

Module 5: Constants

— The Review Process

Reflection, Feedback, and Feedforward

The review process is essential in ensuring continuous learning, refining scouting accuracy, and improving Talent ID processes over time. Without a structured reflection and feedback mechanism, associations risk repeating mistakes, missing key players, or failing to adapt to evolving player development trends.

By regularly scheduling time for review, analysing errors without blame, and utilising key data points, football organisations can support continuous learning, refine scouting accuracy, and create a more effective and objective system to improve Talent ID.

The review process in Talent ID is not just about assessing what happened—it's about understanding why and using those insights to improve future scouting and decision-making processes. Reflection and feedback are integral to this process because they enable organisations to analyse past decisions, recognise patterns, and implement necessary adjustments for continuous improvement.

Why is it Important to Review the Talent ID Process?

- **Ensures Continuous Learning** – Helps scouts, coaches, and decision-makers refine their evaluation methods.
- **Improves Efficiency and Accuracy** – Identifies what worked well and what didn't, reducing inefficiencies.
- **Minimises Bias and Subjectivity** – Encourages structured reflection to make evidence-based decisions.
- **Adapts to New Trends in Player Development** – Ensures the Talent ID process remains modern and aligned with the evolving game.
- **Enhances Accountability** – Encourages a culture of learning and shared responsibility in scouting and recruitment.

1. Reflecting on Experiences

- Encourage scouts and decision-makers to reflect on their past Talent ID experiences.
- Use structured reflection models to analyse personal observations.
- Discuss what worked well and where challenges arose.

2. Embedding Feedback into the Process

- Gather feedback from multiple perspectives (e.g., scouts, coaches, analysts, players).
- Ensure feedback is specific, constructive, and focused on process improvement.
- Track recurring feedback themes and adjust the Talent ID strategy accordingly.

3. Implementing Feedforward Strategies

- Use lessons learned to refine future scouting and selection approaches.
- Establish best practices for decision-making based on previous reflections.
- Schedule regular review meetings to ensure continuous adaptation and learning.

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1. Reflecting on Experiences

How Reflection Ties into the Review Process

- **Identifying Biases** – Were there patterns in player selection based on unconscious biases?
- **Evaluating Missed Talent** – Were there talented players overlooked due to rigid criteria or flawed evaluation?
- **Comparing Expectations vs. Reality** – Did selected players perform as expected or were there surprises?
- **Assessing Process Effectiveness** – Did the Talent ID approach align with the playing philosophy and development goals?

How to Integrate Reflection into the Review Process

- **Case Study Reflection** – Reviewing past Talent ID successes and failures to identify what worked and what didn't.
- **Personal Reflection Sessions** – Encouraging scouts and coaches to journal their thoughts after scouting assignments.

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle in the Context of Talent ID

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle is a structured model that supports continuous learning and improvement through self-reflection and evaluation. In the context of Talent ID, this model helps scouts, coaches, and decision-makers analyse their scouting and selection processes to refine future talent assessment strategies.

Why Use Gibbs' Reflective Cycle in Talent ID?

- **Encourages Structured Reflection** – Helps MA's analyse what worked and what didn't.
- **Identifies Biases and Inconsistencies** – Ensures better decision-making in future player selections.
- **Supports Continuous Learning** – Enables improvement in scouting and player evaluation strategies.
- **Enhances Alignment across Talent ID teams** – Ensures all stakeholders work within a clear framework.

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How Gibbs' Reflective Cycle Works in Talent ID

This cycle consists of six stages, each guiding scouts and analysts through a structured review and learning process:



Description – What happened in the Talent ID process?

- Outline the Talent ID event (e.g., scouting tournament, academy trials, youth player assessments).
- Describe who was involved (i.e., scouts, coaches, analysts).
- Document key actions taken, such as player observations, video analysis, and data collection.

Example: A football club conducted an U18 scouting event, where 50 players were evaluated. A group of six scouts was responsible for player assessments using predefined scouting criteria.

Feelings – How did the evaluators and stakeholders perceive the process?

- What were the thoughts and emotions of the Talent ID team?
- Were there challenges in the process (e.g., pressure to select players, disagreement between scouts)?
- Did the coaches feel confident in the scouting recommendations?

Example: Some scouts felt confident in their selections, while others expressed concern about missing late-developing players. Coaches questioned whether positional needs were prioritised in the selections.

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Evaluation – What was good and bad about the process?

- What went well (e.g., clear selection criteria, structured evaluation reports, use of data)?
- What were the challenges (e.g., inconsistent player assessments, bias in selections, lack of game footage)?
- Did the scouting process align with the club's playing philosophy?

Example:

Good – The event was well-organised, and each scout followed a structured assessment process.

Bad – Scouts were not aligned on key attributes, leading to discrepancies in player ratings.

Bad – The evaluation of tactical intelligence/game understanding was inconsistent across reports.

Analysis – Why did things happen the way they did?

- Identify causes of successes and mistakes in the Talent ID process.
- Were scouts properly trained on selection criteria?
- Was there sufficient time for player assessments?
- Did bias play a role in decision-making?

Example: The lack of alignment in player evaluation stemmed from scouts having different interpretations of the club's Talent ID criteria. Some emphasised physical attributes, while others focused more on tactical awareness.

Conclusion – What should have been done differently?

- What changes should be made in future Talent ID events?
- How can scouting alignment be improved?
- Should data and video analysis play a greater role in decision-making?

Example: To improve consistency, the club decides that all scouts must attend a pre-event calibration meeting to ensure uniform evaluation standards.

Action Plan – How will improvements be implemented next time?

- Implement new review mechanisms (e.g., post-event debriefs, standardised player rating systems).
- Enhance scout training on the organisation's Talent ID model.
- Utilise data tracking and video analysis to supplement live scouting.

Example:

For the next Talent ID event, the organisation will:

- Provide scouts with pre-event training on evaluation criteria.
- Introduce multi-scout reviews for each player to minimise bias.
- Use tracking data and match footage to complement subjective scouting reports.

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2. Embedding Feedback into the Process

Why Feedback is Essential when Reviewing Talent ID

Feedback provides multiple perspectives on the Talent ID process. While reflection is often internal, feedback is about gathering external input from different stakeholders to gain a broader understanding of what's working and what needs improvement.

How Feedback Ties into the Review Process

- Scouting Team Feedback – Were the scouting criteria and processes clear and effective?
- Coach and Technical Staff Feedback – Did the identified players fit into the playing philosophy and team needs?
- Player Performance Feedback – Did the selected players meet expectations in competitive environments?
- Data and Analytics Feedback – What did the performance metrics reveal about the Talent ID accuracy?

How to Integrate Feedback into the Review Process

- Structured Review Meetings – Include scouts, coaches, analysts, and technical staff to review past selections.
- 360-Degree Feedback – Gather input from different levels, including scouts, development coaches, and performance analysts.
- Feedback Forms and Reports – Standardise templates for scouts and coaches to assess whether scouting reports matched real-world performance outcomes.



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3. Implementing Feedforward Strategies

Why Implementing Feedforward Strategies is Important for Talent ID

By embedding structured reflection and feedback mechanisms into the review process, football organisations can ensure an evolving, data-driven, and highly effective Talent ID framework that remains adaptable to changing player development landscapes.

How Reflection and Feedback Together Improve Talent ID

- Reflection helps individuals analyse their personal decision-making processes and learn from experience.
- Feedback incorporates external perspectives to validate or challenge those reflections.
- Together, they create a complete review cycle that leads to data-backed adjustments and smarter decision-making.

Step	Reflection (Internal)	Feedback (External)	Outcome
Evaluate Past Selections	What did I personally observe about our process?	What do coaches, analysts, and performance data reveal?	Identify inconsistencies and missed talent.
Identify Strengths and Weaknesses	What worked well in my scouting approach?	What patterns did others observe in our selections?	Adjust evaluation methods.
Implement Changes	What will I change in my own scouting approach?	What will the scouting department change as a whole?	Improve Talent ID processes.

Organising the Review Process: Good Practices

- Schedule Regular Reflection and Feedback Sessions – Set quarterly or annual Talent ID review meetings.
- Use Data and Subjective Insights – Balance performance analytics with scout feedback.
- Encourage Open Dialogue – Foster a no-blame culture where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities.
- Integrate Technology – Use scouting databases and tracking systems to store feedback and reflections over time.
- Assign Review Leaders – Ensure someone is responsible for collecting feedback, organising discussions, and implementing improvements.