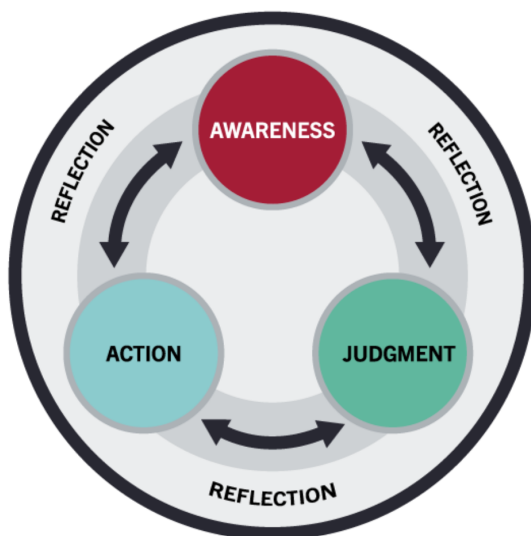


The reflective leader

We don't learn from experience; we learn from reflecting on our experience.

In the context of leadership, reflection is more than pausing to think. It is a deliberate process of examining your experiences, decisions and actions to gain deeper insights and understanding. Unlike other leadership development practices focusing on acquiring external skills, reflection is an introspective process. It involves self-awareness, critical thinking, and a willingness to question your assumptions and beliefs.



Reflective leadership has four components:

- Awareness – of the situation, self and others,
- Judgment – making sense of, gaining perspective and giving yourself feedback,
- Actions – consciously selecting your behaviours and responses, and
- Reflect – throughout this process to learn and coach yourself.

Practising self-reflection

Engaging in self-reflection requires discipline and deliberate purpose. It means setting aside the time to step back and process events, your thoughts, feelings, actions and outcomes, positive and negative. To develop a learner mindset.

Keeping a learning journal

A learning journal technique is a valuable tool for organising and examining your experience so you can learn. A structured way to keep a learning journal is to focus on and record three elements:

1. A description of the experience (i.e. the 'critical event' – 'what happened'),
2. Your reaction to the experience (what you thought, felt, wanted, did), and
3. What you learned by examining how you reacted to what happened.

Writing it down forces you to think deeply about the above.

A journaling app you can use

Follow this link to [Reflection.app](#), a free private AI-enhanced journal that helps you gather your highlights and lowlights as they happen. It shares your entries with you for guided reflection at the end of each month and year.

To recap...

Reflecting enables you to create a pause between your thoughts and emotional responses and your actions. It allows you to engage in a personalised, internal feedback process, recognising the behaviours that have a positive outcome and that you want to repeat and the behaviours that need to change. In other words, to become your own coach.

To be more effective, you must become more reflective as a leader.

In the words of Socrates, *"The unexamined life is not worth living"*.