



What is reflection and why do we use it?

For me, reflection is a massive thing. If you feel you've done something wrong, when you reflect on it you will realise what you need to change. Not only in your work life, but also your personal life, your behaviour and your everyday life.

For reflection to be effective we have to be honest, and genuinely examine our own beliefs and assumptions. Authentic reflection involves a process of self-discovery and allows us to change what we do for the better. This is why it can be an uncomfortable process, but one that comes with many benefits. (Oxford Brookes University, 2023).

My favourite place to reflect is on the beach, I love sitting in my car and watching the sun whilst putting the world to rights by myself. Having that down time and 'you' time is vital as it allows you to be surrounded by your own thoughts with nobody disturbing you. I once had a child in school with behaviour issues and he was getting really high rate one day so I took him outside thinking it would calm him down but it actually made him worse, he caused 10x more problems for both him and myself.

Later that evening I was speaking to a colleague and she mentioned going home to relax and forget the day as we all have bad days but I wasn't satisfied, I felt like I could have done better and handled the situation differently so I took myself down the beach (luckily it's a 5 minute drive from my house), got some chips and a can of cherry coke, watched the sun, got my notepad out and started jotting down what had happened during the day, it was bliss and it got me thinking what I could have done to prevent the situation escalating. Could I have taken him to the sensory room? Could I have taken him to a quiet space to have a chat about what was bothering him? When it dawned on me how much he loves football so that could have been my starting point to calm him down. That's why reflection is so important because I used that the next time he had a meltdown and he calmed down much more quicker as we spoke about football, had I not reflected back on that situation I might not have found out how to stop the situation escalating.

Despite being widely promoted, the impact of reflection on teacher effectiveness has sometimes been questioned. ([Akbari 2007](#): 192, cited in [Anderson 2020](#)), for example, notes there is no evidence to show improved teacher or student performance resulting from reflective techniques

Some might agree with this quote, I don't personally like it as I feel working in a school environment, reflection can be very effective with the children and even my colleagues. My top 3 tips for reflection are:

- Finding a quiet space by yourself
- Grab a cup of your favourite drink (Non alco of course)
- Write down what happened so it's easier to look back on.

What are yours?



Element 2: What is good time management?

"The definition of time management has been offered as the process of skilfully applying time to finish and perfect a specific activity within time constraint" (Dudovskiy, 2013 cited in Harris, 2008). Time Management can also often include things like, effective planning, objectives, setting personal goals and setting deadlines that will need to be met. "Prioritizing activities as per their importance, spending the right time on the right activity" (Management study guide 2015) In all aspects of life, time management needs to be effectively met, whether that be like previously mentioned, in our personal lives, in our work lives or just in general like popping to the shops. Working in a school, the author feels time management is very important, its vital the children arrive at school on time as they could miss important information, also if the lessons have started and they arrive late they could possibly miss critical information about what is going on, then in time if it keeps happening they could fall behind. Not setting children up for routines or good time management when their younger can make it harder for them to meet deadlines when they're older as they can often have no concept of time.

According to Fleming (2011) "an effective time management is closely associated with an understanding the difference between efficiency and effectiveness." Efficiency can involve completing specified tasks in a right way, effectiveness relates to identifying the correct tasks to be completed in the first place. Also according to Fleming, "the practice of identification of strategic tasks in an appropriate manner, and the selection of appropriate tools and techniques for the completion of those tasks can be considered the most basic conditions of effective time management" (Dudovskiy, 2013).

When there is good time management, it is important to prioritize the set goal no matter what that is. Prioritizing certain things can lead to finishing the job effectively and making sure there is enough time and working out how to get to the end goal, that way it should just flow nicely. Specifying your goals will considerably increase your chances of achieving them, it also allows you to see and measure your

progress and to know when you have achieved this goal (Kristenson 2014). Whilst prioritizing is very important, it's also important to be organised. The author finds that working in a school helps with organisation a lot as the more organised you are, the more effectively things should run, that doesn't always go to plan but if you're organised then there will be more chance of things running smoothly.

Time management is defined as "a form of decision making used by individuals to structure, protect, and adapt their time to changing conditions". This means time management, as it is usually portrayed, consists of three components: structuring, adapting time and protecting. When time management is well-established it measures reflection on these concepts. Structuring time, for example is captured in such items as "Do you have a daily routine which you follow?" and "Do your main activities during the day fit together in a structured way? (Aeon, Faber, Panaccio, 2021).

Effective time management is associated with greater academic performance and lower levels of anxiety in students; however many students find it hard to find a balance between their studies and their day-to-day lives. On average, it was found that time management behaviours were not significantly different across gender, age, entry qualification, and time already spent in the program. (Adams, Blair, 2019). The greater the time management, the greater academic achievement as when students can either follow or copy some coping mechanisms to help with their studies and allow them to meet the demands of being a student.

Good time management can also allow extra time to spend doing daily activities. When people can time-manage effectively, there will then be more time to hopefully enjoy spending it on hobbies or other personal pursuits. Making and following a task schedule can reduce major anxiety or any sort of mental health problems as it can have the feeling of being in control as when the items on the list or schedule are being ticked off, progress is being made, there can be a massive weight lifted. This can help avoiding the feeling of being stressed out and feeling like a failure. "It has also been stated that time management is not about creating more time but rather about making the best use of the time we have" (Dudovskiy, 2013 cited in Hansen, 2011).

Taking breaks is also very important in time management as it gives the brain a chance to refresh, with the author working in a school, during dinner times it's important to switch off and have that needed break. Sometimes that can be sitting in a quiet room doing some reflecting, other times it can be having a discussion with a colleague about how the day has gone. Having that down time during a hectic day can be vital. "When doing a lot of tasks without a break, it is harder to stay focused and motivated" (CFL team, 2022).

An individual should evaluate and reflect on time management and can then start to know the weakness or the barriers which can then be adopted to "measures and techniques that needs to be effectively implemented in order to enhance the performance. Identification of flaws and inconsistencies is a must and that comes through the process of evaluation" (Kapur, 2018).

Critical Thinking

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

Nikola Tesla

Critical thinking is thinking about things in certain ways so as to arrive at the best possible solution in the circumstances that the thinker is aware of.

www.skillsyouneed.com

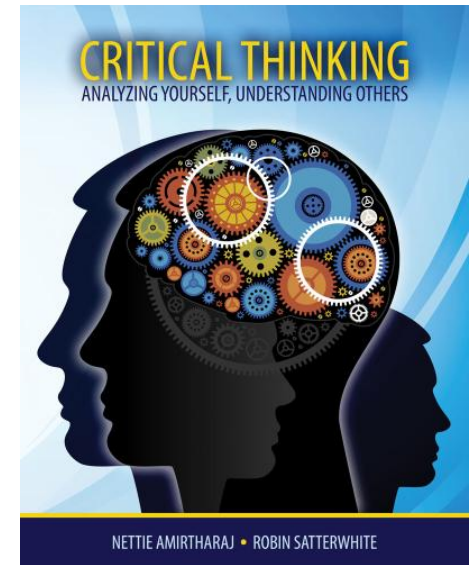
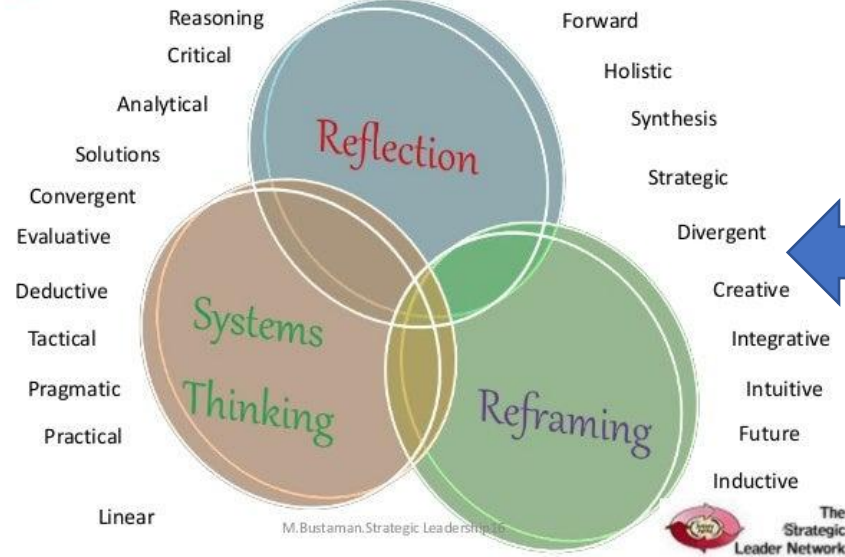
Summary

Applying critical thinking does not mean being negative or focusing on faults. It means being able to clarify your thinking so that you can break down a problem or a piece of information, interpret it and use that interpretation to arrive at an informed decision or judgement.

Monash University



The Strategic Thinking Skills



How can critical thinking be developed?

Collaborate with others

Be Open - Minded

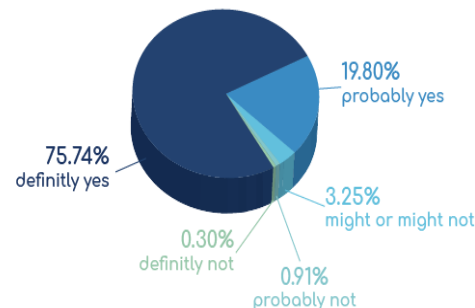
Reflect on your learning

Analyse, Reason and Evaluate

Engage in problem solving

Mentoringminds.com

Do you believe that critical thinking skills are necessary in today's world?



REFERENCES:

Blog:

- Reflection.
2002
Reflection | ELT Journal | Oxford Academic (oup.com)
(Accessed 05.02.23)
- Reflection - Oxford Brookes University
(Accessed 20.02.22)

Time management:

- Time Management
2015
Time Management - Meaning and its Importance (managementstudyguide.com)
(accessed - 23/11/2022)
- Adams, RV; Blair E
2019 (Impact of Time Management Behaviors on Undergraduate Engineering Students)
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2158244018824506>
(Accessed – 21.12.22)
- The Importance of Time Management - Research Methodology (research-methodology.net)
(accessed – 15.12.22)
- 7 SMART Goals Examples for Time Management & Productivity
(developgoodhabits.com)

(accessed – 05.01.23)

- Aeon B, Aguinis H.
2017 (It's about time: New perspectives and insights on time management. Acad
Manag Perspect.)
(accessed – 2.12.22)
- (PDF) Time Management - A Case Study (researchgate.net)
(accessed – 4.12.22)

Academic poster:

- Monash University - What is critical thinking? - Learn HQ (monash.edu)
(Accessed – 13.12.22)
- 741b77f271f94e5b73b284b639f77534--teaching-ideas-teaching-tools.jpg (474×733)
(pinimg.com)
(Accessed – 01.12.22)
- Nikola Tesla quotes
(Accessed – 29.12.22)
- 2011 - 2023
- Critical Thinking | SkillsYouNeed
(Accessed – 15.12.22)
- Critical Thinking Skills Survey & Research in 2018 | REBOOT FOUNDATION
(reboot-foundation.org)
- (Accessed 05.01.23)