

Reflective Essay Template

Rolfe`s reflective cycle

Module Name: Professional Career Development BMSW4012_CARD

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Introduction

This reflective essay will explore how the knowledge and skills I gained during the course have shaped my professional development using **Rolfe`s Reflective Cycle: WHAT, SO WHAT, and WHAT NOW**. I will examine the theories and models learned during the course and reflect on how I will apply them in my current work and in real-world situations. But what exactly does reflection mean? There are more than one Reflective cycles like Gibbs`[\(1988\)](#) according to [1](#)(Bassot`s B,2016) who writes that reflection is defined as thinking about having a target in life and she uses three types of reflection: **Reflection ON** action, **Reflection IN** action, and **Reflection FOR** action.

WHAT – Reflection ON

Several years ago, I found myself contemplating my life in the UK—whether I should stay in the same job or pursue a new career path. I wanted to upgrade my skills and education to help me take the next step in my career, perhaps finding a job I truly enjoyed or even starting my own business. The first step was finding a course that would suit my needs. After much searching and discussions with friends and family, I decided to apply to the University of Wales to attend a course called Employability Skills.

On the first day in the lecture room, I met many students from different countries and cultures, each attending the course for their own reasons. I had mixed feelings: I felt happy because a dream had come true, but I also felt a bit confused because of language barriers. We introduced ourselves in the classroom, and that made me feel a bit better.

From the beginning, I understood that I had obligations during the course, not only in the classroom but also outside, doing homework which demanded a lot of time and searching for information that needed to be used as evidence for my essays. I also needed to improve my English language.

In the lectures from the first week, I learned about **class expectations** , and **The 5 Pillars of Success**.

I learned about **Mindsets**, as described by Dweck, C.S. (2006), how individuals can use these mindsets to improve or change their skills and career. As well mindsets can change.

Resilience (Reivich, K., and Shatté, A., 2002) is another important concept in the workplace or University. Students and workers need to cope and find solutions in adversity, like stress or problems in the workplace, for instance, with colleagues, or lectures or homeworks.

There are myths and truths about resilience. I have learned that resilience is something that can be learned and developed over time.

I took the **Honey & Mumford personality test** (Pratchett, Tet al), discovering that I am a Reflector and learned about the Personal **SWOT analysis** (Dunne.K), which explores strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats at work and decisions made by individuals. Another theory I learned about is how an individual can choose a job and perform well, according to **Dr. Holland's Theory**([Career Advice Resources](#))

There is another theory, the **SMART**([wikipedia](#)) which helps you make a step forward by creating a personal or company plan for growth.

Some of these lectures required our participation, which made it difficult for me in some cases. However, with the help of my colleagues and the professor, I was able to cope.

SO WHAT – Reflection IN

Through class expectations, I learned that I had to focus on my skills, give attention to the lectures, engage in topic-related conversations, ask questions when needed, and learn to use basic computer programs like Word, PowerPoint, Moodle, and the library system. I realized that all of these are important for my work, where I need to collect more information. For example, using the PC, I could find information that might be important for completing a task or making a decision.

I also learned about the **Five Pillars of Success** (Peitzman.J (2024))attending lectures, taking notes, asking questions, listening,submitting drafts,creating relationships with proactive individuals,everything you do must have a purpose.

Recently, I was offered a new role in my current company, and I adopted all these theories I learned, such as keeping notes of important duties. This allows me to remember things I'm not sure about. Asking questions to solve my queries about items we use (like taking blood or using a program to print blood test results) has also been helpful.

The concept of mindset is the way an individual approaches challenges, considers them as opportunities, and seeks out individuals to help grow knowledge and skills. I used this information at work, approaching the right colleagues to help me with the right knowledge. I started to ask for new duties as challenges, knowing that I have individuals who can help me in difficult situations, thus helping me approach my goal.

Regarding resilience, everyone experiences stress from time to time, so it's essential to respond positively by finding meaning in challenges. Resilient people are not necessarily tough; they are clever and have the support of their families and friends.

Previously, I avoided having many contacts with these individuals at work because I thought they were tough. But now, I approach my manager much more easily, and I don't avoid conversations anymore. For sure, this is a strong skill that will help me in my future work.

Through the Honey & Mumford personality test, I discovered what type of character I am and which learning style suits me best. I belong in the Reflector category, which means I like to watch first and think later about the decisions I have made. This was very important information, as I didn't know about all these personality categories before.

WHAT NOW – Reflection FOR

All the above and the **Johari Window**(Communication Theory),which helps individuals understand what type of person they are and how they want others to perceive them, have been significant. The window has four categories: open, blind, hidden, and unknown. I discovered that I belong in the hidden category. Honestly, I am not the hidden type with my friends, but I am hidden when it comes to individuals I meet for the first time, and I need a long time to express myself. I believe that in the workplace, you need to be reserved and cautious about sharing ideas, as others can take advantage of them.

SWOT analysis helps you identify your strengths, explore your weaknesses, define any opportunities available to you, and understand potential threats, ultimately enabling you to make informed decisions. What I found most valuable from the SWOT analysis is that you can transform your weaknesses into major opportunities. For me,

this means not being afraid to try and not fearing failure. Now I can apply this analysis to my current and future work, especially since I often need to train new staff. It is very useful to know from the start how I learn best and feel confident in doing so.

I realized that to achieve success, one needs to work hard on oneself. Identifying strengths, weaknesses, and skills is crucial for growth.

Dr. Holland's Theory suggests that it is very important to ask yourself if you choose a job that really suits you. With friends I have often spoken with, they say they don't like the work they do and want to change it. But the question is: Do they dislike the job, or is something else going wrong, like a lack of collaboration within the team, or have they realized that the job is different from what they originally wanted? This happened to me when I found a job that suited me, but after a while, I wanted to leave it.

It is crucial to choose the right work and try to improve your position. The **SMART** goals framework helps you make a step forward and helps you find a clear path for your progress. My step was attending this course, and I will use it in the future, answering the question: How can I imagine myself in five years? The answer is that during my studies, I will apply all the knowledge I have gained and find the best role for me.

For sure, I need to make self-assessments to check how my work is progressing, whether I've met my goals, or if I need to create a new plan. This means I have to think through all options and make the right decisions. In my current work, I ask myself if I am doing well in my duties, whether I'm managing my time effectively, and how I can continue to grow my skills.

Something else I learned is the importance of working as a team and providing a plan for a company. This makes me understand whether I can collaborate with other students and generally with my colleagues. Also, presenting your work or your plan is another skill I've learned, and it helps me feel less hesitant when providing a plan to others.

Conclusion

There are many challenges out there, both in the workplace and in personal life. According to the course **Professional Career Development**, and theories such as **SWOT analysis**, **SMART goals**, **Dr. Holland's Theory**, and the **Johari Window**, I can say that this course will help me in my current and future life. It has helped me gain knowledge, explore myself, understand my personal type, discover my strengths and weaknesses, and improve my reading skills. I have also learned how to introduce myself, collaborate with a team, and enhance my communication skills.

All these skills will help me improve my current job, collaborate better with my colleagues, and provide better services. Having gained the experience and

knowledge, I will try to find a job that is both pleasant and rewarding, improving my work environment, providing better services, and continuing to explore myself more. I will use everything I have learned and will continue to learn in the future, as conditions change quickly, and we need to keep learning every day to cope with challenges

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