EXAMPLE | Self-Concept Investigation Assignment

There are two parts of your assignment. Be sure to complete both parts. Below is an example of what your Self Concept Investigation Paper should include. You can also watch a complete review of the assignment here: http://prezi.com/1ge54l6gvxdg/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share

PART 1: Worth up to 10 points.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment Requirements</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Completed?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Complete a Reflection on your Self-Concept. Print and attach your results. See the example results below.</td>
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<td><img src="example1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<td>Develop a Word Cloud of all of the words that you use to describe yourself. See the example below.</td>
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<td><img src="example2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<td>Develop a Word Cloud of all of the words that others use to describe you. See the example below.</td>
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<td><img src="example3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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Create a Collage using the Word Clouds and other items that reflect who you are. See the examples below.

You can put pictures of yourself, your family and friends, your favorite things, images of what you want to be or what you are, images of what represents you, etc. Think of this collage as a window into your heart and your mind. Be real!
PART 2: Worth up to 20 points.

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<th>Assignment Requirements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Write a 4-5 page paper (12 font, 1” margins, stapled, name, date and section)</td>
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Basic Requirements

4-5 Page Paper, Typed, 12 Font, 1” Margins, Stapled, Name, Date & Section #.

Grammatically Correct and Few Spelling Errors

Paper Addresses All Parts of the Writing Task Requirements *Clearly label each section!

Writing Task Requirements

Describe your self-concept (You must include a minimum of 15 words).

Explain what social comparisons are and how social comparisons shaped who you are and how you feel about yourself. Provide at least three specific examples using at least three of concepts below. Define the concept and provide your example.

Explain how you learned about your self-concept through experiences and how those experiences shaped who you are and how you feel about yourself. Provide at least three specific examples using at least three of concepts below. Define the concept and provide your example.

Explain how reflected appraisals and the people in your life shaped who you are and how you feel about yourself. Provide at least three specific examples using at least three of concepts below. Define the concept and provide your example.

Explain how your self-concept and self-esteem affect your interpersonal relationships and communication with your family, friends and coworkers. Choose one specific relationship as an example for EACH type of interpersonal relationship. (You should have three total relationships). For each type of relationship, use at least three of the concepts below to explain your answer. Define the concept and provide your example.

Explain how this investigation assignment has:

- Changed the way communicate with others and;
- Changed your perception.

Provide at least three examples.

Jane Doe
COMM 121
MM/DD/YY

MY SELF-CONCEPT

My self-concept includes the following roles: wife, daughter, sister, aunt, caretaker, teacher, employee, leader, coach, mentor, instructional designer, trainer, consultant, professional, student for life, baby of the family, provider, woman, Christian and environmentalist.

I would describe myself using the following adjectives: smart, hardworking, emotional, sensitive, empathetic, adventurous, patient/impatient, laid back, non-materialistic, practical, realistic, conscientious, not wasteful, frugal, an approval seeker, overachiever, rule follower, proper, funny, introvert, private, technically savvy, a planner and creative.

SOCIAL COMPARISONS

Explain what social comparisons are and how social comparisons shaped who you are and how you feel about yourself. Provide at least three specific examples using at least three of concepts on the assignment sheet. For each concept, define the concept and provide your example.
Overtime, I learned a lot about myself through social comparisons. Sometimes it positively affects my self-esteem and other times it affects it in a negative way. We learn about our self-concept through social comparisons. We do this by comparing ourselves to others. When I was growing up, I was always compared to my older brother and older sister. They always did well in school and because I didn’t do well, I was always compared to them. Due to that, I grew up thinking that I wasn't smart or a "good kid." This negatively affected my self-esteem. I didn't think that I could ever compare to them. It wasn't until I got older and actually started trying in school that I realized that I was smarter than I had thought!

Overtime my self-esteem increased but it took a long time to get over feelings of inadequacy. I think this relates to birth order because I was the youngest and was supposed to follow the footsteps of my brother. My brother had to do well because he was the oldest son. As the baby of the family, I had to be just like him.

I also think this is related to our culture because we came from an achievement focused culture. This type of cultural characteristic focuses on material success and the goals that get us to be successful. Achieving in school was very important to my parents. I realize now that they compared me to push me. Not because they wanted to be mean.

Another related concept is face. Face is the image that we want to project to the world. Since it is expected that all children do well in school, my parents lost face when I didn't do well. They wanted to project that they are good parents with successful children. They were embarrassed and to regain face, they pressured me to do well.

EXPERIENCES

Explain how you learned about your self-concept through experiences and how those experiences shaped who you are and how you feel about yourself. Provide at least three specific examples using at least three of concepts below. Define the concept and provide your example.

Unfortunately, we don’t know, what we don’t know. We all have different experiences and those experiences, shape who we are and how we think about ourselves. If don’t have similar experiences, then we don’t always see eye to eye. I have been through a lot and I feel like everything I have gone through has influenced me and changed me. Below are a few examples of how my experiences have shaped my self-concept.

When I first started college, I didn't know whether not I would fail or succeed. I have never gone to college so I didn't know how I would do. My first semester didn't go very well. I wasn't used to the freedom and the fact that teachers wouldn't send a note home to my parents if I didn’t show up to class. I was put on probation and realized that I needed to change. I started to attend class and study which made a big change in my grades! I got up to a "B" average and with every semester I increased my GPA. I got on the Dean's list and remained on Dean's list for two straight years until I graduated. It was from this experience that I formed an identity that comprised of the following words: hard worker, overachiever and exceptional student.

The experience of doing well in all of my classes increased my self-esteem. I felt that I could do well in anything because I even did well in classes that I normally didn't do well in. Now when I get assigned a project I always feel like I can get it done. I try to manage and maintain that identity of being a hard worker. Whenever I get asked to do something, I always try to do it better than anyone else. I also try to learn from every experience I have, regardless if it is a good one or bad one. I feel like, I need to always have the mindset of a student otherwise, I will stop growing as a person. I try to maintain those identities because that is who I am.

My college experience also taught me about my values. Values are what have been instilled in us and what drive our beliefs, attitudes and actions. Personally, I value learning more so than partying. In my first year of college, I was a part of a sorority. I thought that it would be a good way to make new friends. Unfortunately, they didn’t care for school or value learning. The only thing they cared about was
boys and partying. Since I valued school, I started to avoid the sorority events and also avoid my sorority sisters. We just didn’t have the same values so I gradually ended my relationships with them.

In my college experience, I also learned about commitment, investment, Comparison Level and Comparison Level for Alternatives. Commitment is defined as the psychological feelings of attachment to a relationship and the desire to remain in that relationship. Investment are the resources attached to that relationship which include time, effort, friends, joint possessions, etc. Comparison Level are our expectations for a certain relationship. Lastly, Comparison Level for Alternatives are the alternative options to the relationship. I was dating this guy for a few months. I knew that he wasn’t good for me because he didn’t support my focus on education and overall he was just a bad fit for me. He would constantly compare me to his ex-girlfriend which really affected my self-esteem. When I was thinking about whether not I should end this relationship I thought about the commitment and the investment I had already made. I had invested six months and we had some of the same friends. I thought about the alternatives and the alternatives of dissolving the relationship was a lot better than staying in it. I learned that I could be on my own and happy about it. This experience made me feel better about myself and made me understand that it is important to understand the Comparison Level for Alternatives. This process made me understand that there are many alternatives to staying in a bad relationship.

REFLECTED APPRAISALS

Explain how reflected appraisals and the people in your life shaped who you are and how you feel about yourself. Provide at least three specific examples using at least three of concepts below. Define the concept and provide your example.

When I first started working in the corporate world, I learned a lot about myself and those experiences have shaped me in who I am today. In my first job, I learned a very important corporate code, and that is to never share how much you make with anyone. (Codes help guide behavior and explain what is acceptable and unacceptable). I was told that I was a “solid employee” but when I learned what others were making I didn’t believe that I was a "solid employee." If I was, wouldn't I be making something comparable to the others? After I learned what other people on my team were making, I was extremely upset. I felt that I was underpaid and that I wasn’t recognized for the work I was providing. Knowing this information caused a lot of psychological noise in my head and made it difficult at times to talk to my manager and those who made more than me. Especially when someone who made more than me did poor work, it made me feel like I was a fool for what I was getting paid. I hated that this was always on my mind so I learned never to ask and never to tell, because I didn’t want this information hurting my relationships at work. Eventually, I left that company and went to a different company that I felt recognized my worth.

At my first and second corporate job, I learned that I have a very analytical mind and that I would make a very good business analyst. I learned this because two of my project supervisors told me so and because they wanted to hire me to work for them as a business analyst. This was very exciting for me and it increased my self-esteem. Their expectations of how I would do were exceeded and because I exceeded their expectations, they provided me with a lot of positive feedback. Ever since then I have felt confident about my abilities to serve as a business analyst on any projects that I worked on.

In my current position I realized the importance of boundary work. The importance of creating boundaries between two separate areas. I was told by coworkers, friends and family that I need to work on having work/life balance. I realized that I couldn’t turn off work and keep it separate from my home life. My relationships with my husband and family were suffering because I focused too much on work. I wouldn’t have known that this issue was so severe if my coworkers, friends and family didn’t take the time to tell me that I lacked balance. Now I know that I have issues with work/life balance I try a lot harder to make sure that I do separate work from home. I do not put work before my family as much and that has helped my relationships tremendously.
MY SELF-CONCEPT AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Explain how your self-concept and self-esteem affect your interpersonal relationships and communication with your family, friends and coworkers. Choose one specific relationship as an example for EACH type of interpersonal relationship. (You should have three total relationships). For each type of relationship, use at least three of the concepts to explain your answer. Define the concept and provide your example.

FAMILY

My self-concept affects my relationship with my sister in a couple of different ways. First, I have assigned myself the role of being a great sister and an awesome aunt. Whenever her kids need anything whether it is clothes, toys, etc. I always get it for them. I feel like it is my responsibility to help care for my sister's kids and to help provide whenever I can. My sister knows that she can count on me. She self-disclosed to me that if anything happened to her and her husband that she would want me to raise her kids. Self-disclosure is extremely important in relationships. If you don’t share information with each other, it is tough to strengthen and maintain bonds. We are extremely close because our value of putting family first and know that we can rely on each other for anything.

Another way our communication is affected is because of our listening code. My sister and I have a code about listening. When one of us is mad at someone else, we will call each other, explain the situation and be supportive of each other. It doesn't matter if either one of is wrong, we will listen to each other in a supportive manner. For example, when I am mad at my husband and I call her to talk about it, she will agree that he is wrong and that I am right. That is just one of our codes.

INTIMATE (Friend or Significant Other)

My self-concept affects my relationship with my husband in a couple of different ways. First, I define myself as an independent woman and that can conflict with my role as a wife. I know that I can’t think independently because I am a wife. I have to include my husband in on big decisions and that makes it difficult, especially when we disagree. Our family rule is to make decisions together and we know that even though we want to be independent thinkers, we have to now think as a family.

Second, I try to be a “good wife”. To me that means cooking for my husband and making sure that the meals are very delicious. Since I strive to be a good wife, I would like him to tell me when the food that I make tastes good. My expectation is that he to tells me that it is good and when he doesn’t say anything, it makes me feel like it wasn’t good or he doesn’t appreciate it. I know that his love language is NOT words of affirmation so I try to be understanding if he doesn’t compliment my food. It does make our relationship difficult sometimes because I am seeking the validation that I am a good wife.

WORK/VOLUNTEER

My self-concept affects my relationships at work in a variety of ways. First, I try to make work a pleasant and safe place. I value my team and I want them to feel like they can tell me what is going on in their lives. If they need help, I want them to feel like they can ask for it. Since I value my team, I try to make the work place a low power distance environment. This makes it easier for them to come to me. If my team doesn’t feel like they can come to me, then I feel bad and that negatively affects my self-esteem. Therefore I try very hard to be open and understanding with my team.

Secondly, I view myself as an incredibly hard worker. I am determined to figure things out and to get things done right. Therefore when I run into issues, I usually do not ask for help or tell people that I cannot do it. Instead, I do whatever it takes to get it done, even if it means working extra hours or staying up all night. This relates to my individualistic and achievement focused culture. Individualistic cultures tend to value independence and doing things on our own. It is more competitive and you are rewarded when you can get things done independently. Due to this, this is how I feel about my work and doing things on my own. An achievement focused culture is focused on material success and status. By being a hard worker who can be relied upon, I feel like I have a certain status. I feel like if I can’t get it
done, my status is impacted. This makes it tough for me to ask for help but I realize that my coworkers may not feel like I trust them if I never ask for help.

HOW I HAVE CHANGED?

Explain how this investigation assignment has: 1) Changed the way communicate with others and; 2) Changed your perception. Provide at least three examples.

One example in how my communication has changed is how I interpret the other people’s behavior. For example, my coworker is from a high power distance culture. I used to think that they didn't care when we would brainstorm but now I realize that in his culture it isn't normal to share ideas unless you are in a high powered position. Now that I understand this, I don’t push him to share his ideas.

Another example in how my communication has changed is how I talk to my niece. I am more cautious with what I say to her and how I say it. I don’t want to negatively affect her self-esteem. I used to scold her when she did something wrong, and I realized how I said certain things may make her feel like she is always being bad. Instead of saying, “You always do this.” I just focus on this one instance. I also try not to tell her what to do. I ask her what she thinks she should do and let her come up with the solution. I want her to be able to solve her own problems.

Another example in how my communication has changed is how I try to include new people into our group. I feel bad when people don’t feel like they belong. I don’t want people to feel that way and so I try my best to make them feel comfortable, especially if they don’t know anyone. When new people join our team, I always send them a personalized welcome note and try to help them adapt to our team.