

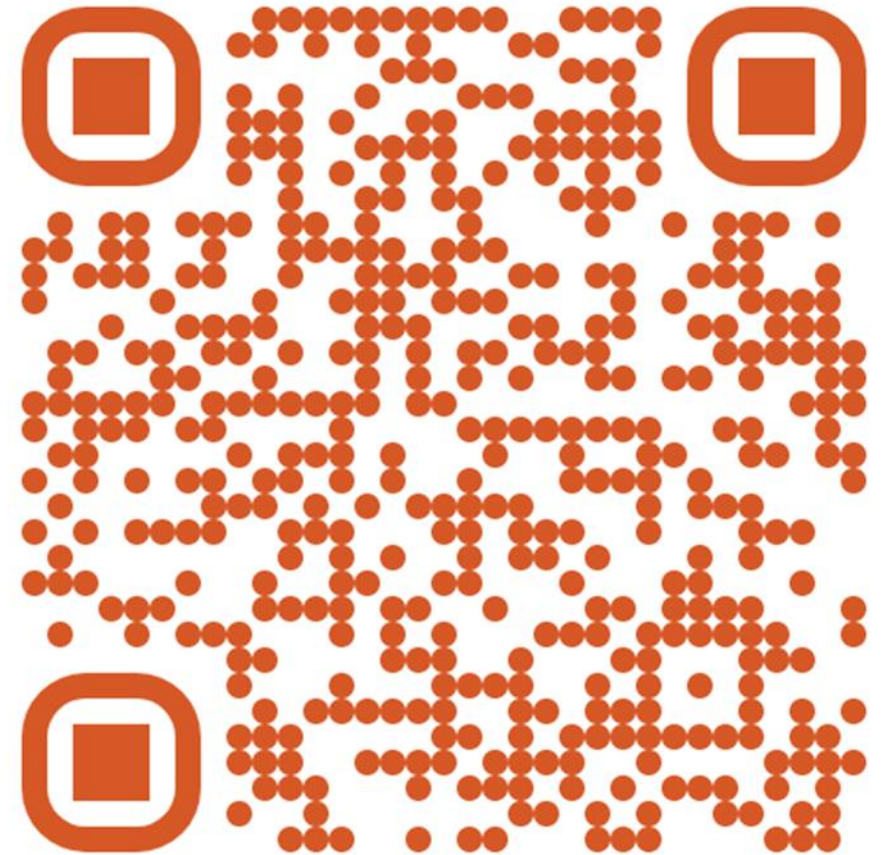
Global Business Environment and International Strategy MOD007191

Lecture 8

Self Reflection

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Learning Outcomes

- Understand the reasons and value of self-reflection;
- Recognise why self-reflection is valuable;
- Apply self-reflection techniques and evidence to assessment element 011;

Reflection: A Definition

*‘Reflection is an important human activity in which people **recapture their experience**, think about it, **mull over & evaluate it**. It is this working with experience that is important in learning’.*

Boud, D., Keogh, R. & Walker, D. (1985) p 43 *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning*. London: Kogan Page.

Why do we reflect?

- “Students will never **take responsibility for their own improvement** until they learn to be **constructively critical** of their own work.” (*Petty, 2009*)
- a powerful way to learn – to reflect back on **what you have done** and think about **how you can improve** (*Courtney & Du, 2015*)

Why do we reflect?

- Reflection is relevant to the learning process;
- Education research shows that it **relates well to professional practice** (Schon, 1983);
- It helps practitioners **gain awareness of their competency** and to continually improve;
- It ensures learners are responsible for their own lifelong learning;
- It fits **with CPD activities** – important if you wish to gain accredited status as a
Member of a professional trade body in business;

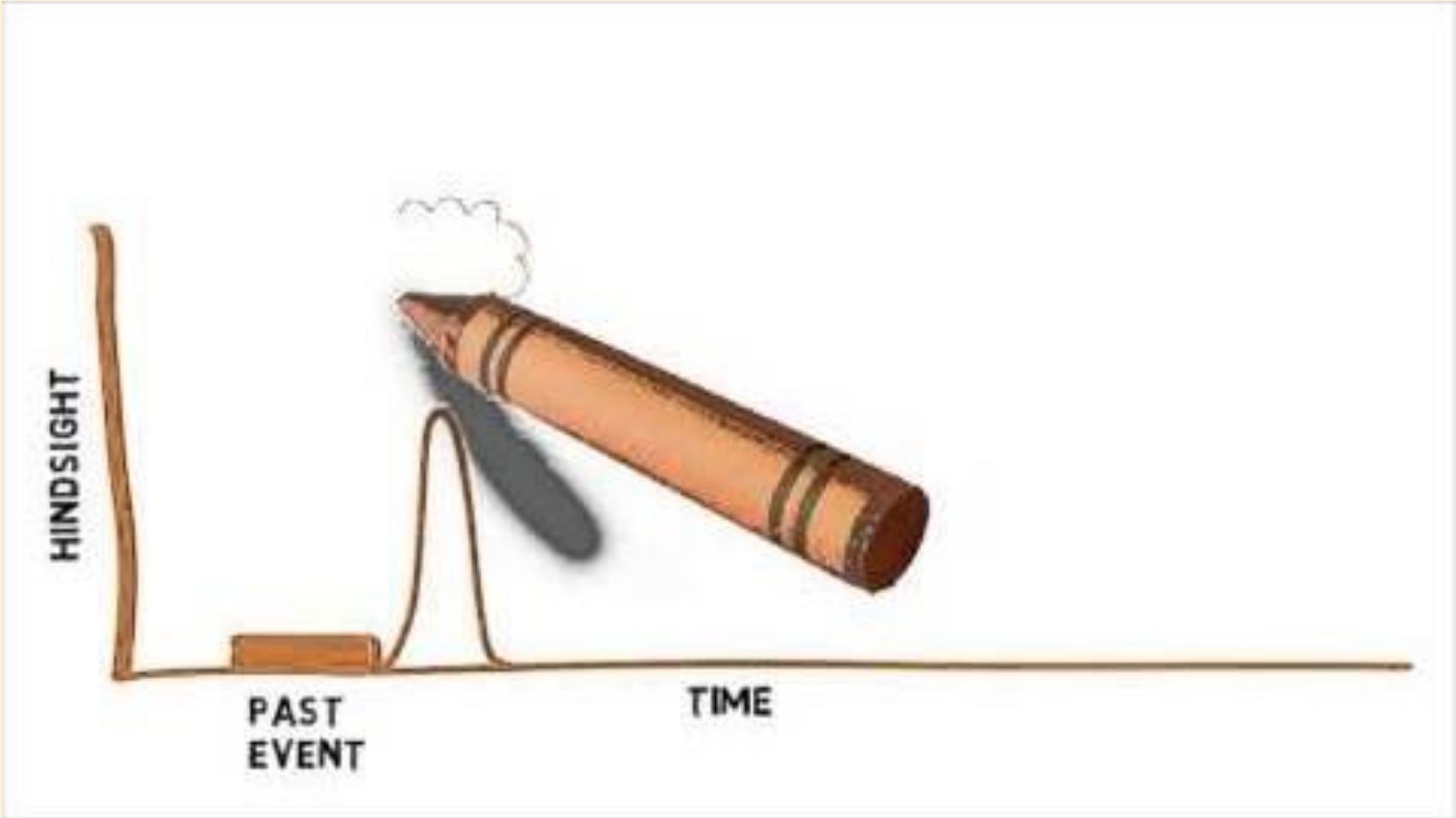
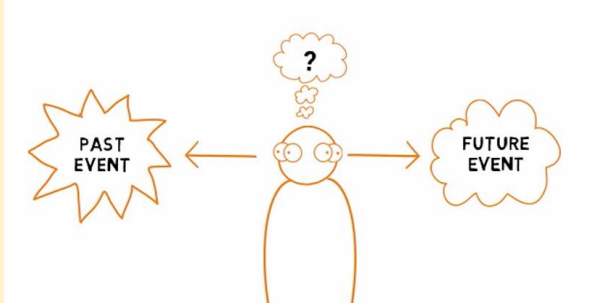
Try not to...

- be dishonest...
- make excuses...
- criticise or blame others...
- put in very personal or private information...
- focus too much on description, rather than analysis or evaluation...
- use colloquial language or overly emotive language - although **you can write in the first person...**

Good phrases...

- This made me aware that...
- I identified this as a strength...
- I found this important because...
- I used my previous experience to...
- This meant that I should have...
- I know that I need to develop...
- This changed because...
- In hindsight, I would not...
- Following this experience, I...
- Despite the setbacks, I...
- This feedback was useful, because...

How to reflect...



Gibbs (1988) Reflective Cycle

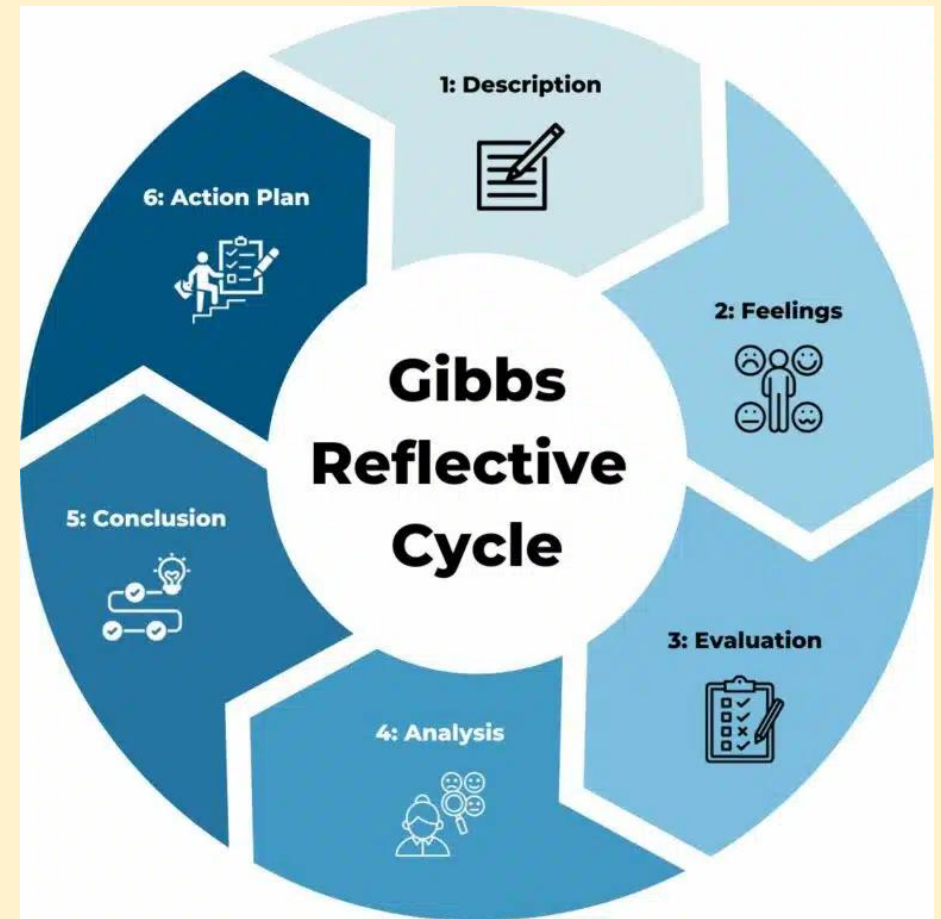
Gibbs Reflective Cycle, is a simple system of reflection, providing:

- Clear description of the situation
- Analysis of feelings
- Evaluation of the experience
- Analysis to make sense of the experience
- Conclusion
- Examination what you would do if the situation arose again

Gibbs (1988) reflective cycle

- **Description** of the experience
- **Feelings** and thoughts about the experience
- **Evaluation** of the experience, both good and bad
- **Analysis** to make sense of the situation
- **Conclusion** about what you learned and what you could have done differently
- **Action plan** for how you would deal with similar situations in the future, or general changes you might find appropriate.

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflection-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle>



Description

- Here you have a chance to **describe the situation in detail i.e. the experience**
- The main points to include here is concern with **what happened and when (dates)**
- Describing the situation **exactly as it occurred**

- Helpful questions:
 - What happened?
 - When and where did it happen?
 - What happened in the order it occurred
 - Who was present?
 - What did you and the other people do?
 - What was the outcome of the situation?
 - Why were you there?
 - What did you want to happen?



Example of Description

- In this assignment, I was tasked with acting as a new business developer for a fictional company planning to launch a new product in a different country. The objective was to create a 10-minute presentation analyzing the business environment in three international markets and assessing the potential success of the company's entry into those markets.
- The first step involved selecting a product from a list provided by the lecturer. I chose [Product Name], which I believed had the potential to succeed in diverse international markets due to its unique features.
- Afterward, I chose three countries—[Country 1], [Country 2], and [Country 3]—based on factors such as market demand, economic stability, and ease of doing business. Once the markets were selected, I conducted extensive research to gather data on each country's business environment, including competitor analysis, regulatory frameworks, and market trends. (state name of models and tools used)
- The next step was to define the company's value proposition and develop a sustainable business model tailored to each market. I also had to identify key stakeholders, resources, and activities critical for a successful market entry strategy.
- The presentation required me to summarize my findings within a strict 10-minute timeframe, which was challenging. I used PowerPoint slides to visually communicate my analysis and included data points, charts, and bullet points to make the content more engaging. Despite extensive preparation, I felt pressured to condense a lot of information into a limited timeframe.

Feelings



- Here you can explore any feelings or thoughts that you had during the experience.
 - How they may have impacted the experience.
 - Recall your first gut reaction.
 - Reflect on any changes in your feelings as time passed.
- Helpful questions:
 - What were you feeling during the situation?
 - What were you feeling before and after the situation?
 - What do you think other people were feeling about the situation?
 - What do you think other people feel about the situation now?
 - What were you thinking during the situation?
 - What do you think about the situation now?

Example of Feelings

- At the beginning of the assignment, I felt both excited and anxious. I was eager to work on a real-world business scenario since it aligned with my interests in international business development. However, I also felt a bit overwhelmed by the scope of the task, especially considering the amount of research required and the need to analyze three different countries.
- As I started my research, I became frustrated due to the sheer volume of information available. It was difficult to determine which data was most relevant for the presentation, and I often found myself going down research rabbit holes that weren't directly related to the assignment. This made me feel stressed about managing my time effectively.
- When it came to developing the value proposition and business model, I was initially confident because I had a clear idea of how the product could succeed in the chosen markets. However, as I started to dive deeper into competitor analysis and risk evaluation, my confidence wavered. I realized that there were more complexities involved in entering international markets than I had anticipated, which made me question whether my proposed strategies were thorough enough.
- During the preparation of the presentation, I felt the pressure of having to condense all my research into a 10-minute timeframe. I worried that I might not be able to cover everything comprehensively or that I would miss key points during the actual presentation. On the day of the presentation, I was nervous but also felt a sense of accomplishment for having completed a challenging assignment. As I began presenting, my nervousness gradually eased, and I started feeling more confident, especially when I noticed positive reactions from the audience.
- After the presentation, I had mixed feelings. I was relieved that it was over and proud of the effort I had put in, but I also felt a bit disappointed that I had rushed through some sections due to time constraints. I kept thinking about what I could have done better if I had managed my time more efficiently.

3. Evaluation

- Here you have a chance to **evaluate what worked and what didn't work** in the situation.
- Try to be as objective and honest as possible.
- To get the most out of your reflection **focus on both the positive and the negative aspects** of the situation, even if it was primarily one or the other.

- Helpful questions:
 - What was good and bad about the experience?
 - What went well?
 - What didn't go so well?
 - What did you and other people contribute to the situation (positively or negatively)?

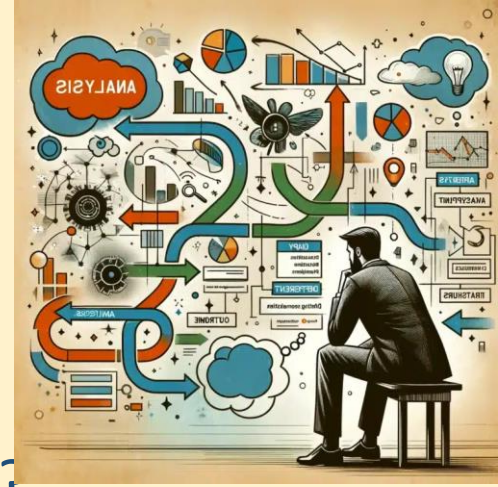


Example of Evaluation

- Overall, the assignment had both positive and challenging aspects. On the positive side, the experience significantly enhanced my research and analytical skills. I was able to identify key insights about each of the chosen markets, which I believe strengthened my understanding of the complexities involved in international business expansion.
- However, there were several areas where I faced difficulties. One of the main challenges was managing the large volume of data I gathered. While I was thorough in my research, I struggled to filter out the most relevant information, which resulted in feeling overwhelmed at times. I realized that I could have been more selective in my approach to focus on key data points that directly supported my analysis.
- Additionally, I think I could have done a better job with time management, both during the preparation phase and the actual presentation. Although I practiced multiple times, I still ended up rushing through some sections of the presentation due to time constraints. This affected the flow of my delivery, and I wasn't able to go into as much detail on certain aspects, such as the competitor analysis, as I had originally planned.
- One thing that went particularly well was the visual design of my presentation slides. I received positive feedback on how engaging and well-structured the slides were, which helped communicate complex ideas more effectively. This was encouraging and validated the effort I put into making the presentation visually appealing.
- Overall, I believe that while I managed to meet the assignment requirements, there was room for improvement, particularly in focusing on the most critical elements and managing the presentation time more effectively.

4. Analysis

- The analysis step is where you have a chance to **make sense of what happened**.
- Now you have a chance to **extract meaning from it**.
- **WHY?**
- You want to target the different aspects that **went well or poorly** and **ask yourself why**.
- Helpful questions:
 - Why did things go well?
 - Why didn't it go well?
 - What sense can I make of the situation?
 - What knowledge – my own or others (for example academic literature) can help me understand the situation?



Example of Analysis

- Looking back on the assignment, I realize that my initial struggle with gathering and filtering research data was a reflection of my approach to information management. I spent too much time collecting extensive data from various sources, which ultimately led to feelings of overwhelm. If I had used a more focused research strategy—prioritizing high-quality sources directly related to market entry strategies—I could have saved time and reduced stress.
- Another issue was my approach to competitor analysis. Although I conducted detailed research on the competitors in each market, I struggled to succinctly present my findings in the allotted time. This indicates that I need to improve my ability to prioritize the most critical insights and communicate them effectively under time constraints. Additionally, while I analyzed market risks, I realized I could have delved deeper into country-specific regulations and potential challenges in the supply chain. A more nuanced understanding of these risks would have strengthened the overall strategy I presented.
- On a positive note, one aspect that worked well was my ability to identify key stakeholders and potential partners in each market. By leveraging the business model canvas framework, I was able to clearly define essential activities, resources, and partnerships needed to support the company's entry into these markets. This structure helped me articulate a coherent and sustainable business model, which was appreciated by my lecturer and peers.
- However, as I progressed and received positive feedback on my slide design and value proposition, my confidence grew. This indicates that I perform better when I feel assured of my work, suggesting that more practice and preparation could help alleviate initial stress in future assignments

5. Conclusion

- In this section you can make **conclusions about what happened**
- This is where you **summarise your learning**
- Highlight **what changes to your actions could improve the outcome** in the future.

- Helpful questions:
 - What did I learn from this situation?
 - How could this have been a more positive situation for everyone involved?
 - What skills do I need to develop for me to handle a situation like this better?
 - What else could I have done?



Example of Conclusion

- In reflecting on this assignment, I have identified several key lessons that will be valuable for similar projects in the future. Firstly, I realized that effective time management is crucial, especially when preparing for presentations with strict time limits. By prioritizing the most relevant information and practicing more efficient ways to communicate key points, I can prevent feeling rushed and improve the clarity of my delivery.
- I also learned that focusing my research efforts on high-quality, targeted sources can significantly reduce the time spent filtering through unnecessary data. This will not only streamline my workflow but also reduce stress. In future assignments, I plan to adopt a more structured approach by defining clear research questions at the outset to ensure I stay focused on the most important aspects.
- Furthermore, while I am pleased with how I applied the business model canvas and developed a solid value proposition, I recognize the need to enhance my ability to synthesize complex information into concise, impactful insights. I could benefit from practicing summarizing information more effectively to ensure I can communicate the most critical elements under time constraints.
- On a positive note, I gained confidence in my ability to structure business strategies and analyze international markets. This experience has reinforced the importance of thorough preparation, visual communication, and the ability to adapt my strategy based on feedback.
- If I were to approach this assignment again, I would allocate more time to refining my presentation skills and focus on delivering a more concise analysis. I would also ensure that I left sufficient time for rehearsals to become more comfortable with the timing and flow of my presentation.

6. Action Plan

- How you can **prevent negative outcomes** in similar future scenarios.
- What **practices or strategies** will you adopt next time?.
- What **specific actions** you will to implement next time
- Outline how you will develop **the skills** you need the next time

- Helpful questions:
 - If I had to do the same thing again, what would I do differently?
 - How will I develop the required skills I need?
 - How can I make sure that I can act differently next time?



Example of Action Plan

Based on the insights I gained from this assignment, I have identified several steps I will take to improve my approach in future projects and presentations:

1. For future assignments, I will create a detailed timeline with specific milestones, ensuring that I allocate sufficient time for research, content creation, and presentation practice. I will set aside dedicated time slots to practice delivering presentations within the allocated time limit. This will help me become more comfortable with managing time effectively and reduce the pressure of rushing through sections.
2. Refine Analytical Skills moving forward, I will focus on using tools like SWOT analysis and PESTLE analysis more effectively to quickly identify the most critical insights for competitor and market analysis.
3. To reduce feelings of anxiety, I will incorporate relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing exercises, before presentations. Additionally, more practice will help build my confidence in delivering content under pressure.

By implementing these strategies, I aim to improve my overall performance in future assignments, ensuring that I can deliver more focused, well-researched, and confidently presented projects. These actions will also help me to better manage stress, maintain a clear focus on objectives, and develop stronger analytical and presentation skills.

References and Useful Reading

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