

FBL Employable YOU - 16 June 2022 - Developing YOU-Tn21BhGkFzl-720p- 1655463427867

ROB MOORE: Hello, and welcome to Student Hub Live with me. I'm Rob Moore, and I'm coming to you from my study shack in rural Leicestershire. It's really good to have you all with us again, and we're going to have a really interesting discussion today, talking about employability and the faculty of business and law. I'm quite excited about this one because this is my faculty. This is where I work, so it's like coming home for me.

We're going to be looking at a range of different issues. So we're going to have three sessions. We're going to be looking at developing you, which is looking at your mindset and your well-being. We're going to be looking at transferable you, which is all about the transferable skills that you pick up. And then we're going to have, in the final session, making the most of you, how to get the most out of your experience and the qualifications that you develop.

As always, we want you to get involved with us. We want you to be involved with the questions in the chat box. And as we go through the session, we'll be going to HJ, who will be picking out some of those choice comments and choice phrases that you're coming up with. So HJ, tell us, who have we got on the line at the moment?

HJ: Well, we've got lots of people joining us in the chat, which is fantastic. So if you are just joining us, feel free to introduce yourself. Let us know what you study, where you're from, if you're enjoying brilliant weather, like Alison is and Natasha in Hamburg as well. I can say it's very sunny in South Wales today. And lots of exciting things I'm hearing in the chat as well.

So Alison's just completed DD103 and is starting a new job soon, which is really exciting. And we all know, as an OU student, she'll absolutely smash it. And Binot's hoping to graduate this September as well. And Danilo is in the last year of the OU MBA. So lots of exciting things coming up for us.

In the chat, this is a place for you to put your thoughts, comments, and questions for our absolutely fantastic guests. We want to hear at all. And if you're like me, Natasha, and Alexander, and you like to talk about chocolate as well, by all means, do so. It's a great place for you to have a chat with your fellow students and let our fantastic guests know what you're thinking. So yeah, we'll have a great session today.

ROB MOORE: Absolutely. Isabella might not be here, but chocolate is yours. So just to be- a word of caution, when you come to take part in the chat box, please remember that it is a public forum. It's a public platform, so don't share any information that you don't want to be published. So just have fun, but just be careful about the private information you put in.

So this first session then, developing you, we're going to be joined on the hot desk by George McPherson and Matt Fiddler. George and Matt will be taking your questions and responding to them specifically in the chat box. And also, if there are questions that we might want to answer in the broader discussion, they'll be pointing them out to us.

In the room with me today, I've got Rosie and Barry. So Rosie is one of our student experience managers, and Barry is a fellow tutor in business and law. You'll notice that Chris was originally in the- oh, sorry, Rosie. Was just going to say Chris was originally meant to be with us, but unfortunately, Chris couldn't make it today. So we got Rosie and Barry.

So I'm going to start off straight into the first question. And I'll let you introduce yourself in a second, Rosie. What we want to know on this first topic is well-being. Why is well-being and resilience important for students? And what sort of skills do we bring into our modules that they can take advantage of? So I'll go over to you first, Rosie.

ROSIE WATSON: Yes. Morning, Barry. Lovely to be part of this Student Hub Live today. It is my first experience of being a participant in this. As you said, I'm a student experience manager in the law department. All of the [AUDIO OUT] tutors that I look after teach law. So that's very specifically my area. To go back to your question, well-being [AUDIO OUT] skills for students to develop throughout their academic years with the OU or wherever else they may happen to be. Well-being, of course, well-being, we all know, is important for maintaining our health. Resilience is extremely important for being able to cope with life's knocks and life's ups and downs.

So as far as well-being is concerned, we all know what we should be doing. It's what we hear every day on the radio and the television. We should be getting enough sleep. We should be eating well. We should be exercising more.

And one of the problems, of course, with that is we all make excuses, don't we? I mean, I've got two children and a baby to look after. I haven't got time. I've got too much work to do. I'll do it next week. But it's really, really important to be kind to yourself, to take care of your own health and welfare. And it's also very important to be able to say no when you've got too much on your plate. It's really important not to take on everything that you're asked to do. Make time for sitting down and reading that book if you're not the type to rush off to the gym. And that's me.

I keep meaning to, but I never do it. Really important to look after your well-being. And you know all the things you need to be doing. Why is it important? Because then it allows you to focus on your studies. Now, I would like to think- I would like all of you to think about this in a wider context because everything that you apply, all the skills that you bring to your studies and all the skills that you develop, are also skills that are vitally important in the workplace. We all heard of workaholics, people who don't take care of themselves, who just work all the time, who just simply don't have time for themselves.

Don't be one of those people. It's vitally important that you do take care of yourself. So moving on- and by the way, I think there are lots of links. I'm pretty sure there are lots of links in one of the boxes so that you can access- certainly at the OU, students are provided with numerous bits and pieces of help.

So Barry, would you let me just touch on resilience now for a second? Rob, sorry. Rob, would you like to- I beg your pardon.

ROB MOORE: In one second. Just before you go on to resilience, I'll just remind people, there's a ticker question going across the bottom of the screen asking what you do to promote your own well-being. And we've had a message from Alison, who's just discovered Capernwray or "Carp-en-ray," somewhere she likes to go and swim. So that's fantastic. Sorry. So yes, if you'd like to talk about resilience, Rosie, that'd be great.

ROSIE WATSON: Yeah. OK. I can move on to resilience. OK, so resilience is being able to cope with life's knocks. Now, I'm sure there isn't one of us, however young or old we are, who has not experienced

knockbacks in life, disappointments of various sorts. I mean, if we take the student context, you've worked weeks and weeks, worked very hard on an assignment, and you get a very poor mark or a low mark or at least a disappointing mark for you because you might get 65, but be horrified that you didn't get 85.

The person who lacks resilience will look at that and will start to think, well, that's not fair. Somebody else's fault. It was really good work. Why did that happen?

Someone who has been able to develop that resilience is going to be able to say, OK, I need to take stock here. This is disappointing. And I can certainly tell you from my own personal experience when I was studying law, I had exactly this experience. Completely horrified to discover I'd only got 50% for a law essay that I'd worked extremely hard on.

So the important thing is, once you've got over the shock, if it is a shock, then you need to say, OK, what am I going to be able to do to change things here? A resilient person is going to say, right. I need to seek help. I need to go talk to my teacher. I need to have some discussions perhaps with colleagues or friends and build up that ability to take those knockbacks.

Now, work is exactly the same. Every single employer, it doesn't matter whether it's law, business, personal care, whatever it is, every single employer wants employees who are going to be able to handle the daily knocks of everyday life and manage to cope with them. And of course, that's why resilience and well-being are tied in together because if you're taking care of your well-being, you're much better able to deal with the knocks that life brings to you.

And of course, you're in a great position then to take advantage of all the good things that life offers you. And don't forget, you need to celebrate your successes. Absolutely, you need to stop, take stock. I'm famous for saying, gosh, I didn't achieve very much today. And I have to make myself stop and think what I did achieve that day and then think, OK, yes.

You definitely deserve a pat on the back. You might not have achieved x, y, and z, but you've certainly done A, B, and C. And isn't that great?

ROB MOORE: Fantastic, Rosie. Thank you for that. Before we go on to Barry to get some ideas of some of the resources we have in the business school to help with well-being and resilience, I was wondering, HJ, what have we got in the chats? What sort of things are people talking about that they do to help with their own well-being?

HJ: Well, there's lots that we're sharing in the chat. Matt, who's helping us in the chat today, says, I always make sure to have a toy on my desk to play or fidget with. Currently, it's a Rubik's cube. I think, for me, I'd just get too distracted and probably spend a day trying to figure that out. Binot just came from the gym and then joined us at Student Hub, so that's fantastic to hear.

Natasha likes martial arts or barbell training as part of a regular routine. And she says kill your social media accounts. George, who's joining us in the chat as well, said, I used to do karate and found it's not only a great way to exercise, and meditation too. Luke likes to read, watch football, and spend time with his little one. Tracey says exercise and laughing at least once a day. I like that.

It's good to have a laugh, isn't it? It's good for the soul. And Alexander says, I'm a hoarder of many antiquities and collectible trading cards. So going out to buy things to resell or add to my personal collection for a few hours a day helps me get away from that unique stress. And Alison likes to collect comics on eBay as well. Lots of collectors in the chat. It might be a social sciences thing.

ROB MOORE: Excellent.

HJ: Oh, and Jane likes to dance around the kitchen, which is something I absolutely agree with. If you're stressed and you're studying, just get up. Have a little dance. We've had a dance on Student Hub before. Maybe we'll have another one in the future.

Ezekiel says, I like walking in the park. Alan says listening to music is always good with happy songs. I like to- what Danilo says. Love walking home after a long day at work and playing with my beautiful cat. And cats make excellent study buddies. I think that's fantastic.

ROB MOORE: Brilliant. Thank you, everyone, for all of your input there. It's great to see you've got some real techniques to help you. So Barry, we're going to go on to you now. So Barry, can you tell us something about how, in the business school, we can help people with the resilience? And also, I know you've got some comments about the apprentices we have and how their study is a little different and how they might need a bit of extra support.

BARRY D'SOUZA: Sure. So good morning, Bob. Good morning, everyone. And thank you for inviting me to your party. I'm joining you from rural Portugal. It's about 36 degrees here at the moment, and I've turned off my fan so I don't disrupt everything with background noise.

So forgive me if I start sweating. But anyway, right. So look. Any extended period of study is going to be demanding of the learner- for example, keeping up over your reading, making sense of what's being taught, taking down notes, preparing assignments, demonstrating good academic practise, et cetera, et cetera.

Now, when studying at a distance, there's additional factors that also need to be considered- for example, the potential for a student to fall into the trap of working in isolation or the potential for a student to lose motivation due to them having to manage competing priorities emanating from work or home or to do with a social life.

For example, if you go into a red brick university, it is easier to put everything else aside for a bit while you're in that building. But working from home, it's a bit more complicated to make those divides. There's also the potential for student to try and deal with any of those setbacks alone because of this concept of working in isolation. And as such, they don't reach out for support. Each of these factors can, of course, adversely impact on one's well-being and resilience if not managed carefully.

However, with the right kind of support put in place from day one, students are not going to just leave the OU with a prestigious qualification, but also an incredible set of soft skills that can then be applied to pretty much any area of their life for the betterment of themselves and, of course, others. So integral to all modules in the business school are study planners to keep students on track with respect to managing those competing priorities, staying on track to achieving their goals.

There's activity-driven content to help apply and embed their learning in practical and engaging ways and, of course, to help students remain motivated throughout the duration of their studies. There's tutor group forums that facilitate communication and learning between tutors and students, which in turn helps to drive debate, surface challenges, and instil and reinforce a sense of camaraderie, which is so important, that feeling of we're all in it together. I'm not alone in this.

There's also online and face-to-face tutorials giving students opportunities to meet and to socialise, to explore ideas, to challenge their thinking, to apply their learning through team-based skills, all of which, of course, helps to develop the kind of skills and, as Rosie said, the kind of resilience demanded by most employers, regardless of profession, sector, or industry. So Rob, do you want me to go straight onto apprenticeships?

ROB MOORE: We'll have to be very quick, Barry, because we've got about a minute left. So quick as you can on apprenticeships.

BARRY D'SOUZA: So in addition to all that stuff, the apprenticeship degree programmes also provide practise tutors to support the apprentice journey from day one until the conclusion of the programme by facilitating the transfer of academic learning to practical situations in the workplace. And underpinning this is an ILP, an Individual Learning Plan, which is apprentice and line manager-driven and focuses on setting professional, personal, and organisational goals, which are monitored by the practise tutor, by the line manager, and by the apprentice.

And as such, based on progress, be spoken. Support packages are developed between apprentice and practise tutor to help them progress through the qualification. In terms of the modules themselves, there's work-based learning modules which differ from academic modules insomuch as that they are focused purely on experiential learning in the workplace, which help apprentices develop the standards necessary to get through the apprenticeship programme, which is essentially focusing on interpersonal excellence, organisational performance, and personal effectiveness. And I think that's more or less the difference.

ROB MOORE: Wow. And you did all that without taking a breath, Barry.

BARRY D'SOUZA: Yeah. Well, I only had a minute. You told me I had a minute.

ROB MOORE: No. No, that's brilliant. And also, just for extra information for those watching, the links that Chris was going to talk about are available on the Student Hub Live website. And feel free to go and use some of those resources. HJ, we're going to come back to you in the next session. We'll start with you summing up some comments there.

But that's this first session done. Rosie and Barry, thank you very much for joining us and for your input. It's fascinating, and 15 minutes is never long enough. For those of you who are watching the session now, we're going to be coming back in a few minutes to talk about transferability.

And just while we change over, you'll be able to watch a short video on staying well and studying well. So I'll see you back here in a couple of minutes. Thank you.