

Kolb's Reflective Cycle

Kolb's reflective model is referred to as “experiential learning”. The basis for this model is our own experience, which is then reviewed, analyzed, and evaluated systematically in three stages. Once this process has been completed, the new experiences will form the starting point for another cycle.

Concrete experience:

You consciously experience a situation, which makes you realise that you need to reflect systematically to learn something new or improve your existing skills and practice. At this stage, you will note the specific situation and **describe what you see, feel, and think**.

Reflective observation:

Having written down the description of the experience, it is now time to reflect more deeply on what has happened in that situation. The questions you need to ask yourself are: **What worked? What failed? Why did others and I behave the way we did?**

Abstract conceptualisation:

The guiding question for this stage comes from the reflective observation stage questions: **What could I have done better or differently? How can I improve?** Initially, you try to find different ways to deal with the situation and think up strategies for when you experience a similar situation again. Also, this is the stage where you should consult your colleagues in order to get a better understanding and further ideas.

Active experimentation:

This stage is about **applying the newly acquired theoretical knowledge**. You take your reflections and thoughts about improvements back into your practice and try out the new strategies. Some of them will work, others won't, so this is then automatically the basis for a new cycle. As the experiences within the active experimentation stage become the new “concrete experiences”.

Reference:

Kolb, D.A. (1984). *Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Adapted from: <https://www.nicole-brown.co.uk/reflective-model-according-to-kolb/>

