



# Reflective Statements

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## **Purpose**

People go through different things in life. Some of those experiences brought joy and some broke them down. Nonetheless, people persevere and thrive despite all they have been through, they are still standing. Those experiences also serve a different purpose aside from just being mere memories and reminders. Some people use those as fuel to push forward and live a better life. No matter the impact though, it is always good to look back.

Looking back on the past doesn't necessarily mean you haven't moved forward, you simply just want to reflect and find meaning again as to why you continue to live. You find your purpose when you look back on the things and experiences that made you who you are today.

## **What is a Reflective Statement?**

Whether in an academic, business or work environment, reflecting from your past is a good exercise to measure your growth. Writing reflection papers about certain topics is a common exercise especially in the academe. It is a task where students are encouraged to make their own synthesis based on their own understanding about a topic.

A reflective statement, in the academe setting refers to the method in writing that is basically about hindsight that assists students in figuring out how education has helped them grow. It also assess the advantages and disadvantages they have gained from a certain choice they have made.

Reflective statements are also commonly used outside the academic setting. It helps an individual look back on prior decisions and helps him thoroughly think about the outcome if he/she has made a different choice. It can also be used in business to help assess if the business decision made in the past helped the individual grow as an employee/officer.

With your reflective statements, you must be able to determine the importance of your development and consider how it will enable you to improve in your profession.

## **Types of Reflective Statements**

### **Description**

Description is the most basic type of reflective statement. The writer will be tasked to recall the details regarding a certain event/activity and include factors such as what he felt before/during/after the said event, and his preparation prior to the event. This exercise will help the writer determine what he could have done differently to predict the result of those choices and compare the reality from the what ifs.

This exercise will help the writer become more adept in making wiser decisions if the situation arises again. Through this exercise, the writer can exhibit his/her maturity in handling such same situations.

### **Analysis**

An analysis reflective statement requires the writer to dig deeper compared to the description type. It demands and needs more thought and effort in doing so. Just like the description reflective statement, the writer is tasked to recall a past event, however, analysis requires an assessment of how the past event helped shaped the present and the benefits it has given to the writer.

Aside from that, an analysis can also be made through the interpretation of the most significant factors that has led to a certain experience. For example, a new employee may write a reflective statement on the difficulty on the task he is working on and about having a hard time adjusting to his colleagues. He may



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use this approach to determine the attitudes, mannerisms and mindsets to properly perform tasks as well as establishing stronger relationships with colleagues.

## **Synthesis/Judgment**

A synthesis/judgment reflective statement revolves around the reflection on what a certain experience taught an individual and what that certain event meant to him/her. This means analyzing the certain event itself, its outcomes, and the various effects it has brought to the individual. Aside from focusing on the literal and/or physical implication of the decision made on that event, the writer has to explain how that choice affected other aspects of his life as well. It is also an assessment on the improvements brought by that certain event or decision.

For example, an employee can write a synthesis or judgment on his decision to become a fashion designer. However, aside from explaining the economical improvements the decision brought, he also has to explain how that decision made him gain more friends and helped established relationships with other people in the workplace.

## **Goal Setting**

A goal setting reflective statement is somehow connected to the judgment approach, as the writer explains the improvements he has noticed within himself and makes goals afterwards. However, the writer must only set relevant and attainable goals in order to reflect on his growth. Setting up goals that are nearly impossible to achieve (for example, fantasies) is simply setting the writer up for failure. In this approach, it is also recommended to include long-term goals as well as short-term ones to have a well-rounded reflective statement.

## **What Makes a Good Reflective Statement?**

While it may be easy creating a reflective statement about previous ventures, the actual reflective statement may lack depth or may be too stuffy for readers. Translating your thoughts into words can be a very difficult task to do. Here's a short checklist to see if your reflective statement can capture the interest of your readers:

- It is written as a comprehensive and brief narrative that is easy to understand by different audiences.
- It includes at least one of the four approaches as mentioned above.
- It aptly addresses an experience that is relevant for the topic being discussed.
- It is greatly influenced by factual knowledge as well as personal opinions.
- It should not include bias and/or does not skew pertinent data.
- It incorporates new and visionary insights on the discussed topic.
- It exposes the individual's decision making process.