



Self-Reflection – an Introduction (1 of 2)

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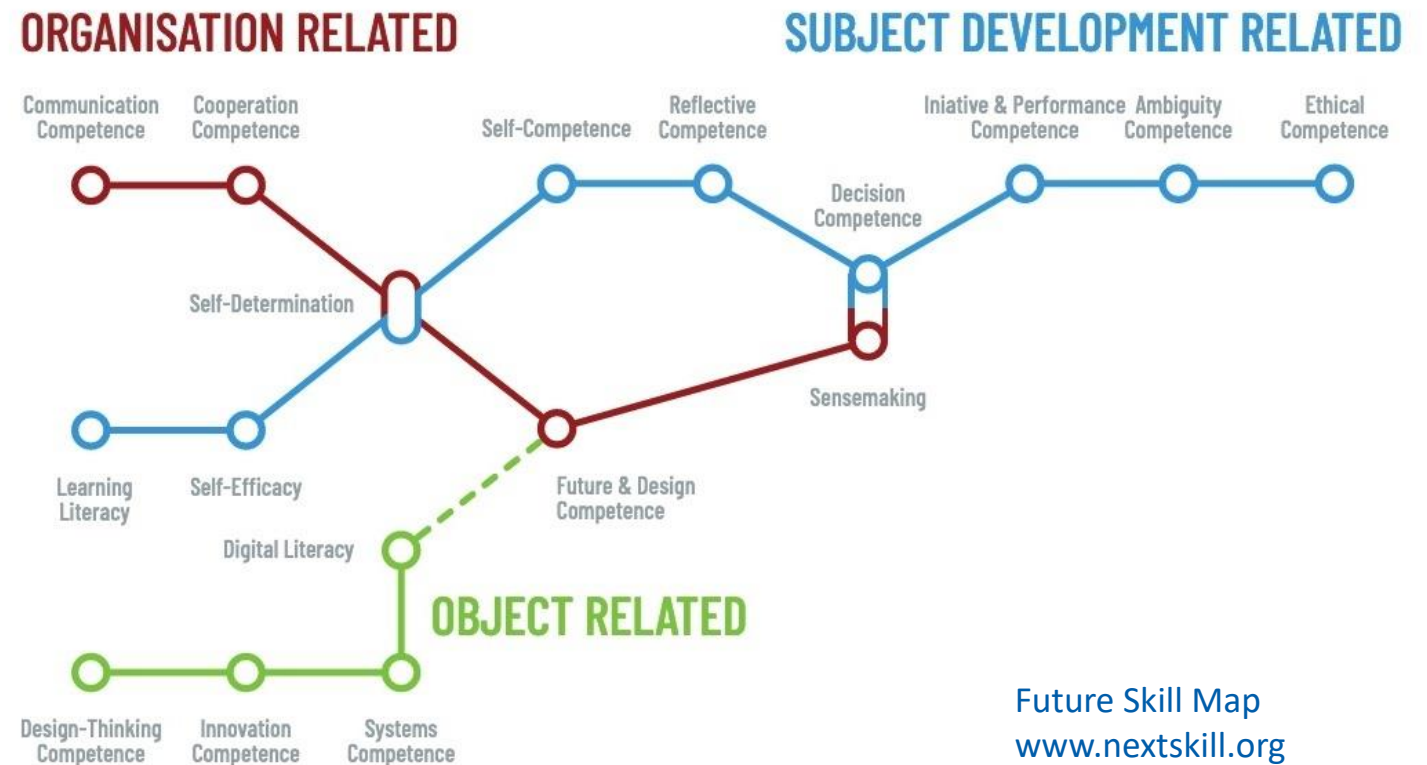
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1. What is Self-Reflection?

Self-Reflection is the activity of thinking about your own feelings and behaviour, and the reasons behind them.

It is a key competence for learning successfully, acting professionally, and for individual growth.

It is often considered a
“Future Skill”



1. What is Self-Reflection?

The term “reflect” originated in Latin, where “reflectere” means “to bend back” or “to throw back [an image]”.

The term is commonly used in physics, in optics in particular, to describe the behavior of light being affected by surface.

In a way, “reflection” describes that something is thrown back, so that it can be viewed from a new perspective.

In terms of learning and thought processes „reflection“ means that experiences are mentally „thrown back“ in order to analyse them consciously. During Self-Reflection you do not simply view your own experiences from your own (inner) point of view, you look at them from a distance, comparable to looking at your own image in a mirror.



2. Why should you learn to self-reflect? **EU**Peace

As a Future Skill, (Self-)Reflective Competence includes the willingness and ability to reflect:

- for questioning yourself and others for constructive development;
- for recognizing the underlying behavioral, thought and value systems;
- For holistically evaluating the consequences of your decisions and actions.

When we reflect, we gain some distance to our experiences, analyse our thoughts and actions, and realize why we reacted the way we did in certain situations. This makes our learning processes more conscious, decisions clearer, and future actions more aimed.



2. Why should you learn to self-reflect?

Self-reflection helps with:

- Turning mistakes into opportunities to learn;
- Recognizing personal strength and growth potentials;
- Considering different perspectives;
- Merging theory and practice in a meaningful way.

Self-Reflection supports us in turning our experiences into competencies, for instance developing our cooperation competence when reflecting on our role in a group assignment.

In a way, Self-Reflection is a “super future competence”.



3. How does Self-Reflection work?

When you reflect, you stop in what you are doing, taking some time to consciously pay attention to an experience, an action, or a learning process. This is not only about describing what has happened, but also about understanding why it happened that way and what you can learn from that.

Example:

„I wasn't active during a class, just quietly listening, and I did not like that.“	→	Observation
„I felt insecure because I did not know the text we worked with.“	→	Emotion & Cause
„Next time I will be better prepared and/or actively ask questions.“	→	Conclusion / Learning



3. How does Self-Reflection work?

Typical steps in the Self-Reflection process are:

- **Describe:** What has happened? What have I done or experienced?
- **Notice:** Which thoughts, emotions, or reactions came up during this event?
- **Analyse:** Why did I act that way? Which preconceptions, aims, or expectations played a part?
- **Evaluate:** What was helpful? What was problematic or surprising?
- **Draw conclusions:** What have I learned from this?
- **Transfer:** How can I use this learning experience in future situations?

Reflecting is more than just thinking about something or mulling it over, as it is structured and oriented towards results and learnings.



3. How does Self-Reflection work?

In a next step, please watch the short video provided in this section of the course. It will explain Self-Reflection in a bit more detail.

