

Race Reflection Tools

How was your race? Was it terrible? So bad that you just want to forget about it and move on? Or was it so amazing that you can't wait to race again?

Whether you relate to the first scenario, the last, or somewhere in-between, there is always something that can be gleaned from your racing experience. Runners who reflect on their race experience take the opportunity to become smarter runners when they choose to learn from what did and did not go well.

Here are three race reflection tools to help you evaluate your race experience and carry the lessons into future races with you.

1. *What did you learn?*

You can learn a lot from a race. This one question can provide a whole lot of learning. Think about what you learned about your strengths and weaknesses as a runner. What did you learn about yourself from a physical aspect? What did you learn about your race strategy? How was your mental game? What did you learn about yourself as a person?

2. *What went well? What did not go well? What is one thing you want to do differently for the next race?*

These questions provide a solid framework for you to: take forward with you, and continue to do the things that are working well; identify areas where you can improve; concentrate on one thing to try or do differently for the next race.

3. *High – Low – Cheer*

This technique is shared by Julie Foudy, U.S. National Soccer Hall of Famer on the podcast *Finding Mastery* by Michael Gervais. Identify one highlight of the race, what is one thing that you are really proud of? Then, think about one thing that didn't go as well as you would have liked. Brainstorm ways you can handle this scenario differently next time. Lastly, give a shout out to someone who helped you on your journey. Sports and life are not all about you, and it's great to be able to applaud and give thanks to those who help lift you up.

Race reflections can be done with another person such as your coach, teammate, or your parent. You can also write down your race reflections in a journal. The important thing is to take the time to learn from your experiences so that you can continue to grow and improve as a runner. Remember that sometimes we learn the most from a "bad" race, so don't be afraid to dig in!