

Reflection on Group Work and Personal Development Using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

Introduction

Looking back on the group PowerPoint presentation assessment, I want to use Gibbs' Reflective Cycle to think about my own development, what it was like working with my group, and how we used Design Thinking to shape our idea. As Gibbs (1988, p.13) explains, "It is not sufficient simply to have an experience in order to learn. Without reflecting upon this experience, it may quickly be forgotten, or its learning potential lost." While I'll mention Gibbs' model, my focus is on sharing what happened, how I felt, and what I learned from the process, and not just ticking academic boxes.

Description of our Group

Our group had five people, which was more than there usually should have been (3-4max), however, this only happened as the other students in our University Cohort are fluent in Welsh, all five of them wanted to do their presentation in Welsh. This obviously left us non-fluent Welsh speakers in a not so ideal situation. However, everyone brought something different to the table. Our assessment was to create a Pecha Kucha style video pitch, presenting a solution to alleviate our chosen problem in an educational context. We all came to a decision that Child Poverty was a great idea. So, first we started working on ideas separately, then we presented our ideas in our next online meeting. We chose to blend multiple ideas into one solution; everyone had an idea that formed to one final idea. It took much longer than I expected. We had loads of discussions about what the club would do, where it would be based, and how to make it doable in real life, not just something that sounded good on paper. We went back and forth a lot before we finally agreed on a plan. We eventually came up with "Grow and Go" an after-school club, an idea that could turn into something realistic to help child poverty in our community.

Organising everyone was a real challenge. With five different work schedules and personal commitments, it sometimes felt impossible to get

us all together. Most of our work happened over Teams or WhatsApp video calls, which was convenient but also meant we occasionally misunderstood each other or missed details. On top of that, I ran into a technical issue with PowerPoint and couldn't get the recording button to appear. After some back and forth with Microsoft support, I managed to record my part, but it ended up in a separate version. I shared it with the group so they could choose which file and link to use.

My personal feelings around the assignment

At the start, I was excited to work in a group because I usually enjoy bouncing ideas off other people and seeing how something can develop with teamwork. Our first hurdle was not knowing what a Pecha Kucha style video was. We had to YouTube it and watch multiple videos in hopes that we were getting it right.

Our group got on well, and I genuinely appreciated how respectful everyone was of each other's ideas, especially during our Teams calls. Still, there were moments of frustration, especially when it felt like we were spending ages just trying to find a time that suited all five of us. The most frustrating for me was when I couldn't get PowerPoint to record, I felt useless and worried I was letting the team down. Thankfully, everyone was supportive, which made a big difference. It felt good to talk about problems openly and get help from the group.

My Evaluation of the group work

There were a lot of positives to how we worked together. People listened to each other, and we managed to build on each other's ideas well when we were all present. I think we did a good job of sharing out the work and making decisions as a group, although sometimes it felt like we were going in circles or making things more complicated than they needed to be. Time management was the biggest challenge. With five people, organising meetings and keeping everyone on track was much harder than I expected. Honestly, there were a few times when I thought it might have been quicker working alone or in a much smaller group. The recording issues just added to the stress.

Reflection

Looking back, I realise that being in a group is about more than just having good intentions. The Design Thinking process was useful, especially when it came to making “Grow and Go” practical. We spent a lot of time trying to see things from different perspectives and making sure our idea was realistic. I learned that being flexible and ready to adapt is important, especially when things don’t go as planned, there was compromise and understanding from all students. Mainly having to fix the recording problem taught me to ask for help and not feel embarrassed about it. It also made me appreciate how much clearer things are when you keep the group in the loop instead of struggling alone.

Conclusion

Overall, this experience showed me the ups and downs of group work. I loved working with others and seeing how our “Grow and Go” idea took shape, but it was stressful at times. Organising a big group is tricky, and technical problems can really throw you off. I've realised that talking openly, being flexible, and not being afraid to ask for help are important. Even though sometimes I thought it would have been easier to do it myself, I know our project was better because it included everyone’s input and had a broader approach.

Future reference and Action Plan

Next time I work in a group, I want to get everyone to agree on regular check-ins as soon as possible and make sure we’re all clear on who’s doing what. I’ll also remember to use the tech support that’s available and not waste time stressing over things on my own before seeking help. For me, reflection isn’t just a box to tick for an assignment, it’s a chance to really think about what worked, what didn’t, and how I can do better in the future if a group assignment is in play again. As Gibbs (1988, p.9) suggests, Reflection is a vital part of the learning process.” I’ll carry these lessons into future projects and hopefully make the process smoother for everyone.

References

Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods*. Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic.