

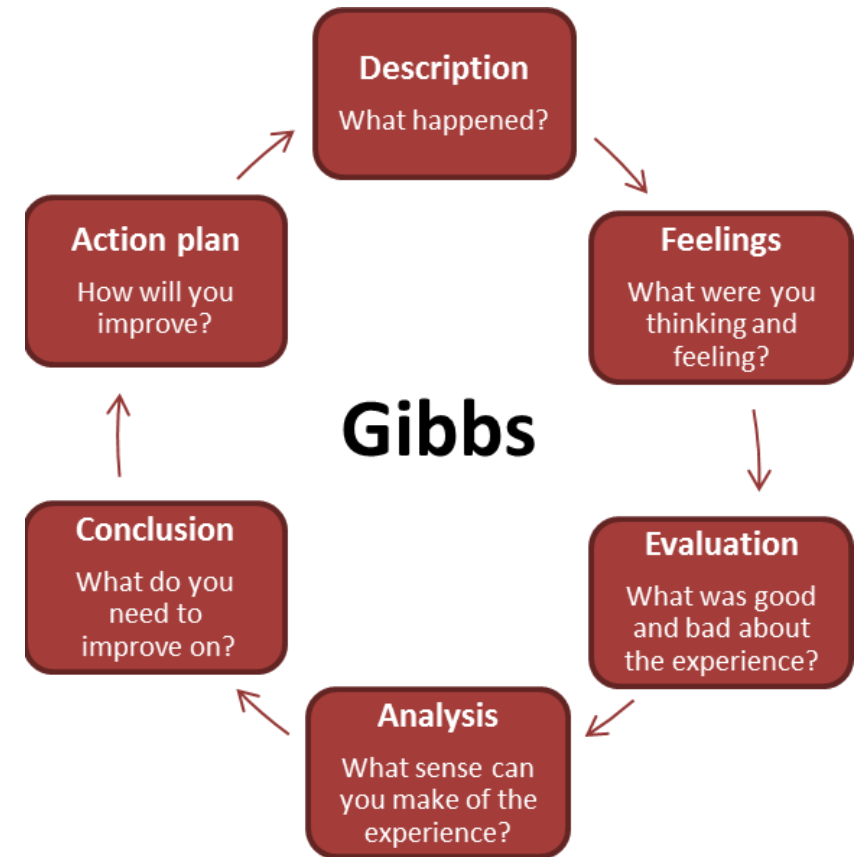


CREATING A PERSONAL LEARNING LOG

Guidance and tips for success
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THE SCIENCE BEHIND IT

- The long-established science that learning provides greater success for better performance, is well proven.
- Studies dating back to Aristotle demonstrate the wisdom of reflecting as a conscious exercise to learn more effectively.
- Key models such as Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984), Gibbs' model (1988) and Schon's (1983) all share insight that learning is cyclical, systemic and experiential based – that we 'learn by doing and realising what came of what we did'.
- Learning is most effective when we think about how we *feel* about our learning, connect it to other experiences, apply it again and again and develop our skills by unpicking it through reflection..



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

- Reflection deepens learning. It enables us to make sense of what we've learned, why we learned it, and how each increment of learning took place.
- Its about linking one experience to the wider perspective of learning – heading towards seeing the bigger picture. Through reflection, learning is integrated, internalised and personalised.
- The importance of capturing learning, applying it, sense-making from it, contextualising it and evaluating achievement of set goals is therefore critical to maximising any learning experience

THE BENEFITS OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

The benefits of adopting this approach are widely accepted.

Individuals who systematically reflect are recognised as having:

- An increase in self-awareness, emotional intelligence, the capacity for emotional regulation and as a consequence the ability to inspire, influence and motivate others.
- An enhanced ability to make decisions which show good judgement, awareness of risk and systemic impact.
- A growth in the capacity to generate innovation through techniques such as asking open questions and listening to answers with an open mind.
- The ability to be compassionate to self and others and inspire trust through demonstrating trustworthiness.



WHAT IS A LEARNING LOG?

- A learning log is a reflective practice activity providing a space where you can articulate your thoughts, feelings, and questions and ideas about your learning experience.
- It is a place to capture reflections, rather than simply diarising what you've done.
- Over time a learning log can demonstrate that you have an increasing grasp of the context of the learning.

LEARNING LOG FORMATS

- Learning science helps us understand we are all unique thinkers and learners with preferred styles, approaches and needs.
- Designing a universal template for a learning log is therefore challenging... some people like drawing mind maps of their learning, some translate it into pictures, some use only key words, some descriptive story telling and some use detailed scripts to capture learning.
- Not every individual's learning log therefore needs to look the same.
- Find the style which works best for you... or use a blended approach and try different ways to deepen your learning and keep you engaged.



JOURNAL WRITING



FREE DRAWING



MIND-MAPPING



WILD WRITING



POETRY



REFLECTIVE
DIALOGUE



NARRATIVE
REFLECTIVE
WRITING

CONTENT TIPS

- Your reflections should be done quickly and freely. Words don't need to be perfect, pictures don't need to be works of art and it could be that you ask more questions than you provide answers.
- Keep it timely. Do entries for 5–10 minutes after each learning experience - whatever the format.
- Date them so you can see not only what learning they refer to, but how your ideas are formed and grow.
- Build on previous entries by making your learning connected e.g. what happened when I applied that learning? What exactly did I do and with whom? How effective was it? What was the outcome?
- Use your log to inform any review conversations enabling you to articulate not just what you've learnt but how it can be linked to your performance.

KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER.

Try answering the following questions in your log to effectively reflect on your learning (and obviously add your own bespoke to your experience):

- What resonated with you and why?
- What learning strategies helped you understand better?
- What do I want to understand further?
- What ideas from others captured your imagination?
- How and when could you apply your learning?
- What other learning does it connect to?
- How does it relate to your learning impact goals?

AND FINALLY
REMEMBER!

"Reflective practice is the ability to reflect on one's actions so as to engage in a process of continuous learning".
(Schon).

So keep the process going... and ensure you maximise all future learning experiences.