EXPERIENTIAL REFLECTION

Leadership on Demand
AGENDA

• Setting the Stage
• Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle
• Practicing Reflection
• Concrete Experiences
• Reflective Observation – What?
• Abstract Conceptualization – So what?
• Active Experimentation – Now what?
What do you consider to be one of your proudest moments (unrelated to your recent engagement experience)?

Think about what you did, and why you were successful.
THE PURPOSE OF REFLECTION

- Learning is an ongoing process
- Increases our knowledge, skills, abilities; make meaning of our experiences
- Draw conclusions based on experience; learn new things
WHY DOES REFLECTION MATTER?

• Who are you?
• How do you work?
  • In a team
  • In a role
  • In a job
  • In the community
• Set yourself apart
• Solve problems, overcome setbacks, seize opportunities
HOW DOES REFLECTION HAPPEN?

- Reflection takes time and energy!
- Connect and synthesize information
- Forms of reflection:
  - Discussion
  - Journaling
  - Presentations
  - Poetry
  - Drawing
  - Blogging
  - Songwriting
  - Project and portfolio development
  - Online
  - Etc.
KOLB’S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

Concrete Experience
(doing/experiencing)

Active Experimentation
(apply/try it out)
NOW WHAT?

Reflective Observation
(review/reflecting)
WHAT?

Abstract Conceptualization
(conclusion/lessons learned)
SO WHAT?
For this activity, think about your personal, proudest moment.

What made this experience stand out to you? Consider what happened:

- Where were you?
- When did this take place?
- Who else was there?
- How did you feel?
• What made this experience better than others? Why did this moment stand out to you?
• What were the circumstances that made you feel this experience was a success? Consider who was involved, where it took place, and when it happened.
• What motivated you to follow through on this accomplishment/ experience? Why?
• What makes you feel proud of yourself? How can you create that sense of pride for yourself in different situations?
• What obstacles did you face, if any? How did you overcome the challenges?
• What were the major takeaways from your proudest moment? What did you learn about yourself?
PRACTICING REFLECTION: ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION – “NOW WHAT?”

• How can you use the lessons from your proudest moment in future situations?
• What would you want other people to know about you based on this proudest moment?
• What would you do differently in the future to lead to an even better result?
• What can you take from this moment and apply to a project or goal you are working on right now?
CONCRETE EXPERIENCE

What happened? Describe the experience in detail.
CONCRETE EXPERIENCE

Cover the classics: When and where did this occur, who was involved, why was it important?
How did the experience play out? What was the end result?
How would you describe this experience on your resume? What would the bullet points say?
REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION – “WHAT?”

What was the most difficult part of this experience? Why was this difficult for you?
What part of this experience was the easiest? Why do you think that is?
What problems or issues came up during the experience? Explain the process you used for resolving the issue or challenge.
REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION – “WHAT?”

Who else was part of this experience, and how did you interact with them? What was your role in the group?
What was your greatest contribution that deserves appreciation?
What did you learn? What were your major “takeaways” from this experience?
Described what you learned about yourself (your values, skills, ideas, etc.) through this experience.
What were some things you noticed about others during this experience?
How does this experience and what you have learned connect to previous experiences in your life?
What do you know now that you can utilize in future situations?
Describe one thing you learned from this experience that relates to your future academic or professional career.
If you had to describe this experience to someone else who might participate, what would you say they would get out of it? Why?
ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION – “NOW WHAT?”

Think of someone who was helpful to you during this experience. What did they do to contribute to your learning experience? How would you tell them thank you?
THANK YOU!

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