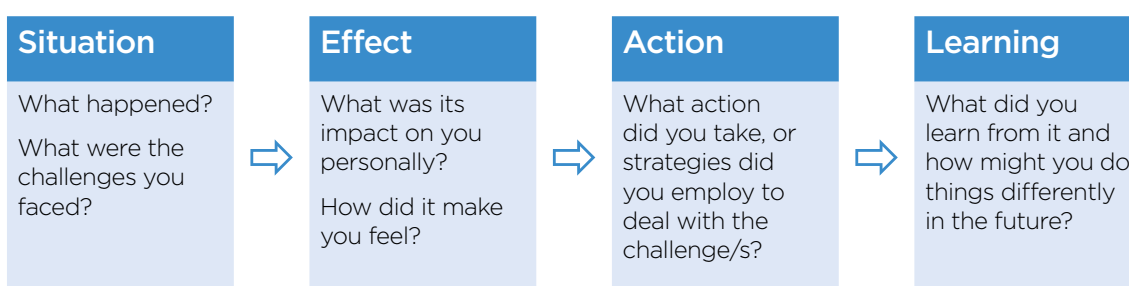


The SEAL Reflection Method

Self-reflection is a vital skill to develop for understanding and evaluating your experiences.

A useful way to structure your reflections is using the SEAL method.



There is no right or wrong answer – it is what YOU gained and learned from an experience. It is important to remember that you don't just describe what happened, but when you reach the learning stage be sure to *evaluate* how and why it was important for your development.

This guide has been created to walk you through the steps of reflecting on your experiences by utilising the SEAL Reflection Method.

Situation

What happened? What were the challenges you faced?

Describe the event, incident, activity, task or experience. Identify the challenges that you faced.

e.g. While waiting tables at a busy Chinese Restaurant, I was serving a customer who I felt was being disrespectful to me and fellow wait staff members. It was very challenging to communicate with the customer who has drunk alcohol and was behaving in a way that made some customers feel uncomfortable.

Effect

What was its impact on you personally? How did it make you feel?

Explain impact that the new experience/challenge had on you.

e.g. At first, I felt disrespected and unappreciated for the work that I was doing to make the restaurant a great place to dine. The customer was a real vibrant and humorous person who managed to make many of the customers laugh at their jokes.

Action

What action did you take, or strategies did you employ to deal with the challenge/s?

Explain what strategies you employed in the situation or what you did to deal with the challenge/s you faced. Evaluate *why* you did what you did to mitigate the effect of the new experience or challenge/s.

e.g. I focused on listening to the customer, and maintained a professional manner, clarifying my understanding of their feedback through asking questions and taking mental notes to provide back to my manager. I also consulted with the night manager about what might be a course of action if the situation escalated and we decided that we would remind the customer of expected behaviours and seek assistance from security if we felt further at risk. Fortunately, one of the customers' party members managed to calm the situation down.

Learning

What did you learn from it and how might you do things differently in the future?

The most important part of the process is to reflect on what you learned from the experience. Try to identify what capability or personal quality you developed or enhanced OR explain what you can now do as a result of dealing with a new experience or a challenging situation. How has the experience added to the ones you have already had in terms of your development?

e.g. After the experience I reflected on the interaction and what I learned about the customer and the situation. Despite their disrespectful behaviour, their feedback was quite important to highlight certain flaws in our waiting process that had room for improvement. They were venting their frustrations but the manner of communication that the customer used was not appropriate and made the situation personal instead of professional. Throughout this experience I feel I learned the real power of listening, observing and taking the time to assess and process the situation, without taking things too personally and becoming significantly frustrated.

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