

Reflective Evaluation
regarding first semester in the University

University of Wales Trinity Saint David
MODULE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Year 1, Term 1

Assignment 2

Student ID: 1905517

Vladislava Markova

Lecturer: Tanja Nathan

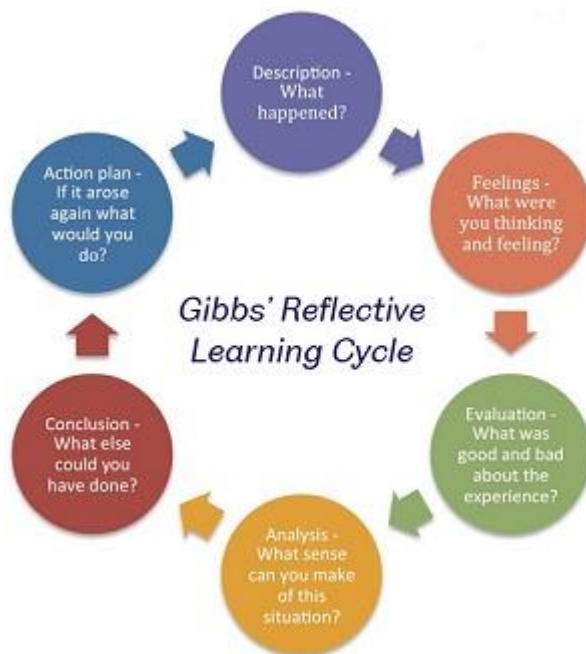
Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Description.....	4
Feelings.....	4
Evaluation.....	5
Analysis.....	6
Conclusion.....	7
Action plan.....	8
Final Conclusion.....	9
References.....	9
Appendix.....	10

Introduction:

The purpose of this reflective evaluation is to focus on my achievements concerning my first term at University of Wells Trinity Saint David. The whole reflective evaluation is based on a reflective cycle designed by Graham Gibbs in 1988. This model is a good way to learn through experience and it includes 6 stages of reflection: describing event, situation (my semester at the university), then describing (my) feelings at the time, evaluating factors (good and bad), analysing what can be improved, a conclusion to determine what else could have been done and an action plan detailing how I would address similar scenarios should one arise again in the future.

Based on the evidence reflective writing is a method which can be transferred into future tasks once mastered. (Gibbs, 1988)ⁱ



ii

The Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988) the University of Sheffield, 2019

Description:

I am currently a student at UWTSD, studying Business Management and I am at the end of my first semester. I had three modules including Community Engagement, Academic Skills and Accountancy Fundamentals. The whole experience has been very new and challenging for me. During this period, I had many tasks- we had to write a group report, an individual assignment report and a Role Play assignment. For my Role Play activity I had to perform in front of my lecturer and class the assigned role(of a Customer Support Centre Specialist in IKEA UK), (IKEA, 2019) and to find a solution in using a professional attitude to deal with an unhappy costumer.ⁱⁱⁱ All these tasks had an impact on my day to day life, as I work in my family company 24/7 hours 7 days, I had to work during the day and write the assessments and prepare for university at night. Managing my time precisely and balancing everything has been one of the hardest jobs. Overall it was very stressful not only for me but for all the students.

Feelings:

When I first walked through the campus doors I was very excited, determined and satisfied as this was a dream come true. I was happy with my class, and lecturers. However, when I was allocated to do the writing tasks I felt very nervous and out of place as I doubted my skills in being fluent enough with my English. Therefore I had trouble sleeping and working as the assignment was always on my mind because this was one of my first tasks and wanted to make sure it reflected the best of my ability. I also felt guilty that my family was suffering as I was not able to give them the same amount of attention as usual and I was often absent from family time. I was having trouble concentrating and was often tired during work due to the many hours I worked on my assignment.

Black and Rosemary's study in 2018 showed that "A fear of public speaking is a very common phobia and one that is believed to affect up to 75% of the population."^{iv} I related to this as I felt anxious when it came closer to the Role Play activity that I had to speak in front of my lecturer and class. I worried about the timing being a constraint and my accent impacting on my clarity. I

felt calmer when my fellow students shared that they were also very concerned about their performances. When I heard my positive feedback at the end of the Play Role I was relieved and pleased.

Evaluation:

From my practice experience I could evaluate that there were positive and negative factors. In my opinion I did not do well and did not show my full potential. The significant gap in my education reflected in a negative way for my studying as had not been in the education system for a long period of time. This led to stress, which I felt impacted upon me and resulted in my finding it difficult to always engage fully. Another negative key factor was that over a very short time frame there was lots of new information to process causing me to overload as a result of not managing my time more effectively. Discussing my experience with the other students at the university I came to realisation that I was not the only one struggling.

On the other hand the positive outcomes were that my language improved and so did my communication skills. I learned many interesting new things such as how to do a detailed research about topics. This practice experience taught me to be a good listener. Furthermore, my self-discipline was developed. "The learner is effective within her discipline" Brockbank and McGill (1988).

Although I had doubts about my Role Play performance I found that facing an audience and giving a speech was nothing to be anxious about as everyone was very supportive and understanding. My fellow students like me were worried too. The positive feedback about my Role Play at the end motivated me to push myself even harder. (Appendix, p.13) From my perspective, my fellow students excelled in their own role-play performances. I had to observe and give them feedbacks, which are attached to the Appendix (p.11, 12).

The group report task also went very well and I met ambitious young people who made a great team. All of our team members evaluated our team work as a good job.

Analyses:

By analysing my first term in the university I don't think my experience went too well as it was very new and different. Several key factors had important roles like stress, time management and lack of experience. My stress impacted negatively on my mental and physical attitude towards achieving my goals and resulted in bad thinking, doubting, and critical thinking all the time.

Based on the literature I have read about reflective thinking I realised that all my thoughts and doubts are normal and very commonly found in students and they will help me enhance my understanding and improve my skills.

I always doubt myself and I think that my skills are not good enough. This links to Dewey's theory of reflective thinking "Reflective thinking is always more or less troublesome". Dewey defined two elements of Reflective thinking : "1 states of hesitation, doubt; and 2 an act of search or investigation directed toward bringing to light further facts which serve to corroborate or to nullify the suggested belief". (Dewey, 1910)^{vi}

Brockbank and McGill (1988) expounded in their theory: "As a student learner, by engaging in reflective practice, I can ask myself (and with others) key questions about my learning in my discipline as well as asking (again with others) about how I go about my learning", which is identical to my concerns.

In the process of growth in education critical thinking is very important as Brockbank and McGill (1988) state "the learner is able to be critical in relation to the domains of knowledge, self and the world, where the learner is able not only to embrace knowledge but also to bring self, including emotion and action, into the learning process"^{vii}

From this practice experience I realise the importance of successful time management, as my lack of skills this semester impacted negatively. (Claessens, van Eerde, Rutte, & Roe, 2004) and Wang, Kao, Huan, and Wu (2011) found that "time management is important beyond the university campus" (Adams, Blair, 2019).^{viii}

I found that The University of Cambridge and Oxford designed special resources (workshops, online training courses) to help students to learn and develop their time-management skills. The University strives to offer as many

opportunities for making the best personal choices and to be a successful student. (University of Cambridge, University of Oxford, 2019)^{ix}

Despite that I learned that anything can be accomplished with resilience plenty of practice and determination, analysing my advantages and disadvantages within the Role Play assignment. When the class elaborated regarding the Role Play our main concern was the lack of public speaking. Black, Rosemary 2018 suggests that “with persistence and preparation, it is entirely possible to beat public speech anxiety

following several key steps as

- be prepared
- get organised ahead of time
- learned all you can of your topic
- revising your speech
- pay attention to the material at hand, not to audience”^x

Conclusion:

In conclusion I want to summarise that taking higher education is a serious commitment to take - one which completely changed my life. I learned that I had change certain factors in my own life, as well as becoming more adaptable myself to achieve the outcomes I want. In the future I should do several things differently: I will become less anxious and not overload myself with responsibilities. I realise that stress is another negative factor in my life and that I must learn to control it moving forward. I learned that with the help of my teachers I can achieve with exceptional results. I should consult with my lecturer early, before I lose valuable time doing pointless research which is unhelpful to my assignments. I should try to be more involved during the lectures. Regarding my Role Play assignment I should change my mental attitude and try to be more courageous confident by thinking of the Role Play not as an assignment but more like an exercise. I also understand that I have to

feel positive and believe in myself in order to have courage and ambition to accomplish anything.

Action plan:

In the future my action plans are going to be straight forward and easy to understand. First I need to learn and develop how to use my time effectively, how to rationally organise my time management strategy by leaving free time for my family, for studying, work and my own time.

I am planning to practice relaxing activities such as yoga, going to the gym and meditation as there is evidence that these activities are stress reliving and relaxing.

In the near future addressing my job, I will be more effective through allocating jobs to my colleagues and not take on all the pressure myself. I would ask my family to be more understanding and helpful regarding the chores at home.

I will consult with my lecturers in advance of an assignment to ensure I have a clear focus and that the information I am working with is clear and accurate.

I will join an IT course as I need to improve on my knowledge in this field and I believe that it will help me deliver my work quality to exceptional standards. I would like develop my knowledge of using database in particular.

Concerning my Role Play experience for my future presentations I am planning to take the following measures: to develop my presentation skills by practising speeches and presentations in front of people (family or friends) and ensuring that I have enough time to effectively prepare. I am going to work more on my public speaking skills, such as have an open body language, make eye contact with my fellow students when necessary and work on my vocals in order to be clearer and more precise.

Final conclusion

Reflection is an essential activity in which students investigate their experiences and their own practice responses, in order to learn and progress. Barnett (1992) stated "We need to be aware, therefore, of our actions in order that we may evaluate them. The capacity to engage in reflective practice

becomes one of the means of enhancing the quality of the educational process and of promoting learning appropriate to higher education”.^{xi}

References

-
- ⁱ Gibbs, G (1988),” Learning by doing: a guide to teaching and learning methods”. Oxford: Further Educational Unit, Oxford Polytechnic
- ⁱⁱ Reflective Practice, available at: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/301/study-skills/university-study/reflective-practice> ,accessed at:18/12/2019
- ⁱⁱⁱ IKEA (2019) – Customer Support Centre Specialist , available at: <https://da-jobs.about.ikea.com/job/tempe/customer-support-centre-specialist/24107/9789163> , accessed: 20/11/2019
- ^{iv} Black, Rosemary, 2018-06-04, "Gloss phobia (Fear of Public Speaking): Are You Gloss phobic?" Psycm.net, accessed: 21/12/2019
- ^v Brockbank A and McGill I, 1988,” Facilitating Reflective Learning in Higher Education”(p.83), Book available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED423743.pdf>, accessed: 22/12/2019
- ^{vi} Dewey, 1910- “How we think”, Book(p.9)
- ^{vii} Brokeback and McGill, 1988 ” Facilitating Reflective Learning in Higher Education”, Book available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED423743.pdf>, accessed: 22/12/2019
- ^{viii} Richelle V. Adams, Erik BlairFirst , January 18, 2019 “Impact of Time Management Behaviours on Undergraduate Engineering Students’ Performance”, available at:<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244018824506>, accessed: 02/01/2020
- ^{ix} University of Cambridge , “The Time Management Workshops”, November 13, 2017, available at: <https://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/news/TimeManagement> accessed at

21/12/2019 and Oxford students, 2019 "Managing your workload", available at: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/time?wssl=1>, accessed at 17/12/2019

^x Black, Rosemary, 2018-06-04, "Gloss phobia (Fear of Public Speaking): Are You Gloss phobic?" Psycom.net, accessed: 21/12/2019

^{xi} Barnett, 1992 "Improving Higher Education".

Appendix

LCBB 4002 Community Engagement

Peer Evaluation Role Play Feedback Form

Name of Presenter *Mariana*

Date *06/12/2019*

Activity:

	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent
Introduction (Explanation)				✓
Presentation (practical demonstration)				✓
Conclusion (how well can you carry out the activity?)				✓

Any other comments

Mariana presented her presentation very well. I think her introduction was excellent by giving many important details of her job. As a transport manager she showed adaptive and strong problem solving skills. She found quick solutions - in order she did the tasks required for the problem. Very organized - she excellently managed the daywork for the company. Although how worried she was before her presentation she still done a great job!

Signed: *Blewis*

Date: *06/12/2019*

LCBB 4002 Community Engagement

Peer Evaluation Role Play Feedback Form

Name of Presenter *Vania*

Date *06/12/2019*

Activity:

	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent
Introduction (Explanation)				✓
Presentation (practical demonstration)				✓
Conclusion (how well can you carry out the activity?)				✓

Any other comments

When Vania presented her presentation she was very outspoken and relaxed. She confidently solved the problem showing background knowledge and skills. She showed professionalism and experience in her job with the customers. She concluded in an interesting way by promoting the specific company products and the successful way they treat customers. It was an excellent presentation!

Signed:

Bliss

Date: *06/12/2019*

LCBB 4002 Community Engagement

Peer Evaluation Role Play Feedback Form

Name of Presenter *Vladislava Markova* Date *02/12/2019*

Activity: *Role Play - Customers Support Centre Specialist at IKEA*

	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent
Introduction (Explanation)				V
Presentation (practical demonstration)				V
Conclusion (how well can you carry out the activity?)				V

Any other comments

In my opinion Vladislava had built her role very well. In the introduction she gave enough information about herself and her work. The presentation was exposed clearly and understandable. Vladislava took right decisions as a Customers Support Centre Specialist. She showed knowledge, good training and quickly thinking. Vladislava presented patience working with people. Her performance was excellent. She showed professionalism and kind attitude. Her presentation had a happy end and she kept the client. The way Vladislava played the role was wonderful!

Signed:

[Signature]
/ Mariyana Marrodieva /

Date: *02/12/2019*