



Three Models of Reflective

David Kolb published his four-stage Experiential Learning Cycle model in 1984;

Concrete Experience

This is the act of taking part in an activity. In the case of teaching this could be the act of running a training session

(i) Reflective Observation

In this phase the experience is analysed. This will include posing, and answering, questions of the nature referred to above (see Triple Loop Learning)

(ii) Abstract Conceptualisation

Following the analysis, conclusions are drawn, utilising both our reflective observations and relevant theoretical literature and guidance

(iii) Active Experimentation

Our conclusions form the basis of our plans to improve performance for the future, and this commences again as we implement those changes into our future actions, i.e. a new Concrete Experience

Kolb's model also incorporates four preferred learning styles, which explains how different people have different styles of learning and is important for teachers to be aware of. The model also incorporates Perception (how we think about things), and Processing (how we do things) Continuums, and each of these elements have complex interrelationships which the professional teacher must seek to understand, and utilise, in order to maximise their effectiveness.

Graham Gibbs introduced a model for structured debriefing, referred to as Gibbs' Reflective Cycle or Gibbs' Model of Reflection, in order to aid the reflection sought by Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle. The stages involved in Gibbs' structured debriefing are as follows:-

(i) Description

An exploration and description of what happened without judgement or conclusion

(ii) Feelings

Documentation of reactions and feelings without analysis

(iii) Evaluation

Judgements of positive and negative aspects of the experience

(iv) Analysis

Assessment of what sense can be made of the experience, including comparison of different individuals' experiences and consideration of relevant theories

(v) Conclusions

General, specific and personal conclusions

(vi) Personal action plans

What is to be done differently next time based on the lessons learned

Stephen Brookfield built on earlier theories of reflective practice, in particular Schon's Reflection-in-Action and Reflection-on-Action. He argued that

“the path to discovering the worth of your teaching is through a process of critical reflection” (Miller).

For Brookfield, the aim of the critically reflective teacher is to maximise the awareness of one's teaching by viewing it from as many different perspectives as possible and, to this end, he introduced the concept of his four lenses:-

(i) Self Lens

Also referred to as the autographical lens, this aspect of reflection is the all-important self reflection element whereby teachers critically reflect on their own performance. In particular teachers focus on their teaching experiences as a teacher in order to reveal aspects of their pedagogy requiring development, enhancement or improvement

(ii) Student Lens

By looking through this lens the teacher seeks to understand the experiences of the students by critically reflecting on their performance from the student's perspective. A good teacher will readily seek student feedback in order to maximise their continuing professional development

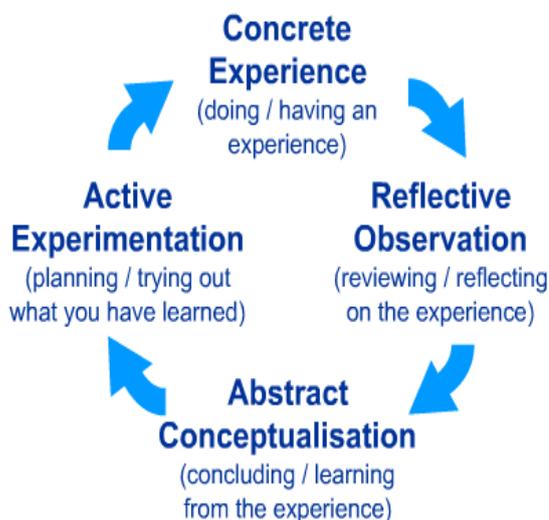
(iii) Peer Lens

Teachers can learn open up blind spots by seeking feedback from the peers (i.e. fellow teaching professionals). This can help them identify traits, habits or weaknesses that they may be completely unaware of, and that student feedback may not recognise. It can also be a source of motivation and support, whilst also providing innovative solutions to problems

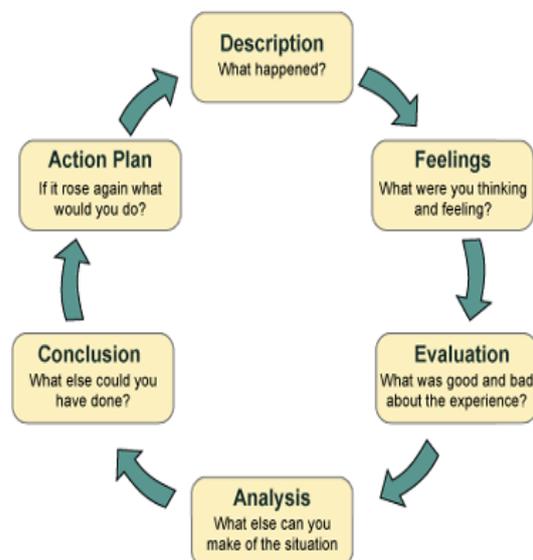
(iv) Literature Lens

Research of scholarly teaching theory provides invaluable guidance for the professional teacher to put into practice, and can again offer innovative solutions to problems. By possessing a good broad theoretical knowledge of their profession, the teacher can better understand their trade and seek to maximise their effectiveness

Kolbs Four-Stage Cycle



Gibbs Reflective Cycle



Reflective practice.