

# Hrm reflective writing

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Reflective writing and theories of Reflection There are several types of reflection. As mentioned by Taylor, All types of reflection are important and a combination of these may be used to make sense of practise and to bring changes. Technical Reflection is generally used to look at clinical practices and procedures along with the scientific knowledge. However, values play no part in this. Practical Reflection on the other hand judges human experiences and assumptions. It also develops common values in-line with organizational values.

Emancipatory (Critical) Reflection involves critiques of the assumptions on which our social, political and cultural beliefs are based with the prospect of changing them. Reflective Practice is concept developed by Donald Schon. There are also several models of reflection used to draw lessons out of experiences. In 1978 Argyris and Schon established the idea of single loop and double loop learning. In the former concept the organization or the individual follows the current techniques or strategies even after corrections are made to the current errors.

However, the late concept involves modification of techniques and strategies. Later in 1984 Schon coined the concepts of Reflection - in - Action (RIA) and Reflection - on - Action (ROA). RIA is a concept when the practitioner is faced with an issue he makes a decision based on his feeling and prior experiences. On the other hand, Reflection - on - Action is an idea where the practitioner analyzes the experience after it is over. Personally, I have experienced both the concepts during several situations in life knowingly or unknowingly.

Specially, during our ALE1, we were given an opportunity to reflect on our performance after every task. This depicted our practical implementation of Reflection – on – Action. By implementing the learning from previous task in the later task we have also exercised the concept of Reflection – in – Action. To mention an example, in the first task we were given a sheet of instructions which were tricky. However, we went to perform the task without analysing the rules and we failed to finish the task within the given time.

After the reflection session, when we went on to perform the second task, we made it a point to read and understand the rules carefully. Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle is another great contribution to this concept. This learning cycle has four stages (Concrete Experience, Reflective, Abstract Conceptualization and Active Experimentation/Observation) and the reflection takes place after the situation has occurred. In the first stage the practitioner concentrates on something that they have done and later reflects and explores the new ideas to better perform the task.

In the third stage he forms new ideas and experiments them in the fourth stage. This loop is continued from one task to another. is another process where the practitioner not only describes the situation but analyses it. Unlike the other models it also has an action plan stage where the reflector mentions the actions that he would like to change if the same situation occurs. Jhon's model of Reflection on the other hand involves sharing the experiences with a colleague. It has two stages ' Looking in' on ones thoughts and emotions and ' Looking Out' at the situation experienced.

Reflection on my Personal Development : Initially, when we were given learning logs for our ALE, I didn't know the importance and advantages of it unless we started writing the reflective log after every task. After learning that this is one of the best and easy ways to change oneself, I have stated using the reflective writing tool every time I wanted to develop the way I work and think. During our ALE we have used several tools to better understand ourselves. During our feedback session, we were asked to use Johari Window to know our intern-personal relationships and communication.

Though I was happy about the adjectives mentioned in the public session, the adjectives mentioned in the Blind Spots section were quite surprising to me. The blind spots for me were ' complex' and ' proud'. When I tried to find the reasons from my colleagues for the same, I was told that though I am a friendly, work-oriented person, I sometimes get too much into detail in a group task or assignment and it's difficult for them to understand me. This may be because though I am clear about the topic, I sometimes find it difficult to explain which confuses the other people.

Also, the feedback I generally receive from most of the people after few days of being with me is that " I thought that you are a very proud person when I initially met you". The reason for this is, when I meet new people or enter a new environment, I take some time to get acquainted and unless I know them, I don't initiate a conversation with people. Though this perception of them changes at a later stage, it gives a negative vibe to people in the initial stage. Also, according to Belbin Self-Perception Inventory, the team roles I have similarity towards are ' completer' and specialist'. These two roles reflect my working style rightly. I always try to learn more and specialize in

the subject area of my interest. Also, because I am good at analysing and pay a good attention to details, I am always given the responsibility of doing the last minute polishing and editing in our group assignments. However, there are also negative sides to these team roles which I am aware of and are part of my development plan. As a 'specialist' though I learn in-depth about the subject of my interest, I neglect other subjects which I am not interested in.

Also, the blind spot 'complex' that I have mentioned earlier can be related to the weakness of the completer. As a completer thought I try to get the every detail of the report correct, I sometimes take the perfectionism to the extremes. According to Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles, I am a Reflector. As a reflector I like to learn from activities that let me think, watch and review. However, I find it difficult to concentrate on a lecture unless I find it interesting. This can be linked to my weakness as a Specialist.

According to the MBTI my personality type is ISFP (Introversion, Sensing, Feeling, and Perceiving). This shows that I am a people's person who is friendly and dislike conflicts. But, I like to have my own space. The MBTI and IDAP grid show me on the People Caring part of the grid. This is little contradicting. Though I am comfortable working in a team, I prefer to work on my own. I find it difficult to convey a message as I feel that contradicting with others views may create problems personally.

As part of the self-development, I would like to develop a skill to converse a message in a soft way and would like to learn to maintain a professional relationship with other people in team as most of the work in organization is team based. Also, would like to develop my networking skills. Reflection on

my managerial skills: According to Reynolds Reflection “ is a management tool for problem solving”. Also, the following quote depicts the importance of management in an organization. “ Make your top managers rich and they will make you rich”.

Robert H. Johnson A question that many people ask is why we should we study management theories? Personal traits, values, beliefs and attitudes are the core personal competencies which may enhance or weaken one’s ability to manage others. Also, it is the behaviour and talent of the individual that has major influence on the performance of the company. Hence, an understanding of managerial theories is very helpful for someone who aspires to be a manager as most rational decisions are based on theories.

An extensive study of the theories available is also very helpful for a manager in order to better manage their team as theories provide info about how to behave and help change the behaviour. Theories also provide a common framework and idea about practices. Over a period of time the purpose of work and the way the work is conducted is changing in the organization. The management styles have to be changed accordingly. Minor says that “ the more that is known about organization and their methods of operation, the better the chances of dealing effectively with them.

Understanding may be more advanced than prediction, but both provide the opportunity to influence or to manage the future. Theory provides a sound basis for action”. Hence, an understanding of management theories and knowledge about organization are important for a manager to better perform their tasks. Mullin in his book, Management and Organisational Behaviour has followed a frame work of four main approaches to explain the

Management Theory. The Classical Approach which emphasises on the purpose and formal hierarchy of management.

The classical writers concentrated on improving the operational efficient in an organization. Brench, a classical writer also provided a concept of practical approach to organization structure based on tried general principles as opposed to the concentration on specific cases. Evaluation: The classical writers are criticised for not taking the personality factors into consideration and for creating an organisation structure in which people exercise a limited control. Also, providing a set of principles to perform management duties has been subjected to criticism. Two Major sub-groups of classical approach are :

Scientific Management: This concept was developed by Taylor who was a believer in the Rational-economic needs concept of motivation. The emphasis of this was on obtaining increased productivity from individual workers through the technical structuring of the work and providing monetary incentives as a motivator for higher levels of output. Though this concept has given a way to management thinking and the development of organizational behaviour, it was widely criticised by workers. Bureaucracy: This concept was defined by Weber. He didn't define the concept of Bureaucracy.

However, he attempted to identify the characteristics of this type of organizations. He emphasised on the importance of administration based on expertise and discipline. In this concept, the tasks of the organization are allocated as official duties among the various positions. There is an implied clear cut division of labour and a high level of specialization. Evaluation: Over-emphasis on rules and procedures becomes more important in its own

right than as a means to the end. Argyris says that bureaucracies restrict the psychological growth of the individual and cause feeling of failure.

The growth of bureaucracy has evolved through the increasing size and complexity of organisations and associated demand for effective administration. This theory is founded on a formal, clearly defined and hierarchical structure. However, with rapid changes in the external environment, empowerment and greater attention to meeting the needs of customers, there is an increasing need to organise for flexibility. The Human Relations Approach: While the main emphasis of classic writers was on structure and formal organisation, the emphasis was shifted to social factors at work and the behaviour of employees at work i. e. human relations during the 1920s. The turning point in the development of the human relations movement came with the famous Hawthorne experiment at the Western Electric Company in America. During the experiment a better work environment and a concern for workers' complaints has increased the productivity. Be Evaluation: This theory was also subjected to severe criticism. One of the criticisms is the lack of scientific approach. The Hawthorne experiment was criticised on methodology and on failure of the investigators to take sufficient account of environmental factors.

After all the criticisms, the experiment did generate new ideas concerning the importance of work groups and leadership, communications, output restrictions, motivation and job design. Systems Approach: With this theory attention has been focused on the organization as systems with a number of interrelated sub-systems. This approach tries to bring together both classical and human approaches. Attention is focused on the total work organization;



inter relationships of structure and range of variables within the organization.

This encourages the managers to view the organization as separate parts and as a whole company as part of the large environment. The Contingency Approach: In contrast to both classical and human relations approach, this approach showed renewed concern with the importance of structure as a significant influence on organizational performance. The Contingency Approach that can be seen as the extension of system approach highlights possible means of differentiating among alternative forms of organizational structures and systems of management.

This approach implies that organisation theory should not seek to suggest one best way to structure or manage organisations but should provide insights into the situational and contextual factors which influence the management decisions. DUCAMUS Leadership Development – was set up by Chris Rigby in June 2007 to plug gaps identified in many leadership development programmes during his research. As part of this Leadership Intervention, they use Downstream 9+1 model to support the critical reflection skills. John Adair's action-centred leadership model

Generally represented by three overlapping circles, Adair's three circle model is about balancing and managing Team, Task and Individual. Three core responsibilities in this model are: Achieving the task, Managing the team and Managing individuals. It helps to improve the quality of work, morale and productivity. Theory U is another change management method targeting leadership as process of inner knowing and social innovation developed by

Otto Scharmer and originally based on a process known as the U-Process. It offers both theoretical perspective and Practical technology.

As a theoretical view, it suggests that the way in which we attend to a situation determines how a situation unfolds. Practically, it provides a set of principles and practices for collectively creating the future that wants to emerge. It involves sensing and presence. There are seven stages in this theory and they are Suspending, Redirecting, Letting Go, Letting Come, Crystallizing, Prototyping and Institutionalizing. Moving down the left-hand side of the U is about opening up and dealing with the resistance of thought, emotion, and will; moving up the right-hand side is about intentionally reintegrating the intelligence of the head, the heart, and the hand in the context of practical applications. An understanding of these theories not only helped me learn how the management theory is formed and changed over a period of time, it also helped me understand the effects of these changes on organizational working styles. Also, an understanding what happened in the past prepares me for changes that may occur in the future. It also gave me an idea about the skills that I need to develop to better manage others.

I lack skills like creativity and inter-personal effectiveness which are very important to manage others. Career Development Model Career management involves the matching of individual career plans with organization needs and the implementation of activities to accomplish these joint objectives. Individual Career Development is another constructive model that helps in planning the career through self-analysis. It has several stages such as Life Planning, Career Interests, Goal Planning and Development of abilities and skills.

Though I always knew which field I want to get into and what I want to do in future, I never had a logical reason for my selection. This tool has helped me to analyze my interests, strengths and weaknesses and chose a career plan for myself. This development plan consists of several questionnaires about my Career Planning Values, My interests, skills, knowledge and a Priority Grid to prioritize my choices. After analyzing my inputs, I have decided a career of my interest. I always aspired to be a HR practitioner.

After analysing my skills, I realized that I like Strategic Orientation and Team Orientation skills that are required to be a HR Practitioner. I will mention a development plan at a later stage along with the action plan that I am going to follow these skills. In a team environment, I can also use this model to know more about my team members career choices. Conclusion: I would like to conclude it by saying that this whole experience of reflective writing was very pleasant and helpful in knowing me with a logical reasoning and my skills.

It provided me with a tool that I can use life-long to develop myself. Few of my key learning's from this exercise are : \* A better understanding of myself \* Understanding of several tools to know myself and people around me \* A simple but effective Career Planning Model that I can use to know me and people around me Development Plan Skill| Action Plan| Effective communication| I have already started a lot articles about effective communication skills and started self practicing when I am along. However, in future I'll try to speak in public whenever I get a chance. Adaptability| I will try to be little open and go introduce myself to other people without thinking about what they might think as that is the thought that stops me from

talking with strangers. | Inter-personal effectiveness| I have already improved a lot on this skill. However, I am not perfect yet. In future I am planning to take advice from tutors on how to develop this skill as it is very important for me in my desired profession. | Team Orientation| Though I prefer to work alone, these days I have started participating actively in the team activities and have already received positive feedback about the same from my friends.

However, I am still putting in efforts to better perform. | Strategic Orientation| I am using the technique of writing an idea on a sheet of paper and think of several strategies to about it to develop my strategic skills. However, I am not being quite successful on this task. However, my efforts are still on to develop this skill| Creativity| This is one skill I lack completely. I can think logically and make appropriate decisions. However, lack of creativity is still my negative and I am quite not sure about developing this skill. | References : \* Management and Organisational Behaviour by Laurie J Mullins, 8th Edition. Argyris, C. and Schon, D. (1974) Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. \* Argyris, C. , ; Schon, D. (1978) Organizational learning: A theory of action perspective, Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley. \* Kolb D. (1984). Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. [http://www. goodreads. com/quotes/tag/management-theory](http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/management-theory) \* F. W. Taylor (1856-1917) \* Wester Electric Company (1924-32) \* Elton Mayo (1880-1949) \* Otto Scharmer \* Chris Rigby