



Reflective Practice Template

Victorian Legal Services
BOARD + COMMISSIONER

Reflective practice is a simple, time-efficient and evidence-based way to enhance your professional performance and improve your wellbeing.

It's widely used in other professions and is increasingly being taught in legal education. It's beneficial regardless of how advanced you are in your career, and particularly helpful for early career lawyers.

Reflective practice doesn't need to take a lot of time, and this template can be completed in just 5-10 minutes (or you can do it over a longer period, delving deeper into your experience). The more often you go through a structured process of reflection, the easier and more instinctive this process will become

This template has been created by the VLSB+C for lawyers to use. For more information and guidance visit the VLSB+C website: lsbc.vic.gov.au/SLP

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How to use this template

There are a number of ways to approach reflective practice. This template is based on Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, which describes a simple and straightforward six-step reflective process:



You can use this template to reflect on any situation, experience or event that you think would be useful to explore and learn from. Examples might be:

- your professional performance (e.g. on a particular matter or a complex court appearance)
- challenging interactions with clients or colleagues
- a professional development activity
- uncertainty in your work
- barriers to progress.

Reflective practice can also be used before or during an experience. Doing this can help you to prepare for, adapt to, or mitigate issues.

You can engage in reflective practice with a mentor or in a group, but if you are new to it, we recommend starting by yourself. You don't need to share or provide records of your reflections to anyone or keep them on file – they are personal reflections.

If you're an early career lawyer, you may find it helpful to share your reflections (or aspects of them) with your supervisor, provided it is a psychologically safe environment and you feel comfortable doing so. If you're a supervisor, it can be powerful to model and share your reflective practice (or aspects of it) with your supervisees.

Reflective practice

Step 1: describe the experience

Questions	Your response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What, when and where did it happen?• Who was present?• What did you and the other people do?• What was the outcome of the situation?	

Step 2: explore your feelings and thoughts about the experience

Questions	Your response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What were you feeling before, during and after the situation?• What do you think other people were feeling about the situation?• What were you thinking during the situation?• What do you think about the situation now?	

Step 3: evaluate the experience and its impacts

Questions	Your response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What went well, what didn't go well? • Did things happen the way you expected or differently? • How did you contribute – positively and negatively – to the situation? • How did external factors, including other people, contribute to the situation? • How did the situation affect you and other people? 	

Step 4: analyse the experience to extract meaning and make sense of it

Questions	Your response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sense can you make of the situation? For example, why did things go well (or badly)? • What insights have you gained by going through the situation? • What would you need to know or understand to approach similar situations more confidently? 	

Step 5: draw conclusions about what you learned and what you could have done differently

Questions	Your response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you learn from this experience (including about yourself and/or others)?• What worked well that you would do again, and what would you do differently?• What personal skills or knowledge gaps have you identified?	

Step 6: make an action plan to support you to deal with similar situations in the future

Questions	Your response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you were in the same situation again, what would you (or should you) do differently?• Are there skills you could develop, training you should undertake, or other resources you could access to help you handle similar issues or matters more effectively (or perform better)?• What insights from this experience can you draw on that will help improve your performance next time?	