

Self evaluation

So, you've completed your latest project. Well done. But before you move on to the next one, it's a good idea to spend some time reflecting on how well you really did. In other words, you need to evaluate your performance.

Of course you could just say that everything you did was spot on, because you're so cool. And apparently that's a really good way of evaluating on Planet Zog, where everyone's perfect.

But here on Earth, most people find that reflecting honestly on their performance helps a lot to improve their skills for the future.

The first question to ask is, "What did I do well?"

You might have been particularly good at all the planning, which shows great organisational skills.

Perhaps your leadership skills kicked in when you found you were really good at finding solutions to problems. And as for creativity, if you're good at generating ideas, then acknowledge that. Being clear about your strong points gives you the confidence to meet new challenges.

If you were working in a team, make sure you tell your teammates about what you thought they handled well. It makes a big difference to get positive feedback from someone else, and a strong team morale is never a bad thing.

So, having all given yourselves pats on the back for being pretty good at stuff, it's also important to ask, "What didn't go well?"

Knowing your weaknesses can be just as important as knowing your strengths, and don't just think about the problems, think of the solutions.

And always be constructive and considerate when giving feedback.

If you just give someone a long list of their faults, it's difficult for them to take that on board.

Giving negative feedback can be helpful but only if you explain exactly what's wrong and how they can improve next time. When you've evaluated your performance for particular aspects of your plan, next think, "How did we do overall?"

Did you manage to get where you were hoping to get? Or did you end up somewhere else? If you were going to do the whole thing again, would you take a different approach?

Bitesize

And finally, what have you learnt about yourself?

Maybe you're a good coach but you've realised you're even better at things you'd never considered before.

Whatever your strengths, and weaknesses, being able to see them more clearly is always a serious advantage. Well, at least on Planet Earth, that is.