

# ACE Quick Guide to Reflective Models

## Why should I use a reflective model?

When tasked with a reflective assignment, it can be difficult to know what to do or where to begin. The **models below** may therefore be **used as both a starting point and a template for the process of reflection**. If applied successfully, reflective models will prompt you to **engage critically** with your experiences in the workplace, **examining your assumptions, motives and behaviours** – their potential strengths and limitations in practice.

## Which reflective model should I choose?

There are many different models to choose from and although they differ in approach, they include comparable stages; the **key differences between them are the number and complexity of these stages** (Cambridge University, 2021).

If your assignment brief does not stipulate which should be employed, **clearly and succinctly explain your choice** of reflective model. No matter which model you choose, your arguments must be supported by relevant **scholarly theories**.

## Driscoll's 'What? So what? Now what?' Model

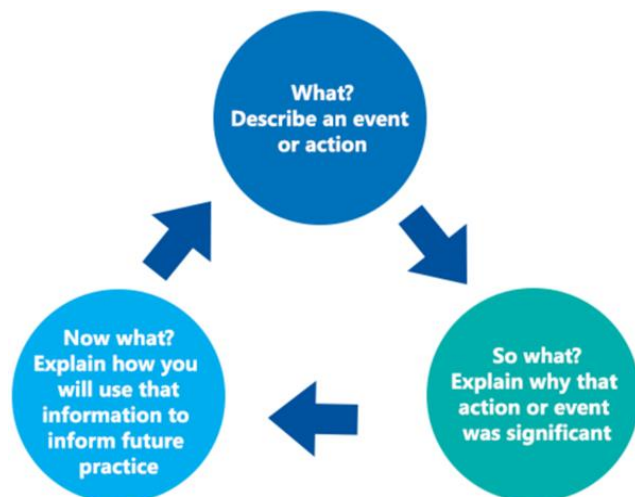


Figure 1: Driscoll's 'What? So what? Now what?' Model (NursingAnswers, 2018)

### 1. What?

In Driscoll's three-stage model, the 'What?' is a challenging or significant experience in the workplace.

Here, you should briefly describe the incident you are reflecting on:

- What happened?
- What exactly did you do?
- What did the other parties involved do?

### 2. So what?

During the 'So what?' stage, critically analyse the significance of your experience:

- Why was this important?
- How do you feel about this?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- How can you employ scholarly theory to make sense of this?

### 3. Now what?

The 'Now what?' stage is where we look forward – considering alternative actions and strategies, the necessary steps to make them happen, and their possible consequences:

- How has this experience influenced your thinking and / or behaviour?
- What will you do in a similar situation in the future?
- How could you achieve a better outcome next time?
- What could you do to prepare yourself for this?

## Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Straightforward</b> to use.	The simplistic title questions <b>do not necessarily encourage you to reflect critically</b> on your own assumptions, behaviours, and motives
The stages are <b>easily remembered</b> , titled after a prompting question.	Models such as Gibbs' include <b>additional stages</b> devoted to feelings, evaluation and analysis.

## Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

### 1. Description

In Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, the first stage is description. Here, you should clearly and succinctly address:

- What happened?
- What did you do?
- What did other people do?
- What did you want to happen?
- What was the outcome?

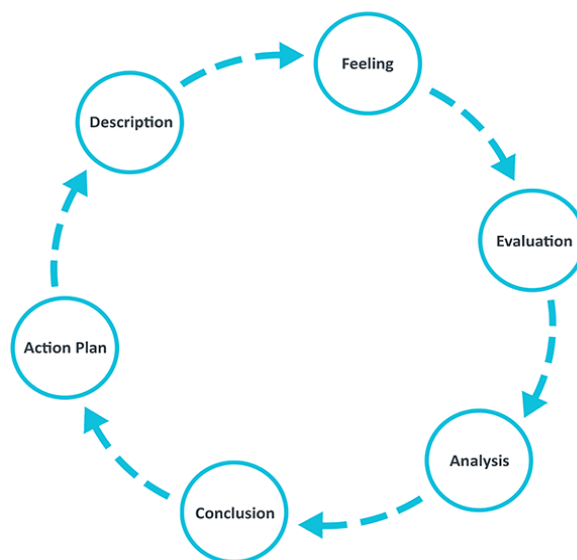


Figure 2: Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (University of Edinburgh, 2023)

### 2. Feelings

Next, explore the feelings or thoughts you experienced regarding the incident:

- What were you feeling before, during, and after the situation?
- How were / are others feeling about the situation?
- What were you thinking during the situation?

### 3. Evaluation

Evaluate what did and did not work, being as objective as possible:

- What was good and bad about the experience?
- What went well? What did not go well?
- How did you and / or others contribute towards the situation?

### 4. Analysis

Here, you should critically analyse the significance of your experience:

- Why did / did not the situation go well?
- What sense can I make of it?
- How can scholarly theory help me understand this situation?

### 5. Conclusion

This is where you should summarise your learning, highlighting what changes to your actions might have improved the outcome:

- What did I learn from this? What else, for example, could I have done?
- How could this have been a more positive experience for those involved?
- What skills do I need to develop to achieve a better outcome next time?

### 6. Action Plan

Finally, plan for what you would do differently in a similar or related situation in the future:

- How will I develop the skills I require to succeed in the future?
- If the incident occurred again, what would I do differently?

(Adapted from The University of Edinburgh, 2023)

## Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
Six clear stages, including one dedicated to 'Feelings' – <b>useful for experiences with a strong interpersonal dimension.</b>	<b>Less user-friendly</b> than Driscoll's model.
Encourages <b>consideration of positive and negative</b> aspects of the situation.	The (false) <b>implication that all stages require equal treatment</b> in writing.

## Reference List

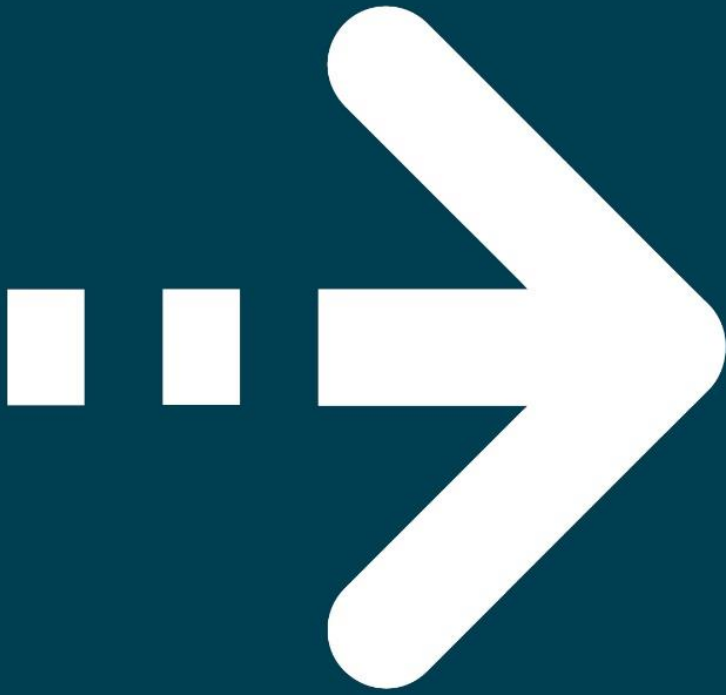
Cambridge University (2021) *Models of Reflection*. Available at: <https://libguides.cam.ac.uk/reflectivepracticetoolkit/models> (Accessed: 5 December 2023)

NursingAnswers (2018) *Driscoll's Model of Reflection*. Available at: <https://nursinganswers.net/reflective-guides/driscoll-model-of-reflection.php> (Accessed: 5 December 2023).

University of Edinburgh (2023) *Gibbs' Reflective Cycle*. Available at: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle> (Accessed: 5 December 2023).

## Additional Resources

The University of Hull's guide to [reflective frameworks](#) details additional models by Kolb, Schön, Rolfe, and Brookfield.



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