

Battery of Reflection Questions

Pre-Reflective Questions

What do I hope to achieve?
What do I need to do to achieve this?
What do I know that might help me achieve this?
How will I know if I'm not achieving this?
What am I feeling?
How might these feelings influence my practice?

Reflection-In-Action

What am I seeing? What might this be telling me?
What am I hearing? How does this fit with my observations?
What am I noticing?
What do I know that can guide how I respond to what I am seeing, hearing, or noticing?
How am I feeling?
How am I presenting?
How am I engaging with this person's feelings?

Reflection-On-Action

What might I do differently?
What should I keep doing?
What were my feelings at the time of the event?
What did I think of the event?
What experiences did I have before the event that might have influenced my thoughts or feelings?
Why did this experience have an influence?
Were there other ways I could have reacted/thought/felt?
Are your feelings or thoughts about it the same today? Why?
What was my role in this situation?
Did I feel comfortable or uncomfortable? Why
What action did take?
How did I and others act? Was it appropriate?
Did I expect anything different to happen? What? Why?
What knowledge from theory or research can I apply to this situation?
What broader issues – for example, ethical, political or social – arise from this situation?
What do I think about these broader issues?
Do I feel I have learned anything new about myself?
Has it changed my thinking in any way?
How could I have improved the situation for myself or the service user?

Using the DEAL Model

If you approach your reflective writing using the **DEAL** model ([developed by Patti Clayton](#)), the following questions might guide you.

DEAL Questions

Describe experience(s) objectively

1. Where was I?
2. Who else was there
3. When did this experience take place?
4. What was said?
5. What did I/others do?
6. Why were we there?

Clayton, Dr. Patti. *The DEAL Model for Critical Reflection – Describe, Examine, and Articulate Learning*. Retrieved from http://servicelearning.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/deal-reflection-questions.original.pdf

Examine Experience

From a Personal Perspective

1. How did this experience make me feel? How did I handle my emotional reactions? Do I believe I should have felt differently than I did?
2. What assumptions or expectations did I bring to the situation? How did my assumptions affect my actions?
3. How have past experiences influenced the manner in which I acted or responded to the situation? Am I comfortable with the influence past experiences has on me?
4. What personal strengths/weaknesses of mine did the situation reveal? In what ways did they affect the situation? What might I do to build on strengths/overcome weaknesses?
5. Why did I (or did I not) experience difficulty working/interacting with other people? What might I do differently next time to minimize such difficulties?
6. What personal skills did I draw on in handling this situation? What personal skills would I like to have had in order to have handled it better? How might I develop these skills?
7. How did this situation reveal my own attitudes or biases, toward other people, toward the organization in question, etc.? Do I need to make any changes?

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Examine Experience

From a Civic Perspective

1. What was I/someone else trying to accomplish?
2. In taking the actions I/they did, was the focus on symptoms of problems or causes of problems?
3. Was the focus (symptom or cause) appropriate to the situation? How might I/they focus more on underlying causes in the future?
4. What roles did each person/group/organization involved in the situation play and why? What alternative roles could each have played?
5. Did I/other individuals act unilaterally or collaboratively and why? Should I/they have worked with others in a different way?
6. Did I reinforce or challenge an assumption or social system by the way I acted?
7. How does this experience highlight the relationship between and larger systems?
8. How else could I have handled the situation? Identify both the paths of least resistance and the paths of greater resistance. Why did I/others follow the path I/they did?
9. What agendas did I and others bring to the situation? Are these agendas appropriate? Are they understandable? Are they shared? How are these agendas related to larger social or cultural issues?
10. In what ways did power differentials emerge in this experience? What are the sources of power in this situation and who benefits and is harmed? In what ways might any dependencies be eliminated?
11. What privilege did I/others bring to this situation? What are the sources of such privilege? How am I, or others, disempowered by lack of privilege?
12. How did leadership emerge in this situation, on my part and/or on the part of others?
13. What is in the interest of the common good in this situation? In what ways is the individual good (mine or that of other people) linked to and/or contrary to the common good? What trade-offs between them are involved? In what way did any other trade-offs (long-term / short-term; justice/efficiency; etc.) emerge in this situation? Were the trade-offs made appropriate or inappropriate and why?
14. What changes does this experience suggest are needed: within my group, within the organization, within our society more generally? How can these changes be accomplished: with individual action or collective action / working within the system or challenging the system/etc.?
15. How does this experience help me to better understand the organization's vision, mission, and goals? What does it reveal to me about the relationship between the organization and those it serves? What does it suggest about how this relationship might be improved?

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Examine Experience

From a Academic Perspective

1. What specific elements of our course materials relate to this experience?
2. How was I able to apply a skill, perspective, or concept related to our academic material?
3. What similarities and differences are there between the perspective on the situation offered by our academic material, and the situation as it in fact unfolded?
4. How does this experience enhance my knowledge of a specific reading, theory, or concept? Does it challenge or reinforce my prior understanding?
5. Based on analysis of the experience in light of course material, is the material (or my prior understanding of it) adequate? What reasons might there be for any differences or inadequacies?
6. What questions should I ask to put myself in a better position to judge the adequacy of the material?
7. Instructor's specific course-related questions.

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Articulate Learning

Questions

1. What did I learn?
2. How, specifically, did I learn it?
3. Why does this learning matter, why is it important?
4. In what ways will I use this learning? What goals shall I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself and/or the quality of my learning and/or the quality of my future?

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