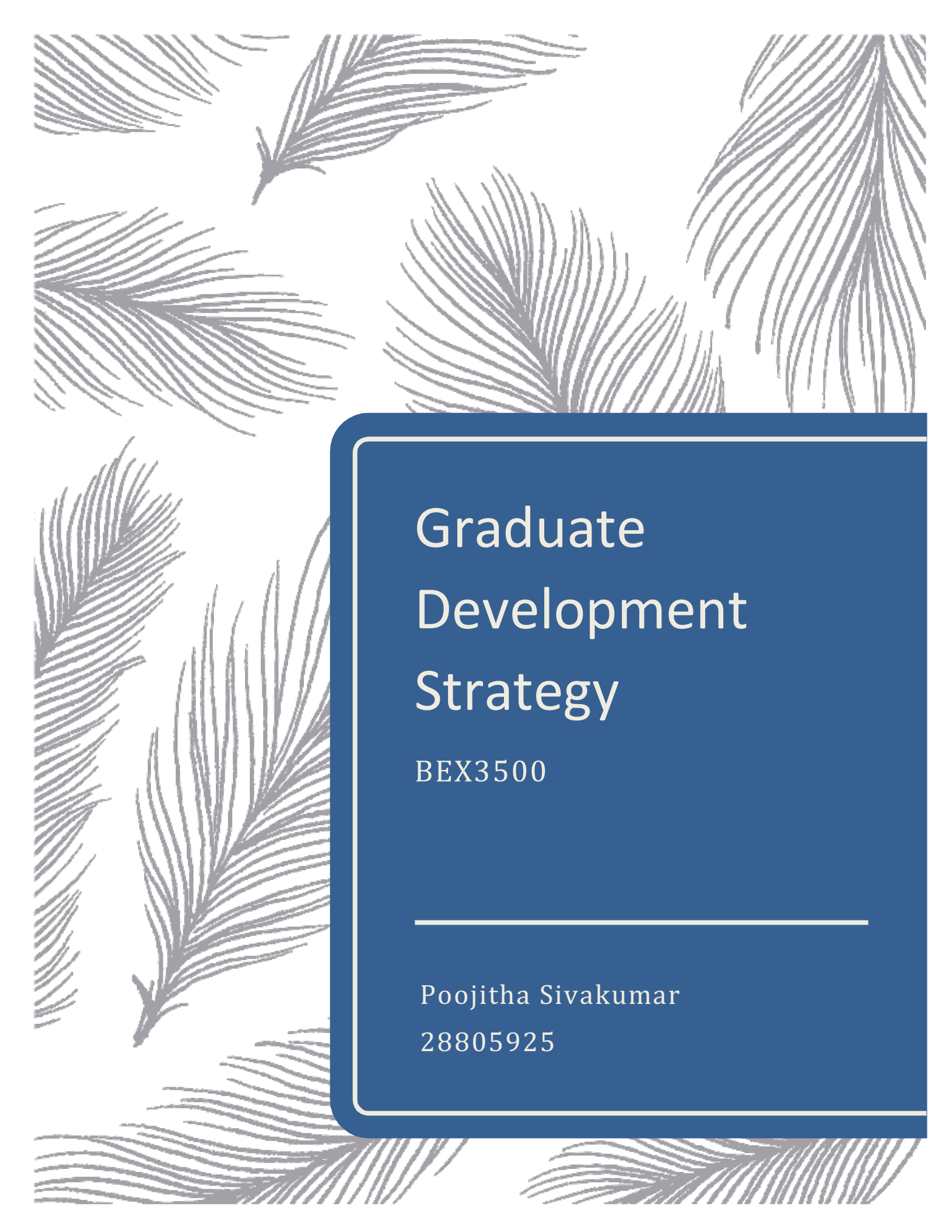




Graduate Development Strategy

BEX3500

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My Graduate Capital strategy has four dimensions of reflections to it: Career aspirations, Personal and professional vision, BEX3500 team and individual performance and Most Significant Change (MSC).

Career aspirations

Following the completion of my bachelor's degree, I intend to pursue higher studies and aim to complete Master of Business Administration (MBA) at RMIT university. In addition to this, I am currently working as a Floor Manager at Kumon Narre Warren and Berwick South where I am responsible for training and managing eight staff members under me and am responsible for the education of over 100 students. Upon completion of my master's degree, I intend to purchase an existing Kumon Franchise center and run the center as an instructor.

One of the major challenges in my projected career pathway is going to be limited experience. As a Kumon instructor, I am required to handle several aspects of the business which includes the finances, administration, staff training, marketing and student management. My experience as a Kumon Floor manager has enabled me to explore and experience several aspects of the business such as staff training, student management and to a limited extent, marketing. However, there are several aspects of the role I am not exposed to such as the finances and the administration. In addition to my experience in Kumon, my education has prepared me to understand different management styles, handle finances and understand commercial laws. Despite this, I anticipate that I will have a significantly lower amount of evidence in comparison to other Kumon instructors where most of them have switched to Kumon as their second career. To combat this, I have partnered with the Kumon Instructor in the current centre I am working in where she has accepted to mentor and support me during the initial year of my role as an instructor. Furthermore, she has progressively increased my responsibilities in the current centre to help me understand the wide range of daily activities required to maintain and also improve the business.

The second major role is accumulating the financial resources to purchase a Kumon centre. Since I intend to purchase a centre soon after the completion of my master's degree, I have been working two jobs to save up for a centre. However, my saving capacity has been greatly impacted since my father suffered a workplace injury three years ago. In addition to Kumon, I also privately tutor students as an additional means of income. In the past two years, I have limited myself to take only one batch of students at a time as I did not want to overextend myself and compromise my education. However, as I have gained the experience and resources, I am confident that I will be able to concurrently manage several batches of students. This will ensure that I have saved enough money to purchase a Kumon centre right after completing my MBA. However, I have also calculated a set amount of money that I need to save in addition to the cost of purchasing a Kumon centre to mitigate any financial risks and am determined to embark on this journey when I am financially secure.

Reflection of Professional and personal vision

As a person who highly values education, my personal vision in life was to partake in educational endeavors. Initially, I intended to work as an accountant following my bachelor's degree. However, my work experience at the Doxa Youth Foundation as an accounting cadet demonstrated that I was not suited to be an accountant as it was not reflective of the type of person I am. Personally, I strongly believe that the job should have a positive impact on the society and my role at Kumon has provided me with ample opportunities to help and support students to achieve their academic goals. Additionally, my academic downslide in my second semester of my bachelor's greatly impacted my self-confidence which I took a lot of time to regain with the support of my parents, my brother and my friends. This job provided me with the opportunity to help struggling children to reach their grade level and improve their self-confidence which I believe is the best way to repay all those who supported me during the tough times.

Additionally, I also believe that the skills required for a Kumon instructor aligns perfectly with my strengths: interpersonal communication, problem solving and the capacity to work in a dynamic environment. I have the ability to work with a variety of people in different age groups and form a strong connection with them. This is the biggest strength I have which I would like to hold onto for the future as well.

One of my weaknesses is that I am a highly sensitive person. As a businessperson, I will be required to think about what is ethically right for the business and as an educator, I am required to think about the human aspect of the students and parents to better assist the students. Therefore, a Kumon instructor requires a fine balance between the two contrasting roles, or it can be detrimental to the growth of the business. Upon closer inspection of other Kumon instructors, highly business-minded Kumon instructors often have high student turnover as they lack the personal touch and usually fail to positively impact the child's education. On the other hand, Kumon instructors who value student education over the business aspect tend to have smaller centers with limited growth capacity. As a sensitive person, I fear that I may lean towards the second type of Kumon instructors. However, my current employers and my mentor is currently training me in how to respond to different situations and manage between the two different roles.

Over these years I have learnt a lot about myself and this year especially this unit has played a crucial role in helping me gain full understanding of who I am and what I would like to achieve in my life both personally and professionally. Predominantly, one thing stood out the most, I am a person who works with a purpose and I work better if the job I do has an impact on the larger society and the people. It does not give me satisfaction by just earning above average, I would like to pursue my purpose of giving back to our community in some way.

Reflection of Individual and team performance

This unit has been significantly different from all the units I have completed during my degree. Firstly, I was eligible to take this unit from last year but I had postponed it to 2020 as I wanted to thoroughly enjoy and make the most out of this unit. However, COVID-19 flipped things for all us, hence, I did not have an option but to complete it this semester in order to graduate and finish my bachelor's degree. I was not a great fan of the structure of this unit, initially it did not work for me as I was finding it really difficult to network and connect with my peers online. Adjusting to the new norm took me some time and before I could adapt the first team assignment was upcoming due. The first meeting was the hardest one and once we all started to speak and know each other better, the zoom conference environment turned to have immense positivity. My teammates were transparent and supportive for the learning and growth of other members of our team. Since this unit was my first team presentation that was due, I had the advantage of settling and knowing the expectation prior to interacting with my other groups from different units. This unit has had an impact on both personal and professional learning. I have learnt that change is the only thing that is certain and the significance of being flexible to adapt is key for success. I have the tendency to disregard new ways of doing things and often am a critique of any new change. During this semester, I have learnt to treat each situation uniquely and respond organically where I am able to make the most out of the situation. This learning journey has assisted me in developing my identity capital. This semester I have spent the most amount of time with myself and spoken the most to myself. During this time I have gained clarity on various life decisions which during non-covid would have been hard to take.

However, I have had glitches in my personal life due to my family member falling ill during this time and these have been significant highs and lows I have had. But I have learnt to persist and be hopeful that with the skills I have gained and the experience I have stored I will be able to get through these situations as a strong individual.

Reflection of Most Significant Change

The most significant change during my degree has the phase of when the circumstances at home were greatly impacted due to my father's injury at work. Around three years ago my father had an injury at his workplace which dislocated his disk in the backbone. At the time of injury, nothing seemed more important than his recovery and we were very confident that with time he should be able to fully recover. Consequently, this impacted my personal development, I began to take more initiative and found myself a part-time job to support my family. Personally, I am a very pampered child and at that phase of my life I was not mentally prepared to take on a job and perform. Opportunities are rare and are not recurrent, this is what I always remind myself of before taking big decisions in life. Hence, I tried applying for many companies and retail stores, I would clear all the assessment segments but never got through the interview stage. This was the second time I felt like I was left all alone without direction. However, through a reference of my friend I was introduced to Doxa Youth Foundation, it is an organisation which supports youngsters with

academic talent but with families that are struggling or going to issues. This program was the biggest turning point in my life and it is only because of the opportunity I had to be a part of it that I am who I am today. During my time at Doxa, I was provided with a sponsor company where I would work twice a week and was paid on a weekly basis. Along with the part-time employment, Doxa offered many other support services, one of which was the professional development seminars. During these seminars I have learnt a variety of skills and adapted to various professional behaviour, I have taken part in 20 professional development workshops and have received completion certificates from all of those, while I have only been working for three years.

There are three strategies that I have implemented in my life and will continue to follow into the future.

1. Firstly, I set goals on a daily basis, I believe that long term goals are realistic only if there is an apt mindmap of how to get there. Hence, each day I set 1 SMART goal and ensure I achieve it. This strategy I have learnt from the concept of Kaizen, in this concept it is believed that even 1% improvement every day is a booster for not giving up.
2. Second strategy is to break down the system into smaller manageable actions. In order to attain continuous improvement, I believe that it is important to make steady progress instead of sudden bursts of improvement. I ensure that the small actions that I have derived are those behaviours that I do not have resistance towards. The main part of this strategy is to sustain and commit to the actions and ensure that it is organically blended into the daily system.
3. The final strategy is keeping track of the improvement. Measuring incremental achievement is as important as performance itself. The cycle of evaluating and measuring from time to time the improvements we have achieved is the motivation and the yield for commitment to the journey. It is scientifically proven that by measuring progress, our brains are being convinced and strengthens our inner self with the confidence to achieve all the goals in life.

I believe that significant changes in our lives are the dealbreakers which shapes each one of us and develops a sense of individuality. It is how we tackle these situations that makes it turn out positively or negatively. With these strategies I have been able to achieve so much, and I have stored all the energy in me to achieve more by continuously pursuing these strategies into the future.

References

The Graduate Capital Model |Careers and Employability Service | University of Southampton. (2020). Retrieved 30 August 2020, from <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/staff/employability-exchange/curriculum-development.page>