# Discoveries

## What is it?

A discovery is an experience or insight that will guide/modify how you choose to act in a similar situation next time. It could be on any topic, both in and out of work and should prompt reflection. You may have also come across **lessons learned** sessions after a project, or a collaborative piece of work. However, by the end of a lengthy project, it's easy to forget what you learned at the beginning. How can you be sure you've learned anything at all?

Sharing the experience is essential – if it was a lightbulb moment for you or a time saving discovery, it could be for others too.   In Focus we have found that when you think "I bet everyone knows that already", it's amazing how wrong you can be!

> **Benefits at a glance**
> - Recording a discovery at the time will mean it is easier to remember.
> - Learning from experience and adapting your behaviour will lead you to perform better.
> - Sharing personal insights can build trust in a team.
> - It fosters habits of active listening, reflection and adaptation, which is the cornerstone of continuous improvement.

## When to use it

The phrase "every day is a school day" holds true – learning opportunities are everywhere. By observing others at work; listening to podcasts or watching TV, whatever it may be, there are so many situations when you may think – *I didn't know that, or why didn't I think of doing it that way*?

A really good way to build Discovery capture into your team's routine is to get into the habit of holding a *Daily Update* – either face-to-face, online or hybrid. The Daily Update template can be downloaded from the Online Toolkit along with an explanation of how to use it, and will ensure that team members are prompted on a daily basis to share, log and reflect on their Discoveries.

## How to use it

Discoveries can be a team activity or you can think about them on a personal level too.

### 1. Log your discoveries

Reflect every day. Don't wait until the end of an activity to look at what you've learnt. Capture discoveries as you experience them – logging them on a simple spreadsheet, including the date, who made the discovery, a brief description and potential actions.

Categorising them by type of discovery: process, customers, behaviours, mind-sets, technology etc., is really useful when you come to review them.

### 2. Review and act

Review and discuss the collected discoveries regularly. This is an ideal time to learn from each other and consider how you need to adapt the next time.

Consider any actions that can help ensure a discovery is incorporated into team best practice or ways of working. Set a date to complete the action, and importantly, don't forget to tell other teams or your customers/stakeholders if your new way of doing something is going to impact them.

| Category | Date | Description of discovery: | What could we do differently? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Miro | 04/05/2025 | Watched a Miro webinar yesterday: There are new formats in Miro, including a **Diagram** format option and using 'Focus mode' you can work on it just like in visio. The shape snapping etc looks better than just using Digramming Tools from the side menu, but there are still limitations. The format concept is trying to organise work into separate 'files' instead of cramming everything onto one Board as we have been doing. May be worth thinking about? | Organise a demo section |
| Technology | 16/05/2025 | Having been using my Epson home printer for months, I have just discovered that the front control panel can be tilted outwards so I don't have to keep crouching down at an odd angle to read the very small screen when trying to change settings/print stuff | Fully read instructions when installing new equipment |
| Learning | 17/11/2025 | Pink (lower wavelength than white noise) noise is amazing for aiding sleep | Check out playlists on Spotify |
| Miro | 27/05/2025 | You need to manually add newer Focus team members to be owners of the 'Spaces' in miro so that they can transfer boards into the spaces. When we added all the team as owners, it only captured the people in the team the time rather than looking on a rolling basis who is on our licence | Update the owners of spaces to include newer team members |
| Technology | 29/05/2025 | There is a way of automatically highlighting a cell in excel (fill colour and/or text colour) based on a word in another cell. Eg. If a discovery is worthy of sharing with a wider audience the word 'NUG' in the Action column automatically adds colour to the discovery cell and changes the text colour - so they are easy to spot in the growing list. | Consider if this type of simple automation could have uses elsewhere? |

*Figure 1: Examples of different types of 'Discoveries' logged by members of the Focus team during the team's Daily Update.*