

BEHIND THE LENS

MY FIRST DAY ON PLACEMENT

As I returned from my year abroad in the United States, I was keen to reach out to my contacts in the TV & Film industry to see what opportunities were available. After a week of kind emails and text messages from industry professionals with no job secured, I got a phone call from a number I didn't recognise. I answered to hear a man explain he was a Production Coordinator working on a BBC show. I was immediately filled with excitement as he offered me a position as Trainee Assistant Director for 10 weeks over the summer on the series 'World on Fire'.



Gibbs Reflective Framework

To reflect on my first day as Trainee Assistant Director, I will use Gibb's reflective framework to evaluate my performance on the job and how I can learn from my experience. Consisting of six stages, the Gibb's framework 'is an effective and easy tool for developing reflective practice habits and learning from errors and failures' (Sicora, 2018). The stages are presented in Figure 1.

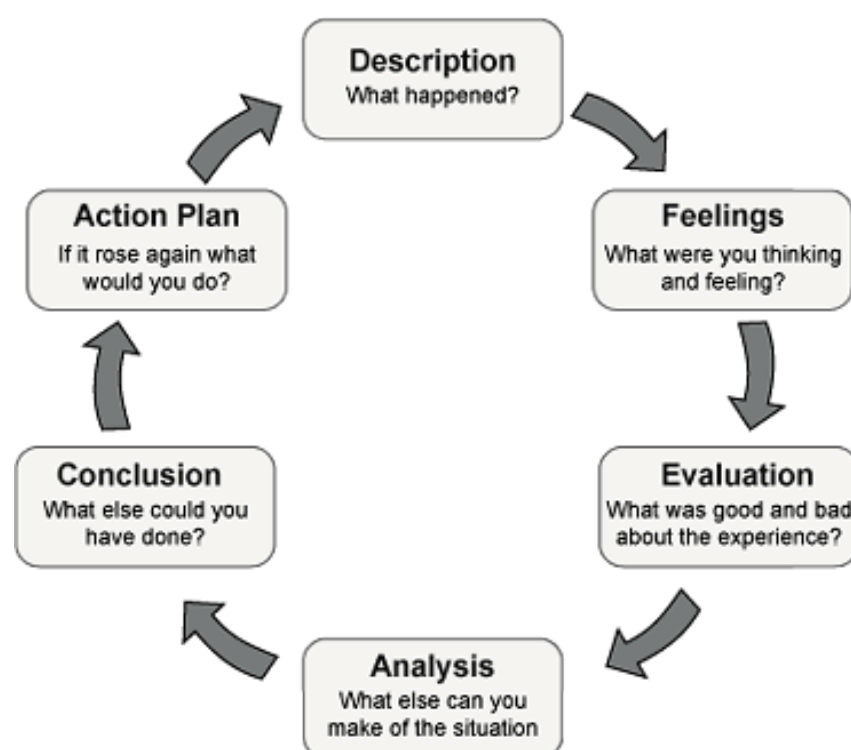


Figure 1: (Gibb's reflective model 2021)

Description

The first stage gives me the chance to set the scene and give context of the event. I was thrown straight into the deep end on my first day and was told that I'll learn best by doing. My job was to greet actors, show them to their trailers and get them through hair & make-up and costume on-time to head to set. I familiarised myself with the call-sheet, remembering actors names and the characters they play, taking note of important times and making sure I maintained effective communication with my team on set.

Feelings

Feelings are all about the thoughts associated with the experience. Minutes before I met the first actor, I was standing outside waiting for the car to pull up at base and I was riddled with anxiety. When that moment finally came, I immediately felt at ease. Cast member number 1 stepped out of the car and as I greeted them, I was excited to be the first person the actor met on set so I could help them feel welcomed. As I walked them to their trailer, I ensured to check the time and made sure I got them camera ready. This was the daunting part, realising the amount of responsibility I had which was to ensure the shoot days ran to schedule.

Evaluation

Looking back, I am evaluating whether my first go at the job was a good or bad experience. I would say there were both good and bad parts of the experience, but it gave me areas to focus on for the rest of the shoot. I made great professional relationships with the actors and that started from those initial greetings. I was able to put my anxiety aside and I greeted them with enthusiasm and confidence. I felt I was faking it until I made it and I think it worked because I settled in comfortably in the role and the confidence and enthusiasm came naturally once I developed those relationships.

Mirroring those good factors, I did make mistakes which is to be expected. When it was time to knock for the actors and bring them to set, I forgot to tell the hair & make-up and costume departments that would normally travel to set with them so they could do checks in between takes. I was unaware that it was my job to let them know as I assumed they had radios and headsets on.

Analysis

While trying to make sense of this situation, I realised that my anxiety was holding me back from fully concentrating on my first day. That is a pattern I've noticed about myself in many different situations such as my first day at university. Small wins and settling into new environments quickly ease my anxiety and that worked in this case.

Conclusion

I learned how to remain professional with high-profile talent despite feelings of anxiety. I learned how to control it and stop it interfering with my work and concentration. I could've asked more questions before jumping into the role which could've prevented some mistakes although I understand mistakes are normal and I've learned from them.

Action Plan

In reflection, I intend to go into new jobs knowing my responsibilities, but still ensure to ask questions especially as a trainee. I know as a trainee that all head of departments work differently and we're there to help them. I will also remember, 'don't expect an intern host to teach you everything you need to know' (Kindem, 2015). I know I will be able control my anxiety better in the future as I will have more experience to be confident in my role.

Bibliography

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