Reflection and Resilience
Identifying and developing skills of reflection and resilience in conversations with your mentor

Dear SMF mentee,

As part of the Aspiring Professionals Programme, we focus a lot on academic support and helping you to build your employability skills such as networking and communicating in a confident and professional manner. Another key component of academic and professional success is the ability to reflect and show resilience in times of difficulty. In fact, this skill is one that employers’ value increasingly – that their employees are able to bounce back from difficulties and failures with composure and determination.

You can use this resource to start thinking about what reflection and resilience means as well as how you can apply this to your own experiences. Your mentor will have had experience of this and is well-placed to support you with this task as a mature professional.

Best wishes,

The SMF Team
**Task 1**

Research a business person in your career sector, or a public figure that you admire, who has a story of struggle and success. To consider how they developed a sense of resilience, fill in the 4-part story structure below:

1) **This is a story about...**
Introduce the central character of your story here, and say a bit about them.

2) **The adversity faced is...**
Describe the adversity faced by your character. What setbacks, struggles or failures have they faced?

3) **What helps here is...**
Consider how the character reacted to this adversity. What strengths and knowledge did they draw upon to respond to the situation?

4) **And that leads to...**
What was the outcome for the central character? What success or resolution did they enjoy, that they might not have had without demonstrating the ability to reflect and be resilient? Would they have achieved their goals without utilising this quality?

**Task 2**

Now apply this structure to a difficulty or failure that you have experience. Your mentor can do this too!

Use this to reflect upon your strengths and how you draw upon your own insight to overcome these setbacks – and identify areas of weakness that you can work upon and develop to improve your resilience in the future.

**Useful links:**

- [TED Ideas: 8 Tips to help you become more resilient](https://www.ted.com/talks/edith_topper_8_tips_to_become_more_resilient)
- [Psychology Today: Resilience](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/resilience-insider/)