



## Action—Reflection—Planning: a vital leadership skill Models

### Models of Reflection

Learning through reflection is more effective if there is an understanding of frameworks that encourage a structural process to guide the act of reflection. Various models have been developed which may suit individuals or particular situations. However it is important that we choose the framework that we feel most comfortable with and which helps us to learn most from our own experiences. The type or combination of types may be used according to the requirements of the situation.

#### Gibbs Framework for Reflection

##### Stage 1: Description of the event

Describe in detail the event you are reflecting on. Include e.g. where were you; who else was there; why were you there; what were you doing; what were other people doing; what was the context of the event; what happened; what was your part in this; what parts did the other people play; what was the result

##### Stage 2: Feelings and Thoughts (Self awareness)

At this stage, try to recall and explore those things that were going on inside your head. Include:  
How you were feeling when the event started?  
What you were thinking about at the time?  
How did it make you feel?  
How did other people make you feel?  
How did you feel about the outcome of the event?  
What do you think about it now?

##### Stage 3: Evaluation

Try to evaluate or make a judgement about what has happened. Consider what was good about the experience and what was bad about the experience or what did or didn't go so well

##### Stage 4: Analysis

Break the event down into its component parts so they can be explored separately. You may need to ask more detailed questions about the answers to the last stage. Include:  
What went well?  
What did you do well?  
What did others do well?  
What went wrong or did not turn out how it should have done?  
In what way did you or others contribute to this?

##### Stage 5: Conclusion (Synthesis)

This differs from the evaluation stage in that now you have explored the issue from different angles and have a lot of information to base your judgement. It is here that you are likely to develop insight into you own and other people's behaviour in terms of how they contributed to the outcome of the event. The purpose of reflection is to learn from an experience and without detailed analysis and the honest exploration that occurs during all the previous stages, it is unlikely that all aspects of the event will be taken into account and therefore valuable opportunities for learning can be missed. During this stage you should ask yourself what you could have done differently.

##### Stage 6: Action Plan

During this stage you should think yourself forward into encountering the event again and to plan what you would do – would you act differently or would you be likely to do the same?  
Here the cycle is tentatively completed and suggests that should the event occur again it will be the focus of another reflective cycle



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### Bortons` (1970) Framework Guiding Reflective Activities

What?	So What?	Now what?
This is the <i>description</i> and <i>self awareness</i> level and all questions start with the word what	This is the level of <i>analysis</i> and evaluation when we look deeper at what was behind the experience.	This is the level of <i>synthesis</i> . Here we build on the previous levels these questions to enable us to consider alternative courses of action and choose what we are going to do next.
<b>Examples</b> What happened? What did I do? What did other do? What was I trying to achieve? What was good or bad about the experiences	<b>Examples</b> So what is the importance of this? So what more do I need to know about this? So what have I learnt about this	<b>Examples</b> Now what could I do? Now what do I need to do? Now what might I do? Now what might be the consequences of this action?

Gibbs and Bortons' models incorporate all the core skills of reflection. Arguably they are focused on reflection on action, but with practice could be used to focus on reflection *in* and *before* action. In any case with the last stage in Gibbs and the "now what" in Borton, there is preparation for a similar encounter and the notes taken could be used as preparation for reflection before action once you are aware that another such event might occur.

### Smyth's Framework for Reflection on Action

Activity	Cues
Describe	What did I do?
Inform (Analysis)	What does this mean?
Confront (Self awareness)	How did I come to be like this?
Reconstruct (Evaluation and Synthesis)	What do my practices say about my assumptions, values and beliefs? Where did these ideas come from? What social practices are expressed in these ideas? What is it that causes me to maintain my theories? What views of power do they embody? Whose interests seem to be served by my practices? What is it that acts to constrain my views of what is possible in my behaviour?



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### Johns Model of Structured Reflection

Chris John's (1994; 1995) model arose from his work in the Burford Nursing Development Unit in the early 1990's. He envisaged this model being used within a process of guided reflection. His focus was on uncovering and making explicit the knowledge that we use every day. He adopted some earlier work by Carper (1978) who looked at ways of knowing in nursing.

Ways of knowing	Cues
Aesthetics – the art of what we do, our own experiences	What was I trying to achieve? Why did I respond as I did? What were the consequences of that for the patient? Others? Myself? How was this person (people) feeling? How did I know this?
Personal – self awareness	How did I feel in this situation? What internal factors were influencing me?
Ethics – moral knowledge	How did my actions match my beliefs? What factors made me act in an incongruent way?
Empirics – scientific	What knowledge did or should have informed me?

The framework uses five cue questions which are then divided into more focuses to promote detailed reflection

#### Cue Questions

<b>1. Description of the experience</b> Phenomenon – describe the here and now experience Casual – what essential factors contributed to this experience? Context - what are the significant background factors to this experience? Clarifying – what are the key processes for reflection in this experience?	<b>2. Reflection</b> What was I trying to achieve? Why did I intervene as I did? What were the consequences of my actions for: Myself? The client or team member? The other people I work with? How did I feel about this experience when it was happening? How did the others feel about it? How do I know how the others felt about it?
<b>3. Influencing factors</b> What internal factors influenced my decision – making? What external factors influenced my decision – making? What sources of knowledge did / should have influenced my decision – making?	<b>4. Evaluation:</b> Could I have dealt with the situation better? What other choices did I have? What would be the consequences of these choices?
<b>5. Learning</b> How do I now feel about this experience? How have I made sense of this experience in light of past experiences and future practice? How has this experience changed my ways of knowing: Empirics – scientific; Ethics – moral knowledge; Personal – self awareness; Aesthetics – the art of what we do, our own experiences	



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In part the models use some or all of the phases in this table.  
(Phases in critical reflective inquiry Kim 1999)

	Descriptive phase	Reflective phase	Emancipator phase
Processes	Description of practice events	Reflective analysis against espoused theories	Critique of practice regarding conflicts distortions and inconsistencies
	Examination of descriptions for genuineness and comprehensiveness	Reflective analysis of the situation & Reflective analysis of intentions	Engagement in emancipatory & change process
Products	Descriptive accounts/narrative	Knowledge about practice processes and applications	Learning and change in practice
		Self awareness	Self critique and emancipation



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