

Professor Sommer

IDS493

Reflection Essay

April 02, 2026

### Building My Future: An E-Portfolio Reflection

Throughout my degree in Leadership, I have developed important skills that prepare me for my future career in Human Resources. These skills come from a variety of courses, including leadership classes, writing courses, and general education classes. Each course has helped me improve in areas such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving. By working on different assignments and projects, I have been able to connect what I learned in class to real-world situations and put together this e - portfolio. According to Nedra Reynolds “portfolio keeping will help you through the steps of collecting, selecting, and presenting your work, all the while emphasizing reflection”. This reflection paper discusses the key skills I have developed, the artifacts that represent those skills, and how my learning experiences have shaped my thinking and future goals.

Collaborative Projects and Teamwork are important because they show that success is not achieved alone. Working with others allows individuals to grow, learn new perspectives, and improve weaknesses. Team environments strengthen communication and problem-solving skills while providing support, making it easier to overcome challenges and achieve shared goals.

One of my strongest examples of teamwork is my final project in CPD 414: Design Thinking for Leaders. The PowerPoint I created was the final group project submitted for the course. It was a very rewarding experience because of the strong collaboration within my group.

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We had to communicate regularly, divide responsibilities, and work together to complete a large project on time. This assignment showed me how important teamwork is in achieving success. It also demonstrated that when people contribute equally and support each other, the outcome is stronger.

Another group experience that reflects teamwork was a project where my group visited an art museum and then created a visual museum of our own. This assignment highlighted creativity and collaboration. It was one of the most enjoyable projects I completed because we worked together to create an authentic and engaging experience. We had to combine ideas, plan carefully, and present something meaningful as a group.

These experiences connect directly to leadership because good leaders must know how to work with others effectively. According to Meade, "Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with a deeper understanding of its relationship with and connections to other experiences and ideas. It is the thread that makes continuity of learning possible." In Human Resources, teamwork is essential because employees must work together to solve problems and improve workplace environments. These projects helped me understand how collaboration leads to better results and stronger relationships.

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Creativity is another important skill I have developed. Creativity is not only about art or design but also about problem-solving and thinking differently. My visual museum project helped me understand this concept in a real way.

At first, it was challenging to decide how to turn our ideas into something meaningful. We had to brainstorm, test ideas, and make changes along the way. This process helped me learn that creativity requires effort, planning, and teamwork. It also showed me that creative thinking is important in leadership because leaders often need to find new solutions to problems.

In Human Resources, creativity is important when improving workplace culture, solving employee issues, and developing new policies. This project helped me understand how creativity can be applied in professional settings to improve outcomes.

Critical thinking is one of the most important skills I have developed throughout my education according to Purdue Global's "employers value people who can think critically and resolve issues quickly and effectively". It allows me to analyze information, evaluate ideas, and make informed decisions. My coursework has helped me strengthen this skill through research papers and presentations.

One example is my English 101 assignment at Tidewater Community College. In this assignment, I had to take on the role of a professor and evaluate a classmate's short essay. This

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experience was very insightful because it showed me how important feedback is in learning. It also helped me understand that people at the same level can provide valuable and meaningful feedback.

Another example is my research paper on the legal drinking age. This assignment helped me develop my critical thinking and research skills. I chose this topic because I feel strongly about the issue, especially the idea that individuals can serve in the military but cannot legally consume alcohol. This project helped me analyze different perspectives and strengthen my ability to form arguments based on research.

I also completed a PowerPoint presentation in my PAS 301 class that focused on workplace harassment and safety training. This project used statistics and research to show the importance of regular training in the workplace. It strengthened my ability to analyze data and apply it to real-world situations.

In addition, I completed a term paper analyzing Apple and its influence in the technology industry. This paper explored how Apple operates and its level of market power. It helped me improve my ability to research companies and understand business concepts.

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These assignments show how critical thinking is important in both academics and professional settings. In Human Resources, decision-making must be based on research, fairness, and logic. These experiences have helped me prepare for that responsibility.

Leadership is an important part of my degree and future career goals. Leadership means guiding others, making decisions, and helping teams succeed. It is especially important in Human Resources because HR professionals must support employees and maintain a positive work environment.

Throughout my experiences, I have learned that leadership is not just about being in charge but about helping others grow. In group projects, I have taken on responsibilities, supported teammates, and helped complete tasks. These experiences have helped me understand how leadership works in practice.

One important example of leadership development is a career blueprint I created at work. This document outlined my career goals and the steps needed to achieve them. I used it in a meeting with my manager to discuss my future growth. This helped me understand what I need to do to move forward in my career.

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Another example is my resignation letter from my first job at Kmart. Even though the company was closing, I made sure to leave professionally and respectfully. This showed me the importance of professionalism in all situations.

Leadership also connects to my current job in the insurance industry. I use Excel spreadsheets to create home insurance policies for clients. This work requires attention to detail, accuracy, and responsibility. It shows that leadership also includes being reliable and careful in your work. Leadership is important to me because it helps me grow personally and professionally. It also allows me to make a positive impact on the people I work with.

In conclusion, my e-portfolio reflects my growth as a student and future professional in Human Resources. Through my coursework, group projects, and work experience, I have developed important skills in teamwork, creativity, critical thinking, and leadership. Each artifact in my portfolio represents a different part of my learning journey, but together they show how my skills connect and grow over time. I have learned that collaboration leads to better outcomes, creativity improves problem-solving, and critical thinking supports better decision-making. My experiences have also shown me the importance of professionalism and responsibility in the workplace. Whether in school projects or real-world jobs, I have learned how to communicate effectively, work with others, and stay organized. Being an interdisciplinary thinker has helped me understand how different skills connect across subjects and real-life situations. This will be

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important in my future career in Human Resources, where I will need to work with people, solve problems, and support organizations. Overall, this e-portfolio shows my progress, strengths, and areas for continued growth. I am proud of how far I have come, and I am motivated to continue developing my skills as I move toward graduation and my future career.

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