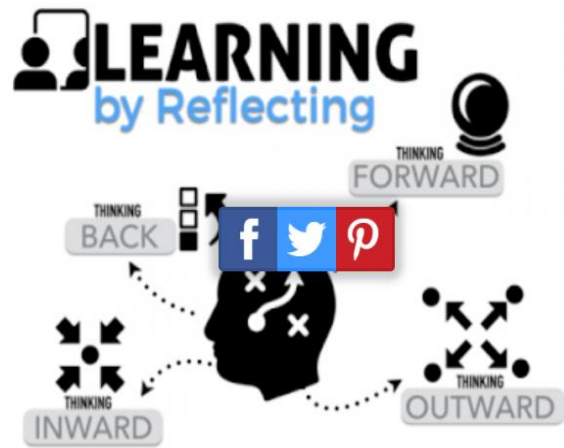


So, what is reflection?

And why should we use it?

Hindsight is wonderful isn't it? Often, we wish we could have foreseen the outcome, which unfortunately as humans, it's not a super power we possess.



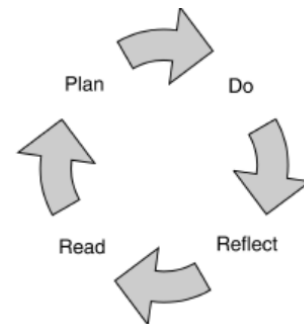
Sheninger, E.

However, we do have the ability to reflect, and this can be as powerful!

In simple terms reflection is about doing something, reflecting on how it went, receiving feedback, read up on it, and then plan how you will improve what you did initially, in the future.

For a student, for example;

- Write and submit the essay
- Receive a mark and feedback from the tutor, using this to identify areas for improvement
- Research the topic, use the internet, speak to peers or your tutor
- Using your research, you will then be equipped with the theory and practice to adapt to your next assignment.



(Roffey-, BJ, & Malthouse, R 2020)

Reflection requires analysis, exploring a problem to understand different problems from a range of aspects and perspectives (Brock, 2014). Reflection is not a new idea, however, over time, reflection has developed and become a core value in many professional settings. Reflection is an essential part of professional practices and is endorsed across a range of areas including education and health and social care (Moon, 2004).

But why? It's done now, how can it help me?

Being reflective allows you to become a more rounded practitioner. It will enable you to have the ability to continuously improve, gain further knowledge, and develop deeper understanding in the subject matter. It will also broaden your outlook on not only your own delivery but others also and enhance your capability in providing others with reflective feedback. With changes to modern life becoming more complex it is important that an individual is adaptable, able to change their thinking and continue to develop and run with current times.

When faced with a perplexing problem, a reflective thinker will adapt their reflective ability to further understand the issue they are facing, and from experience choose the appropriate strategies to explore and identify the best method to solve the issue. (Reflective thinking: RT).

So, what benefits are there to my learning?

- The **encouragement of learners to take charge of their own learning**. This will allow learners to understand areas of strength and areas in which they need to improve through positive conversations.
- **Build stronger connections between learning experiences**. This enables learners to take a step back and review how previous learning experiences have developed their skill set and how these skills can be used and further developed in new forthcoming experiences.
- **Produces useful feedback**. Often learners feedback is limited, so this will give them the opportunity to hold positive interactions and receive praise for well developed skills whilst using the feedback as an opportunity to seek understanding of development opportunities.
- **Raises social interaction**. Whilst reflecting it is important to seek the advice of others and feedback to a tutor or even peers. This interaction can spark positive conversations where ideas and opinions can be shared.

(Cross, 2018)

'Without reflection, we go blindly on our way, creating more unintended consequences, and failing to achieve anything useful. It's amazing to me how much we do, but how little time we spend reflecting on what we just did' (Wheatley, 2002).

We can't see into the future and we can't change the past but we do have the super power to reflect on our past and use what we've learnt to improve our future!

Brock, Avril. *The Early Years Reflective Practice Handbook*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/trinity/detail.action?docID=1744144>.
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<https://learningpool.com/why-reflection-encourages-a-better-learning-experience/> (Accessed: November 28, 2022).

Reflection is promoted in a range of disciplines, particularly in education, health and social care, and is an essential part of professional practice (Moon, 2004).

Roffey-, BJ, & Malthouse, R 2020, *Reflective Practice in Education and Training*, SAGE Publications, Limited, London. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central. [28 November 2022].

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Wheatley, M.J. (2002) *It's An Interconnected World*, *Margaret J. Wheatley: Consumed by either fire or fire*. Available at: <https://margaretwheatley.com/articles/interconnected.html> (Accessed: November 28, 2022).

Within this essay the writer will look at what good time management is, what skills good time management requires, the positive and negative effects time management or a lack of time management can have on an individual.

‘Your ability to manage time is one of the top causes of success or failure’. Zeller, D. (2015)

Rabel (2020), described time management as ensuring you use your time wisely by applying the relevant strategies and tools, which will in turn ensure you are best equipped to complete the required tasks. However, Hellesten (2012) argued that there is no universal definition of time management, and further to this there are no set agreed skills or behaviours that constitute time management.

Good time management is a crucial skill required for any individual to succeed in many areas of life. To be an effective time manager it will require at times following a system, scheduling specific time, creating a routine, balancing use of time, prioritising and planning. These time management techniques can be used for short, mid and long-term outlook.

So, what individuals need to think about time management? Everyone, can potentially benefit from time management within their personal or working life. Both, an individual completing potentially everyday tasks such as a parent having to take their infant to school, an adult preparing and cooking the evening meal or an individual completing laundry duties such as ironing or a professional who may be given their daily briefing of tasks from management, can benefit by improving their time management. Creating a system or plan will allow the individual to go about their day with more ease, less stress or anxiety whilst enhancing the opportunity for the completion of tasks in a prioritised manner. As Crutsinger (1994) explained, setting goals are crucial to time management, determining which events are of highest priority and scheduling the time used for these initially and arranging time to be spent on other activities around it.

Initially implementing the skills can be difficult. An individual will over time become a better judge of time required to complete tasks and therefore allow for more accurate planning and this is where planning and prioritising is crucial. If a plan is in place, even if the length of time the task takes increases, it will allow the individual or team to relax and know they have completed the task of higher priority and the tasks remaining are of lower importance. Soucie (1986), wrote that, only when an individual is clear on their end goal, and has set specific targets and a completion date, can they become an effective time manager.

Once completed a number of times, a routine can then be established which will best suit, and therefore further enhance the effectiveness of their time management. Crucial to the success of routine or a plan is to focus attention specifically to the current task and not to be distracted or waste time, allowing the focus not to be on the time, but on the completion of the task. (Bullet Journal, 2022)

However, even with a perfect plan, a system, a steady routine and prioritisation there are still opportunities for difficulties to arise and time management to be lost. There are many reasons time may be lost but one of the main instigators of this listed by Jackson (2009), is seeking perfection. Seeking perfection can mean delaying completion, restarting or simply a change of mindset as the individual is unhappy with their work which can result in the task never being completed. Additionally, Jackson, (2009) stated that the second of the two main stumbling blocks to

time management is procrastination, putting aside distasteful tasks which only further delays work and completion of the task and as a result contributed to more stress or increased anxiety. It could simply be that the individual puts a task to the bottom of the list each time, regardless of its priority, simply because it is their least favourite.

In conclusion, developing strong time management skills will overtime undoubtedly improve an individuals' efficiency and personal well-being. In turn, it will reduce stress, anxiety and confusion whilst enhancing the capability to complete more tasks. Learning from Shah, (2018) a major factor contributing to stress levels is poor time management. This is often caused by feeling there is too much to complete and not enough time to do so. The consequence of this is a rise in our anxiety levels and loss of focus. In the modern world lives are generally very busy, long working hours, lack of social time, and therefore it is imperative that time is used wisely and not wasted.

A well-established routine, which is planned focusing on prioritising and adhered to with a focus will ensure only positive outcomes.

Cyril (2015), summed up the importance of time, stating, that time is the only thing that cannot be changed by man. Time cannot be substituted, once time is gone it's gone and cannot be brought back.

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What is critical thinking?

'Critical thinking is to analyse a situation, determine facts without prejudice in order to deal with unexpected situations or solve problems'.
(A students guide to critical thinking, 2019)

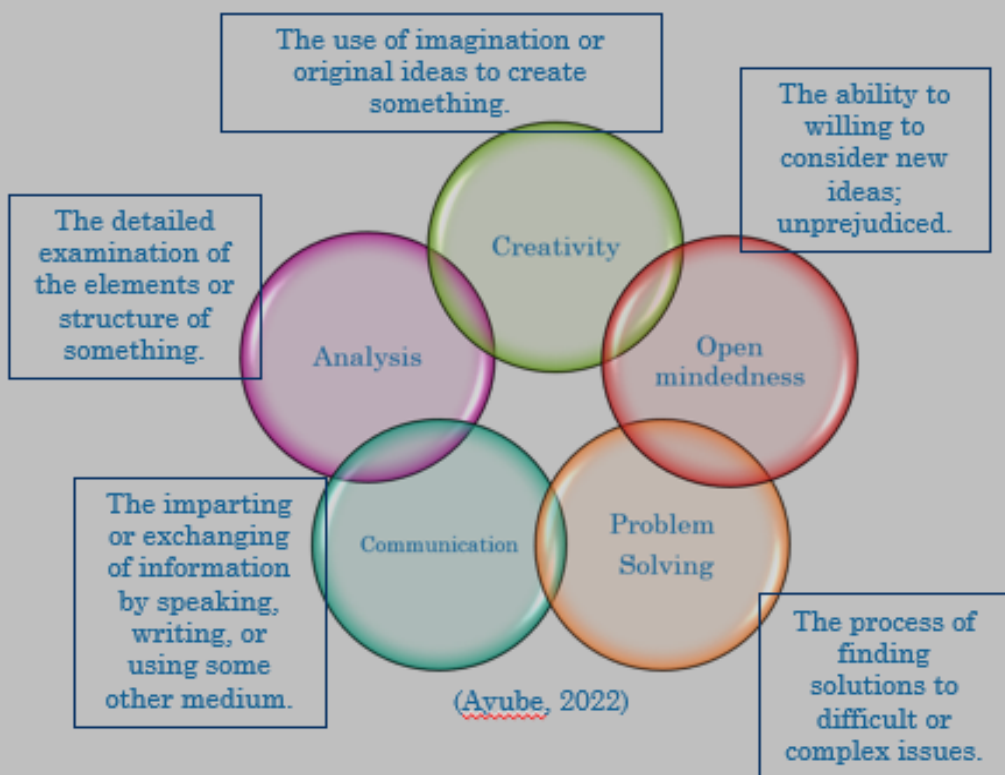


'Critical thinking is simply putting structure to your thoughts'.

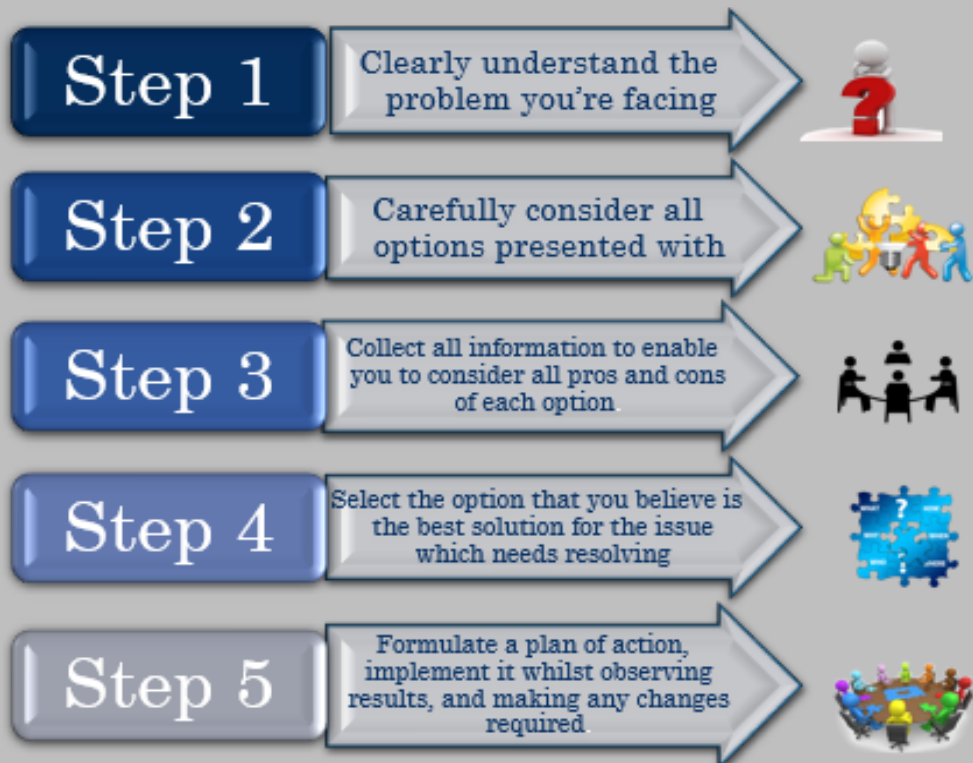
(Beistle, K.S., Smith, D.A. & Nagel, G. 2006)



'It ultimately leads us to the best decisions and actions'. (Jacob, C, 2018)



How to improve your critical thinking?



(Frank, C. 2014)

'Questioning is vital to help us make sense of our world and in developing our ability to think critically'. (Judge et al., 2013)

A students guide to critical thinking. (2019) Available at: <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/watch/a-student-s-guide-to-critical-thinking/details?context=channel:student-success-series> (Accessed: November 2022).

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