

Reflective Learning Cycle

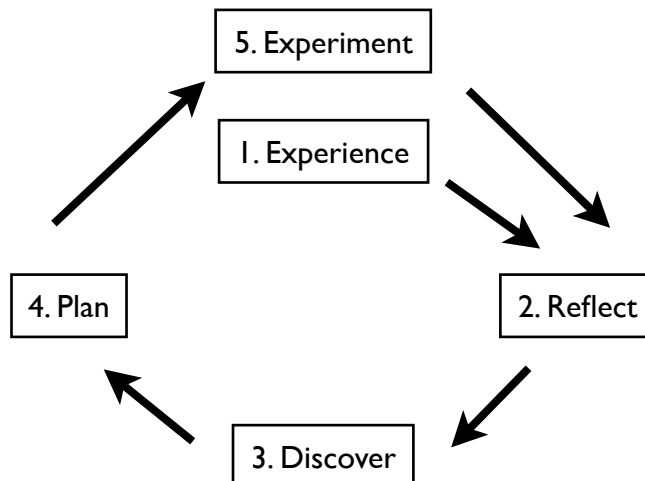
This is a Model for self-managed learning, which is a learner-centered, self-directed process that combines experience with reflection.

If you want to avoid being one of those people who keep making the same mistakes over and over again and never stopping to take time out to reflect on what has taken place so far, then you need to make choices that affect the outcome instead of treating life as it happens to us. We all need the ability to learn and to develop – this is the basis of self-leadership

The kind of learning that you are embarking on, that of self-discovery – your leadership journey, is not simple and straightforward. Unlike learning manual maneuvers such as learning to golf, etc. you need a process of reflection in which you draw on internal resources of your previous experiences to gain a very personal understanding of a current event or experience.

Mastery of complex situations is generally not acquired quickly or predictably over time as subsequent experiences build what is more aptly termed wisdom than simply skill. Our learning needs to become more self-directed and reflective in response to the increasing complexity of our adult lives – especially as the environment around us continues to change at a rapid pace.

It is easy to become too focused on the acting and doing and not taking time out for the learning, therefore the Reflective Learning cycle is a “conscious time-out” from on-going experience in which actions and events are considered in a conscious and deliberate way. A simple process for ensuring that we gain the right lessons from experience as a means of sustaining personal and professional growth.



The Cycle is triggered by experience – this is the starting point and the focus of reflection

- Reflect **– learner consciously considers the experience (alone or in consultation with others)
- Discover **– learner seeks to derive insights about its significance that can inform future actions and behaviors
- Plan **– learner develops appropriate strategies and behavior modifications based on insights
- Experiment – learner tries out new strategies – then starts the cycle again with Reflecting.

** A Learning Journal is an ideal tool to use to capture these thoughts fully.