

IMPOSTER SYNDROME IN THE WORKPLACE IS A DEFINITIVE RITE OF PASSAGE

Having started my placement at Q Radio, my first day showed that feeling to be very real. That overwhelming sense of everyone is staring, when in actuality everyone is more concerned with oneself than others. My day began with walking into my first ever working newsroom, followed with a quick showing of Northern Ireland's map to refreshen my geography, which was greatly needed. I was set the task of finding 14 news stories and creating them into 7 news packages, to be broadcast around each of Q's key areas, broadcasting from the North Coast to Mid Ulster. Having been shown the way to my desk and computer by the video team, I made my way through Q's emails, newspapers and social media in search for my stories. From the world's tastiest bread competitions to Halloween firework cancellations and infrastructure emails, I found my stories to then pitch to the head of the newsroom, a man whose career I dream of having so evidently there was no pressure.

A lot of lessons were learnt that day, especially when taking notes on a story to keep your information accessible in seconds to show. With it being an article in the Derry Journal or a random email, to have it always within hands reach and most importantly to "speak up" as I was told. Imposter Syndrome was beginning to kick in once I was left by myself to find the stories and later pitch them. Belfast being the master story meant insuring that all my other news packages matched the timing of it, in order to all be broadcast at the same time. I had never imagined having learnt so much in my first day or been given the task of creating a news segment that the station is in the early stages of broadcasting.

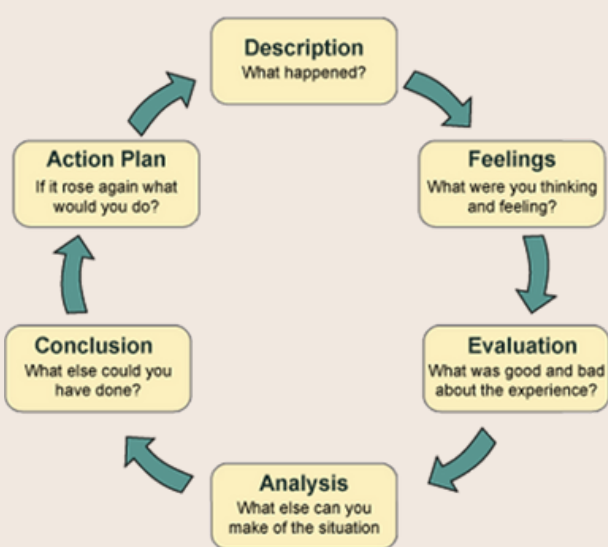
"Imposter syndrome is a condition that describes high-achieving individuals who, despite their objective successes, fail to internalize their accomplishments and have persistent self-doubt and fear of being exposed as a fraud or imposter"

(Bravata et al.2020, p.1252)

Radio



Gibbs Reflective Cycle



Gibbs Reflective Cycle

Following Gibb's model of a reflective cycle as part of my own evaluation, I think for my first day it was very informative and educational but also allowed for many rewarding learning lessons. I am self-aware enough to know that I struggle with not always being the best within my work but also understand the importance of taking those situations and learning from them. In irony to the impostor syndrome, I rarely get nervous entering a new environment but as explained in *The Imposter Phenomenon in High Achieving Women: Dynamics and Therapeutic Intervention* by Pauline Rose Clance & Suzanne Imes (1978, p.2), "self-declared imposters fear that eventually some significant person will discover that they are indeed intellectual impostors" and that is exactly what I had felt.

Entering the newsroom, I was an impostor and therefore I should not be there. That somehow in my first hours of meeting these people, they would discover I have no cognitive abilities but charmed them through my interview. My mind had begun to run a mile a minute most of the day as they all discussed stories, running in and out of the studios to record with the world's news being as manic as the newsroom from the new PM to Stormont to the murder of an innocent girl.

Despite feeling like I wasn't deserving to be there, it did not stop me from trying my hardest in the task I was set. Having then pitched my stories I was given critical feedback on my work from the head of the newsroom. However, daunting it seemed to have someone analyse every sentence I typed, I enjoyed it. From the feedback given, I learnt the importance of timing in radio and tv, that a singular second can change everything and that radio news packages MUST be short, informative, and most important clear. Listening as a tool is important especially when being given advice but putting that advice into practice is even more, "talking is common; what is far less common and far harder to obtain is good listening" (Boud et al. 1985, p. 86)

As part of my analysis and conclusion, I have learnt that I need to hold the same confidence I have toward myself, alongside the confidence I have in my work and that of any Roald Dahl characters, I hold most similarity to the "quote-on-quote Fantastic Mr. Fox" (Fantastic Mr. Fox ,2009). In reflection I don't think there is a specific thing other than my own internalised feelings that I would have changed about my first day. The advice that I received on my first day has stayed with me throughout my placement and has allowed me to manage the progress of my work. Within my action plan I aim to continue to have confidence in my abilities and not view my struggles as a way of thinking that I am an intellectual impostor. I now view these encounters as valid learning opportunities rather than fearing them and have seen the benefit those discussions have had on improving my work.

References

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- [5] Fantastic Mr. Fox (2009) Directed by W. Anderson. 20th Century Fox
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