

The Significance of reflective practise to facilitate professional development in the yearly years of workforce

What is reflective practice?

All practitioners should have the skill of reflective practice. According to Brock ((2015), PG 7) "Reflection and reflective practice are core values of professionals and have a key role in professional training.". Reflective practice empowers practitioners to evaluate their skills and knowledge.

Being able to reflect on professional practice can help to understand and identify what went wrong, what could be done better, and ways of improvement in professional practice. "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)

University of Cambridge (2021), states that there is no right or wrong way to reflect. Reflection is very personal and there are many different methods of carrying it out depending on circumstances or preference.

Dewey (1859 – 1952) was a philosopher who believed that reflection is an added dimension of people's thought processes and that people actively need to develop these thoughts. Dewey believed that reflecting on what we have done is important for extracting the meanings of what has occurred. (Dewey, 1938:1100

Why is reflective practice important?

"Reflective practice is a vital aspect of working with young children", Paige-smith & Craft (2011). Being reflective helps us to consider what motivates practitioners to understand their individual and collective roles, responsibilities, and relationships.

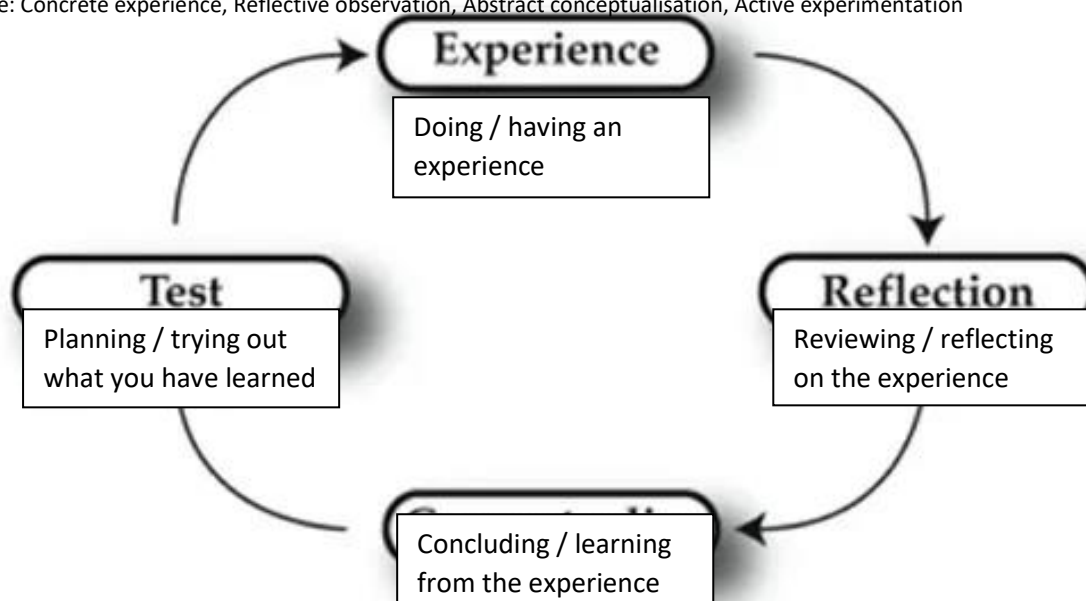
Schon (1976) suggested that there are two different reflections which are: reflection on actions, reflection on action

Schon (1987) suggested that reflection is used by practitioners when they encounter unique situations, and when individuals may not be able to apply known theories or techniques previously learned. As the terms, he used to suggest, his idea of reflective practice was very much embedded in the action of the setting itself.

"There are quite several models of how to develop the processes of critical reflection that can be used to organize thinking and develop critically. These models can help facilitate the deepening of reflection. The most well-known reflective process models are Kolb's (1984a, 1984b) experimental cycle and Gibbs's (1988) reflective cycle (Brock (2015))."

Reflective Models

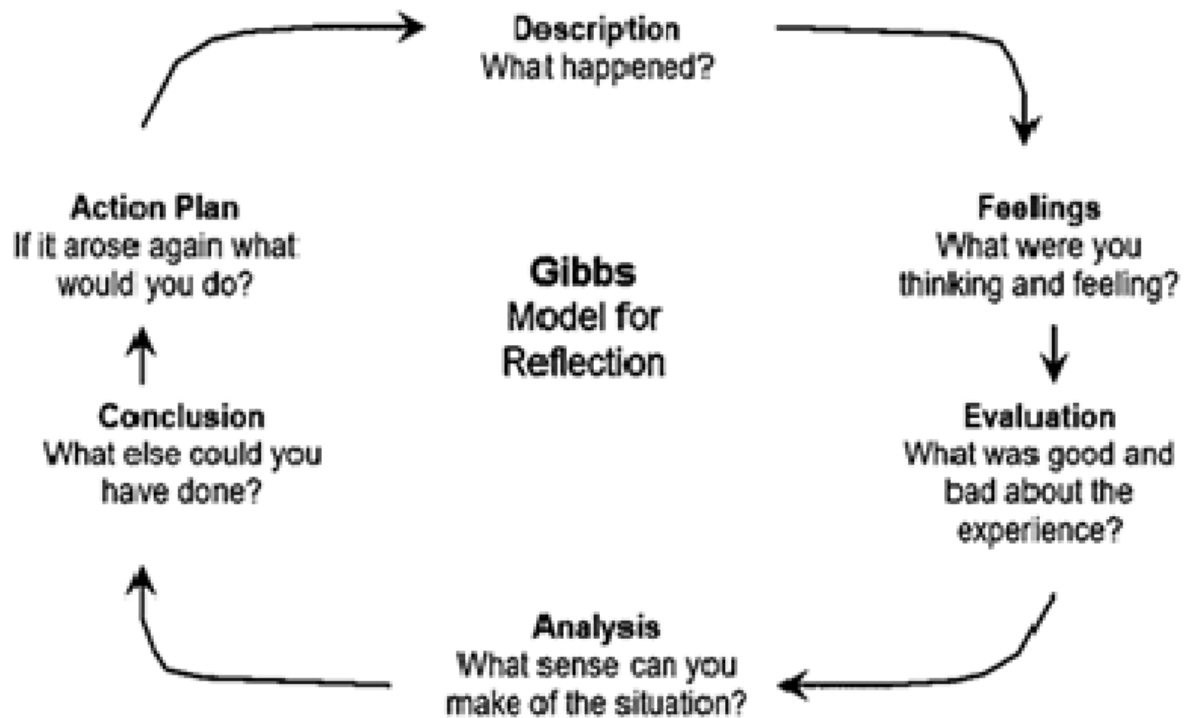
(Brock (2015)), "Kolb's experimental cycle is a guide to carrying out reflection. The four stages the Kolb method includes are: Concrete experience, Reflective observation, Abstract conceptualisation, Active experimentation



(Source: University of Cambridge, No Date)

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Gibbs "(1988) model is more useful as it enables practitioners to follow a six-stage plan of reflective practise in action. This enables to move from simply describing what has happened, through a process of analysis and then onto developing future actions.



(Gibb's (1988) model of reflective practise)

"Sustaining effective early years of practice involves reflecting on, developing and possibly changing our own practice", Paige-Smith Craft (2011)

Schon (1983) writes about how reflection on actions allows practitioners to spend time exploring the group and individual actions.

Reflective practice within early years setting

When this happens questions and ideas are raised about activities, as well as practice. For instance, early years practitioners may change their practice by focusing more on the child's perspective of their world and how they learn.

(Brock 2015) Tacit theories are embedded in the practitioner's conscious and subconscious knowledge and thinking. They are not there by accident but will have been developed from knowledge gained through training and experience of working in settings with children and experienced colleagues, as well as drawing on their own personal life experiences. Of course, all this knowledge is not drawn out within one particular day, activity, or an incident that has significance for you. Alix, a master's student and further education lecturer in ECCE observed.

Contemporary professionals need different aspects of knowledge, and for most it is complete and multidimensional, crossing a range of expertise and skills. Developing professional knowledge involves the interconnection of technical or subject knowledge, practical skills, values, beliefs, attitudes, and awareness (ayens 1999)

"When these knowledge bases are reflection upon, articulated, and understanding enhanced then professional knowledge is generated. It is essential to integrate reflection with personal and contextual understanding in order to identify the way to develop, change and improve practice", (Brock 2010)

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