

Explore



Prepare



Develop



Reflection
and
Resilience



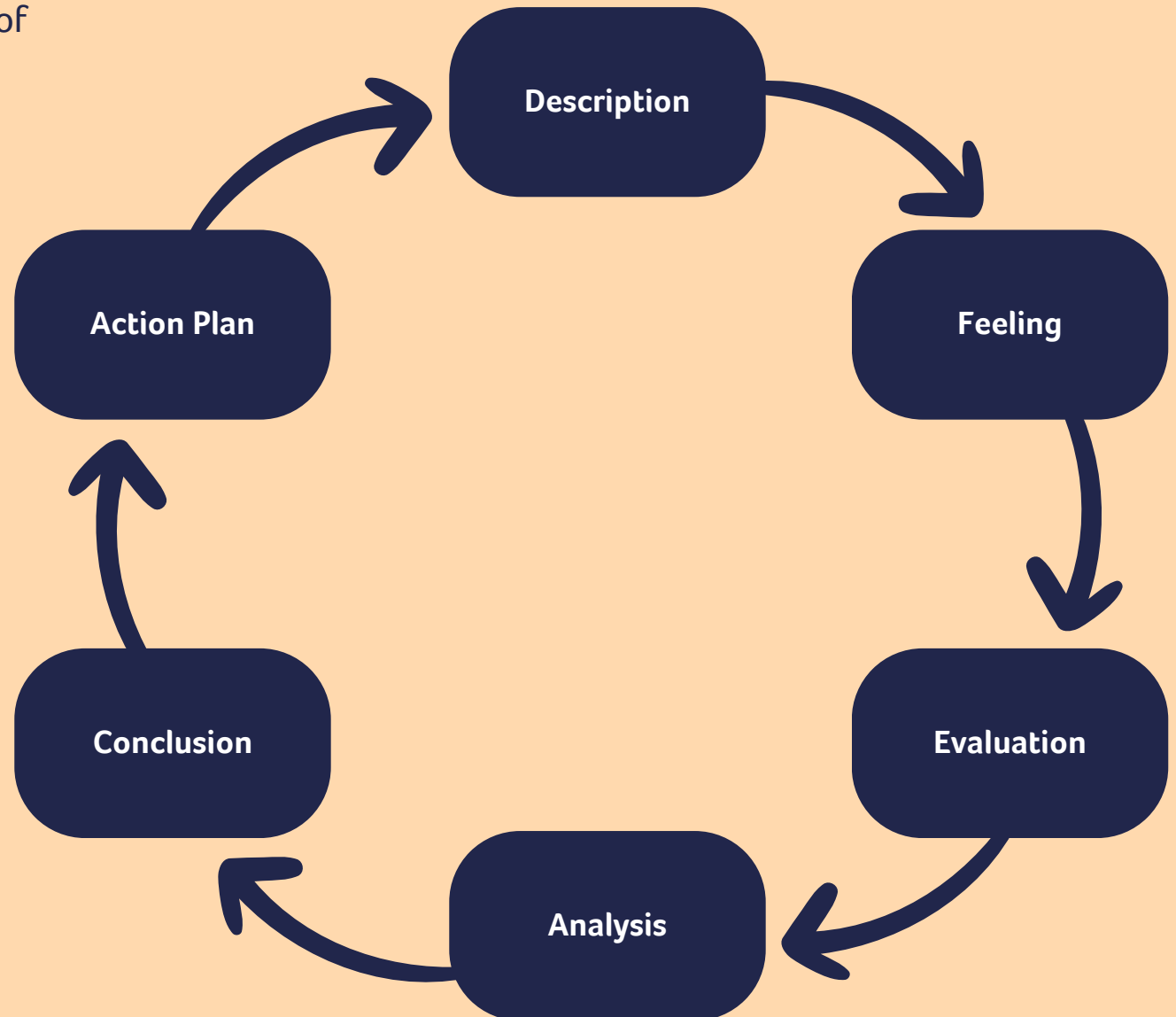
Listen to the Learning

A self-help tool

Introduction

Many things have the potential to develop your employability skills and to provide insights into what you like doing. These include: work experience; volunteering; student societies you belong to; hobbies; community activities you take part in; paid jobs; entrepreneurial activities; courses; electives; LinkedIn Learning. Practically anything has the potential to develop you as a person and help you discover more about yourself.

There are a number of reflective models which help you thinking about experiences and what you can learn from them. In this case we've used Gibb's reflective model (1988) which is widely used within Higher Education and professional development, and adapted this from the University of Edinburgh's version (2020).



This tool is designed to...

- Help you think about something you've done and how it made you feel.
- Help you analyse experiences and capture insights through a structured process.
- Help you identify ways that you might approach a similar situation differently in the future.

Consider using this tool if you...

- Are doing things to develop your employability and want to notice what you are learning.
- Developing new skills and need to learn how to improve your performance.
- Feel that some experiences are going by too quickly and you are at risk of not processing them.

How to use this tool

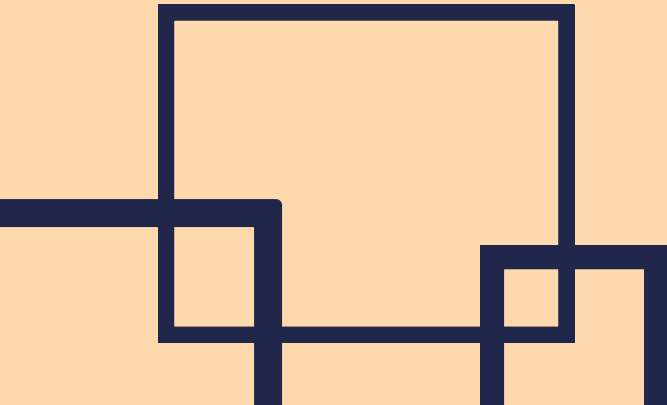
There are 7 stages to Gibb's model.

For each stage we've suggested some prompt questions to help you reflect. Get a piece of paper to write down your responses to each prompt.

Stage	This is about:	Reflective Prompts
Description	Giving a short, factual account of the experience. You can do this for an activity (e.g. running a fund-raising event) or a broader experience (e.g. being the Marketing Officer for a Student Society). Often having reflected on discrete events will make a broader reflection on them easier. This might be about what you did, the skills you used or what others did.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was the context?• Who was involved?• Where did it take place?• When did it take place?• What did you do?• What did others do?
Feeling	Being honest about the feeling and emotions you had. Try to capture the different emotions and how these changed over the course of the activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What feelings were you aware of at the time?• How intense were these feelings?• How did your feelings change over time?• Did you have conflicting feelings?• Did you have different layers of feeling?

Stage	This is about:	Reflective Prompts
Evaluation	<p>Saying which parts were 'good' and which were 'bad'. This may not always be obvious. For instance, the intense pressure of a deadline may be actually energising and quite pleasurable for one person, or tense and stressful for someone else. Remember that these are preliminary labels. By the time you've completed the reflective learning cycle you may see things slightly differently. The important thing is how you feel about things.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which feelings were comfortable? • Which were uncomfortable? • Which parts of the experience were good for you? • Which parts of the experience were bad for you? • Which skills stood as things that you enjoyed doing? • What aspects energised you? • Which things would you like to do more of?
Analysis	<p>This is where you start to make sense of the experience. What was actually going on? You'll need to think about why things happened the way they did and most importantly why you felt that some things were good or bad. If there are things you felt that you didn't do as well as you would have liked, see this as an opportunity to learn. Don't be hard on yourself and aim to achieve a balanced and fair view of the situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did events unfold as they did? • Why did you feel the way you did? • How might an impartial observer evaluate the experience? • What feedback might a good friend give you? • What does this tell you about the things you like doing and are good at? • What does this tell you about your values? • What might this mean for the work setting you would thrive in?
Conclusion	<p>Here you'll want to summarise the learning you have gained. When the 'dust has settled' what does it actually tell you and mean for you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the main message you can take from this? • What really surprised you?

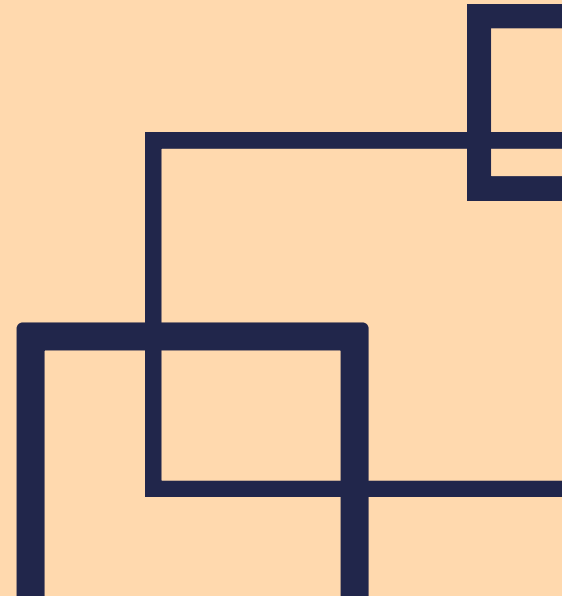
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Action Plan	Deciding what you want to do next. This might be how you could develop yourself further, additional learning or activities you could undertake which might take you in a new direction. Alternatively, it might be about how you could do the same sort of thing but better.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you want to do next to make the most of this experience?• How will you do this?• When will you do this?• Who can help you?



Pause, Reflect, Act

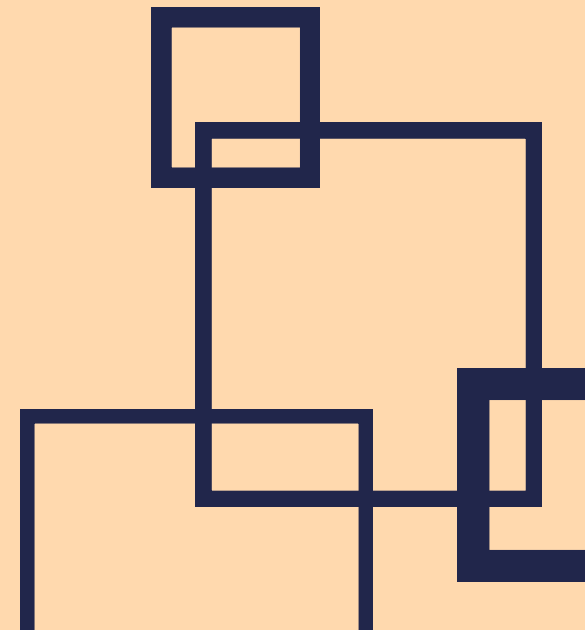
- What experiences or issues do you want to use Gibb's Reflective Learning framework to reflect on?
- How might this framework help you capture the learning which otherwise might be missed?
- When / how often do you want to record your reflections (e.g. daily, at the end of each week)?
- What are the key insights you've taken from this self-help guide?
- What actions do you need to take now to build on this exercise?
- Who could help you with this?
- Are there other related self-help tools you'd like to use as well?

NB: Because everyone is different and no one solution on its own is necessarily a magic bullet, please look at our other self-help tools as well and use the ones that work best for you.



References and Resources

- *Gibb's Reflective Cycle*. (2020, November 11). The University of Edinburgh.
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle>
- Gibbs, G. (1988). *Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford Polytechnic.



If you are a member of staff from another educational organisation and want to use a limited number of our self help tools with your students, we'd love to hear from you and share good practice. We'd ask that you retain references to University of Huddersfield as a matter of courtesy and acknowledge the other sources we've used. Thank you.