

# Reflective Essay

Ty Yiu

2019-12-22

## Contents

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Abstract                       | 2 |
| 1 Introduction                 | 3 |
| 2 Employed reflective practice | 3 |
| 3 Reflections                  | 4 |
| 4 Conclusion                   | 6 |

## abstract

Having known not much about professional sports leagues, organisational structures or anything remotely connected to traditional sports, this course extraordinarily increased my knowledgeability in that specific area. Mix some biology or chemistry into the material or neurological / psychological explanations and even a non-jock could get interested in sports management. More importantly, seeing *sports* as an analogy for *stress situations* or situations requiring *high performance*, makes the name a little confusing, but at the same time more relevant to more individuals. Luckily for me, that is exactly what the course and instructor did.

# 1 Introduction

*Reflective practice is the process of continuous learning enabled through questioning one self's past actions.*

Luckily, reflective practice has been a font technique of mine for years. For long, I have tried incorporating meditation, stoicism, elements of zen and buddhism, feynman technique, and controlled breathing, into reflective practice. To me, it is a central element of self-optimisation. Reading loads of material in the genre of philosophy, reflection became a natural part of my habit list. Specifically, this course expanded my horizon as to grasp and transfer conclusions forged from reflection. Following a Wittgenstein' mentality of knowledge transfer, the course and instructor succeeded at sharing valuable insights.

Assessing one self's performance in past situations can reveal insights into why performance was as it was, considering given circumstances. Thus, conclusions can be induced into what could be the source of unexpected underperformance and how to avert re-occurrence.

The more factors one can include in such analysis of reflective practice, the more likely one may be to conclude more precise strategies objectifying learning.

For the participated in class "sports management", reflection was crucial as to the aim of increasing capability for high performance situations. These high performance situations should be subject to reflective practice for optimisation of potentially identified shortcomings. Furthermore, a log shall be maintained capturing demonstration of learning manifested through reflective practice.

The three main deliverables, the assignments are a guideline for structure, as well as outstanding moments from lectures.

## 2 Employed reflective practice

Similarly to Gibbs's model of reflective practice [Gibbs, 1988], emotions will be considered for a trigger of reflective practice, though shall not be the sole origin of such. Thus, the goal is to be able to even reflect upon apathetic situations as to wonder why apathy may have manifested itself. The goal of this is, to tailor reflective practice more to individual personality traits, as one may easily be stimulated or may be avoiding stimulation.

Stress is a very significant factor when it comes to high performance capabilities. A recently undertaken personality trait test revealed a 9/10 stress resistance of the *performance model* base-lined to high performance business management environments. The *triune brain* incorporates stress into the *two-brain theory* of human behaviouristics. Stress is less of a personal stimulator as to stay in mind. On the contrary, a personally identified shortcoming is conflict avoidance. This has been revealed through analysis of apathetic behaviour in situations of unlikely display of such. The conclusion made is a decreased level of assertiveness or lack of trust in own ability.

A situation reflected upon in the log is the assertive and questioning nature of the instructor requesting confirmation of a student stated opinion. Such behaviour is strategization of testing the student supporting their own stance under pressure of it being questioned.

The same way, the analysis of the heart rate baseline variance is very interesting to myself in the sense of whether or not one's own image of one is skewed. Such could be the case considering the existence of unconscious incompetence. Specifically, my own classification of capability, skill or resistance may be completely biased. Such is a much more interesting question to me compared to why one has performed a certain way, as underlying biases can even skew that analysis heavily. Hence, an outside entity may be required, providing a probably less biased perspective on one's performance. Thus, feedback is essential to reflection. It can thus be said, that *introspective reflection* can only reveal so much and limited by nature. The in class discussed *dialogical other* may be a broader approach, though also less precise and can become skewed in trade off for accuracy in repetition, due to biases incorporating in the dialogical other.

### 3 Reflections

A situation from class, in fact, the very first class, was rather outstanding to me. Such was, the task of ordering by city, that students are living in. The task seemed fairly easy but turned out not to be such at all. Ignorance to the task displayed by others or plain simple incompetence throughout the course leaves me to wonder of showing similar behaviour. This is to say, without direct comparisons being made with others, considering clear differences in personality or individual factors such as past. Another situation very similar, was one of the very last lectures, in which the class was tasked with passing

a ball through the air as many times as possible in a given time period. Naturally, the students failed miserably at coordinated teamwork and clear employment of individualistic behaviour taking over. A high performance situation without coordination or prior determined options of action can easily become chaotic and result in significant drops in collective performance. Students could clearly be categorised into being drawn to either pole, panic or resilience.

It would have really interest me to gain insights into the heart rate variance analysis, to see whether the calm self perspective is the case or a mere illusion to unconscious incompetence. I would want to be able to control my bodily reaction to stress situations and minimise its impact. A personal investigation of stress analysis to be conducted is measuring the bpm before, during and after high performance situations and to actively try to maintain being as close to base line 60bpm as possible. The data from the presentation held as the individual assignment would be golden for analysis.

Speaking of which, the individual presentation did actually result in a bigger physiological response to stress than expected. Usually, as can be clearer seen in the group presentation, there is little apparent stress to my behaviour. My personal guess into why, is the lack of isolation prior to the presentation, but instead embracing the moment, chatting with others instead of focussing, breathing and staying calm.

The psychological character trait analysis classified my level of bravery and preference of common and thus comfort environments as low, leaving me again to wonder about the actual level of performance and again outlining my weaknesses.

I compare it to an exam room with extremely nervous teenage girls; there will be little chance of one being able to not be nervous when absorbing the surroundings. Thus, for the first time, I identified isolation as a potential necessity to stress resilience, or at least considering the option.

The by myself displayed nervousness very much followed Gibb's model [Gibbs, 1988]. The presence of strong emotion is rather uncommon to me and left me to think about the relevance of Gibb's model, as it has prior been seen as less relevant to myself.

During the individual presentation, I constantly found myself thinking to not hide myself behind the counter and monitor like everybody would probably do instinctively, considering the high stress circumstance. Cyclically, I had spare capacity to realise that I've been subconsciously wandering back to the side of the camera field of view, instead of staying alone in dead center.

Such behaviour I also consider mentioned subconscious conflict avoidance.

One thing I would have liked, is feedback on the presentation, prior to having hand in the first assignment. I am unsure about my performance and fear skewed perception and would have liked to traced differences.

In contrast to the individual presentation, the group assignment felt comfortable. The group constellation was common and trust in capabilities of partners was given. The performance of each member was predictable and acceptedly so and didn't vary greatly in actuality. Much preparation and fractioned responsibility was key for achieving so, in a subject matter about which none of the group's members were particularly knowledgeable of.

Collective reflective practice performed and analysis of each other's performance post to action maximised learning. I believe that the professional approach and formality required for the presentation was outstandingly good for introducing less common elements into Hult presentations. It was different than other assignments, as precision was of the essence.

Although having hated the effort input required for the collective reflective practice undertaken during classes, the value could be argued for. Having to change seats and getting up on first glance seems annoying, though brings often underconsidered benefits such as blood circulation and the *Zeigarnik Effect*.

Another aspect I disliked due to efficacy, was the chosen method of having students answer a posed question. The implemented technique left me to stay inside my comfort zone, without having to fear a probable scenario of needing to answer on the spot. That I realised over time, made me sometimes participate less in class in terms of input. The argument for that, is the behaviour displayed when the guest lecturers were around. Much more discussion was going on in regards to the number and variety of participating students. Furthermore, only a few students were forming the majority of participation.

## 4 Conclusion

The class posed fewer personal challenges than it made me wonder and reflect upon my actions during the course. Post-observationally, I displayed much higher and prolonged self awareness during the course than during any other. The focus on one self and the importance put onto reflection impacted me much more than the perceived material of the course. My opposition to

sports management transformed into thinking of sports management more of as *stress* or *high performance* management. The lessons learned from the course posed persistent and remaining questions and support inquiry, very much unlike the original perception of the course. The course has concluded leaving much room for further progression and having laid a solid foundation for the professional high performance environment one could find oneself in.

- First class:
  - Sort by region
  - absolute disaster - uncoordinated
  - little groups forming
  - less about sports than thought?
- Group presentation:
  - good group; know the team
  - assignment not really posing a threat
  - sport affine and non-sport affine members
  - creativity! -Giancarlo
- General:
  - a lot of people are unconsciously incompetent and or ignorant
  - maybe I should get more involved in collective reflective practice
  - maybe I rely too much on introspective reflection?
  - how can I use what I've learned to eliminate shortcomings?
  - interesting approach of sports management being analogous for high performance circumstance
  - I can treat most findings not as sport specific, but high performance specific -i much more relevant to me
  - physical performance less interesting than psychological
  - people being "exposed" by instructor -i very funny
  - let's see when it's my turn -i never came
  - maybe it didnt because I subconsciously tried to avoid it?
  - instructor really good at making students be sure of what they say
- Guest lecturers:
  - enjoyed first one much more than second; too much "sport"



- participation and focused dropped significantly for second speaker
  - interesting similarities in behaviour between the instructor and guest lecturers
  - relevance of first lecture perceived as higher
- Individual presentation:
  - O.K. prepared
  - annoying pre-presentation phase with other students
  - why was I so nervous? - maybe bc of the others?
  - Did I do well? Did I stutter? How about movement and presentation (body posture etc)

## References

[Gibbs, 1988] Gibbs, G. (1988). *Learning by doing : a guide to teaching and learning methods*. London: FEU.