



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Skills for the Workplace

Your Reflective Assignment

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



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Reflection



A Definition

Reid (1993) noted that reflection is an active, rather than passive, process, claiming that:

Reflection is a process of reviewing an experience of practice in order to describe, analyse, evaluate, and so inform learning about practice.

Reid, B. (1993) 'But we're doing it already' Exploring a response the concept of reflective practice in order to improve its facilitation.' *Nurse Education Today* 13: 305-309.

Why Reflect?

‘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.

It is from the feelings and thoughts emerging from this reflection that generalisations or concepts can be generated.

And it is generalisations that allow new situations to be tackled effectively.’

(Gibbs, 1988)

Gibbs Cycle of Reflection (1988)

Gibbs' reflective cycle has 6 stages. They are usually given the following headings:

1. Description
2. Feelings
3. Evaluation
4. Analysis
5. Conclusion
6. Action Plan

Gibbs' model was developed from an earlier theoretical model; David Kolb's 4 stage experiential learning cycle (1984).

Whereas Kolb's model is sometimes referred to as an **experiential learning** model (which simply means learning through experience), Gibbs' model is sometimes referred to as an **iterative model** (which simply means learning through repetition).

Gibbs Cycle of Reflection (1988)

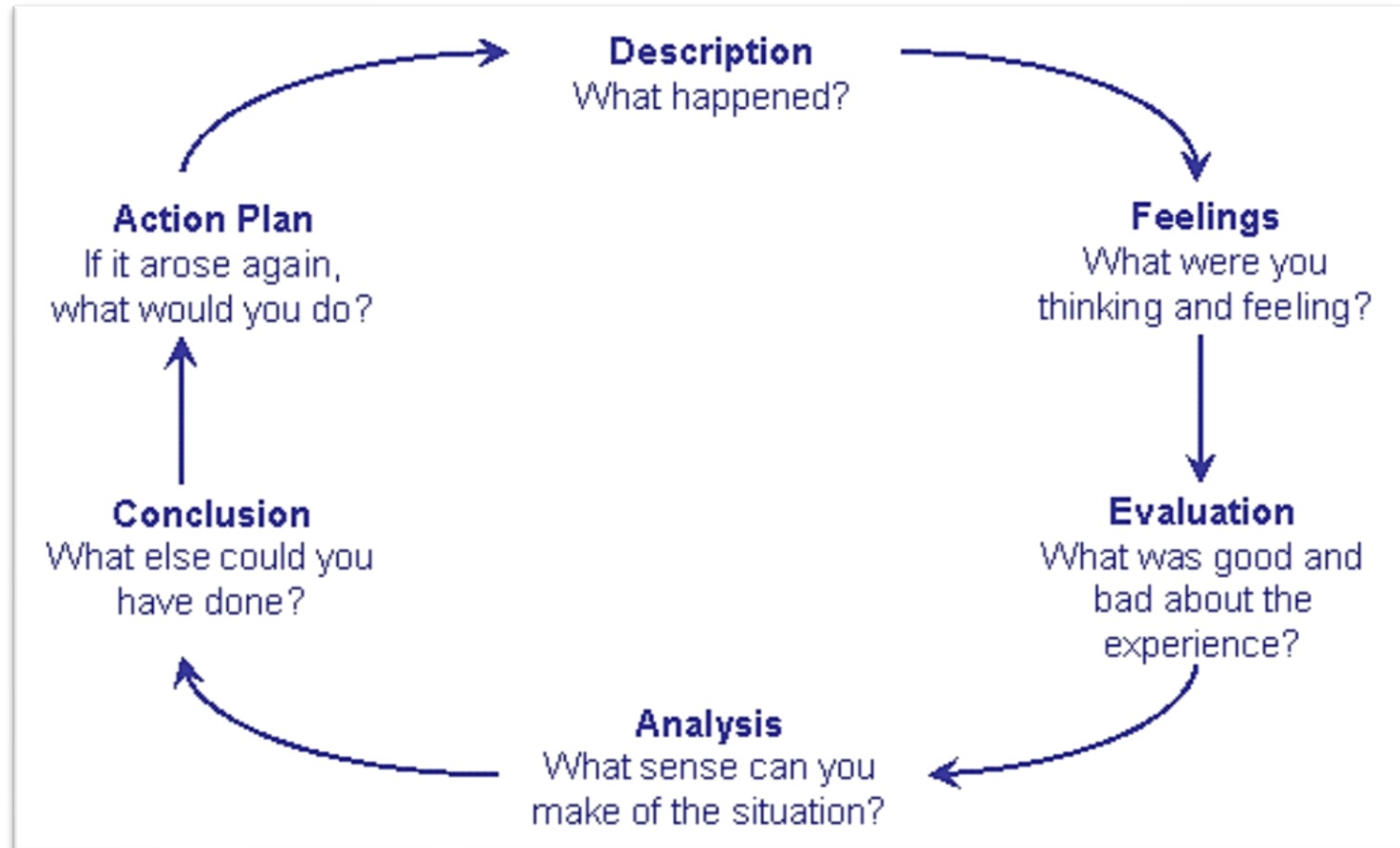
Using analysis in Gibbs' model

In theory, the reflective process follows the 6 steps of the model so that each step informs the next. In practice, students often confuse the Evaluation, Analysis and Conclusion stages. These parts seem to ask similar questions and as a result, there can be a lot of repetition. **Analytical writing is only required in the Analysis stage.** The other 5 steps are made up of statements of description, statements of value (whether something was good or bad), statements of summation or statements of justification (why something was done).

The aims of using Gibbs' reflective cycle:

- to challenge your assumptions
- to explore different/new ideas and approaches towards doing or thinking about things
- to promote self-improvement
(by identifying strengths and weaknesses and taking action to address them)
- to link practice and theory
(by combining doing or observing with thinking or applying knowledge)

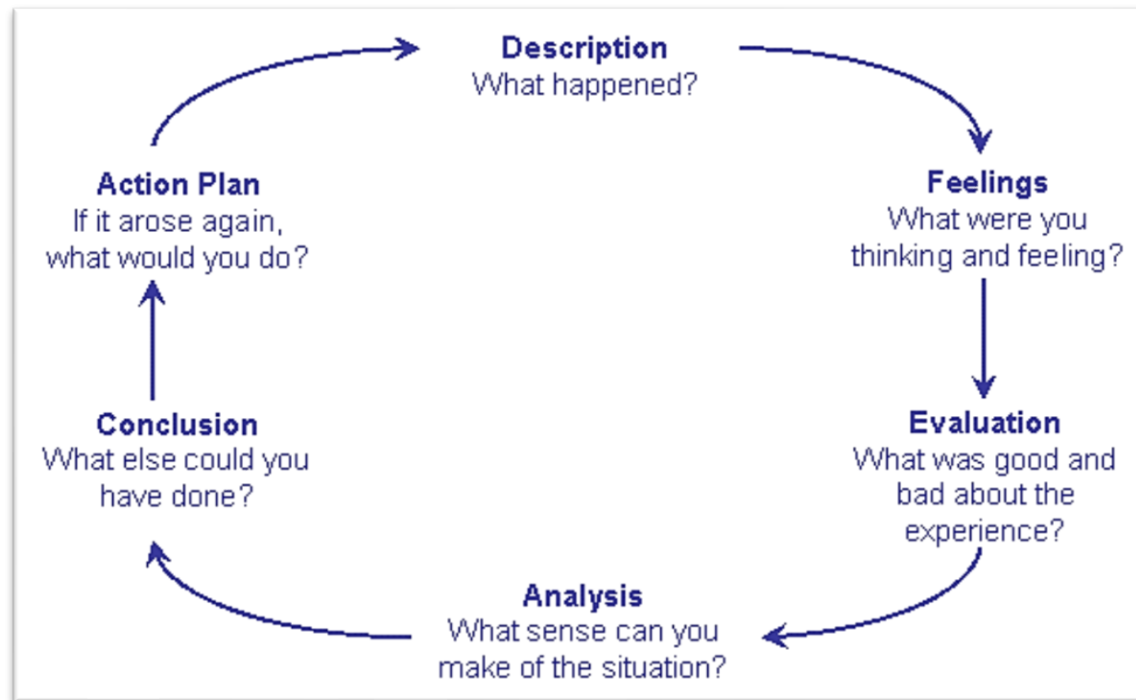
Gibbs Cycle of Reflection (1988)



Your Reflective Assignment

is specifically about ***what you have learned*** from the process of undertaking the module (unless otherwise stated)

Follow the Gibbs Model



Description

Describe the process you have followed whilst undertaking the module:

What did you do?

Where did you look?

What did you read?

Description

You can put **citations** in this section to all sources you have used - books, articles, websites - unless any sources used relate specifically to your /analysis/evaluation/conclusion.

Example: Bloggs (2019), in an article for Careers Monthly journal, suggests that you should tailor your CV for the job you are applying for and not just send out a general one to every employer that interests you

(Full **reference** would then go in the References section at the end of the assignment)

Feelings

What did you think and feel as you were doing your reading and research?

Did you have trouble finding what you were looking for?

Did you struggle to understand anything you were reading?

Did you read things that confirmed you have been doing the right/wrong things in the past?

How did this make you feel?

Worried? Confused? Overwhelmed?

Pleased? Confident? Satisfied?

Evaluation

What was good and bad about the experience?

Was the research process difficult (bad) or easy (good)?

Which bits were good – went well ?

Which bits were bad – didn't go so well?

Be specific about what was good or bad.

Analysis

Why did things go badly? (*Causes*)

Example:

Possible reasons:

Unfamiliar with researching

Don't know if the source is 'credible' or not

Couldn't find anything relevant in the library

Don't understand referencing/ paraphrasing

What did this lead to? (*Consequences*)

Poor quality/non-existent referencing

Poor quality sources (blogs, some newspapers, Wikipedia etc.)

Analysis

Why did things go well? (*Causes*)

Example:

Possible reasons:

Read the Referencing Handbook to help understand referencing/ paraphrasing

Looked on Moodle and found useful guides to start the research journey

Applied C.R.A.A.P. test to all sources used

Used library guide to help find resources

What did this lead to? (*Consequences*)

Good quality, relevant referencing

Good quality sources (books, articles, journals etc.)

Conclusion and Action Plan

What have you learned?

What do you know/understand now that you didn't before the module?

Be specific about what *exactly* you have learned here

Examples:

How to reference

How to search the library

How to 'google' effectively

How to judge if sources are credible or not

Action Plan

To use this new knowledge to research 'effectively' for all future modules and gain good marks.

References

Put the full references to any sources you have used in your assignment in the References section **in alphabetical order** at the end of your reflection and before appendices.

Read the Referencing Handbook for guidance on how to do this.

Example

Reference for the Gibbs Model of Reflection

Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by doing; A guide to teaching and learning methods*. London: FEU