**Personal and Professional Development**

***Unit 4***

**Learner Support Handbook**





Introduction

This workbook and the various activities within it, introduce you to the principles of managing personal and professional development:

Key skills are explored that will enable you to confidently tackle these elements of your role or future role as a senior administrator or even as a line manager.

The activities will require you to consider theories and ideas that align with each topic but, importantly, you will be expected to make parallels with your own experience in the workplace, which will help in ensuring that you can lead and manage your team effectively.

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| 1. Be able to identify personal and professional development requirements | 1.1 Compare sources of information on professional development trends and their validity  1.2 Identify trends and developments that influence the need for professional development  1.3 Evaluate their own current and future personal and professional development needs relating to the role, the team and the organisation |
| 2 Be able to fulfil a personal and professional development plan | 2.1 Evaluate the benefits of personal and professional development  2.2 Explain the basis on which types of development actions are selected  2.3 Identify current and future likely skills, knowledge and experience needs using skills gap analysis  2.4 Agree a personal and professional development plan that is consistent with business needs and personal  objectives  2.5 Execute the plan within the agreed budget and timescale  2.6 Take advantage of development opportunities made available by professional networks or professional bodies |
| 3 Be able to maintain the relevance  of a personal and professional  development plan | 3.1 Explain how to set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) objectives  3.2 Obtain feedback on performance from a range of valid sources  3.3 Review progress toward personal and professional objectives  3.4 Amend the personal and professional development plan in the light of feedback received from others |

Utilise a professional discussion to meet these criteria

Complete attached appendices

***Managing Personal and Professional Development***

**Professional Development:**

Is a term describing the means of supporting people in the workplace to understand more about the environment in which they work, their role and how they can become more effective. It is an ongoing process of learning that spans an individual’s working life.

The workplace is changing rapidly and the pace of change is accelerating. Professional people need to keep abreast of changes that affect the way they work in areas such as the law, social and economic development, technological advances, environmental and political issues.

**Personal Development:**

Is a term that often refers to development of soft skills (e.g. assertiveness) – which can enhance employees’ career prospects and enable them to feel on top of their job. Also, it can relate to more general development that may or may not have direct relevance to your current role.

Personal development includes personal growth, change, improvement, and advancement. The scope of personal development

is broad and as the word ‘personal’ implies, it is about focusing on what matters to you, albeit our personal qualities, which can be enhanced through personal development, have a big impact in the workplace. In other words, personal qualities are highly relevant to success at work. There is a close link between personal development and professional development.

It can be a requirement of professional bodies to undertake a clearly defined number of days or hours of continuous professional development to retain membership of the body. Engaging employees in professional and personal development can be stimulating for them but also brings multiple dividends to the organisation that has a workforce with well-honed and current skills.

***Identifying Personal and Professional Development Requirements***

There are numerous ways of identifying requirements for personal and professional development, including:

* Skills gap analysis ***See appendix A***
* Training needs analysis ***See appendix B***
* SWOT analysis ***See appendix C***
* Environmental scanning – looking at what is changing in the world and planning
* professional development to enable you to meet the new challenges ***See appendix E***
* Professional development trend analysis.

**Professional Development Trend Analysis**

Trend Analysis is the exercise of collecting and collating relevant information and making comparisons to identify a trend or pattern in the information. The trends are

likely to indicate where effort should be concentrated in supporting professional development - providing of course that the trend is in line with your own organisation’s goals.

Naturally, when making decisions as to where to concentrate professional development initiatives, it is important that the sources are reliable and valid – i.e. based on sound research and factually correct. It is all too easy, for example, for web-based information to appear highly credible with the look and feel of the particular site camouflaging inauthentic information.

The main point to be made here is that some sources are known to be more reliable than others. Well-recognised professional bodies are one example of sources that exist to support the interests of members and the profession they serve. Consequently, they are a good source of valid information regarding professional development. Similarly, well-recognised trade or professional journals often have good validity, as do some quality newspapers. Research published in academic journals is a strong source of robustly researched and well-articulated trend analysis.

**Professional Development Plans**

Managers and staff members that are committed to developing themselves tend to have Personal/Professional Development Plans (PDP). The classic PDP is simply a form of action plan and typically sets out the following:

* The areas(s) for development: what do I need to learn?
* How the learning might be achieved: training, on-the-job learning, secondment or a combination of appropriate interventions?
* The support or resources that will be required to enable learning to take place, time off from work for study, study materials, registration fees?
* How much it will cost the organisation and/or the individual to complete the learning?
* Success criteria, the criteria by which it will be determined whether the learning has been successful: achievement of objectives, appraisal, obtaining a qualification?
* The proposed start and end dates; and, review dates, which will enable progress to be assessed.

**The Benefits of Personal and Professional Development**

*Benefits to you might include:*

* Your job performance improves;
* Improving career prospects by gaining new skills and achieving additional qualifications
* Being able to responding confidently to changing conditions at work
* Achieving promotion
* Changing career
* Fulfilling the stipulations for membership of professional bodies
* Re-honing of unused or forgotten skills
* Deepening and broadening your understanding of developments in your specialisation;
* Developing your knowledge of your working environment
* Achieving greater levels of personal satisfaction
* Networking opportunities and re-energising and invigorating experiences.

*Benefits to the organisation might include:*

* Potential for improved profitability
* Provision of encouragement and support for professional development makes it easier to recruit and retain talented employees
* Helps in informed decision making
* Brings fresh perspectives to the workplace
* Improved morale leading to higher productivity
* Improved ideas generation
* Making the organisation more adaptable and agile in responding to, and pre-empting market changes.

***Appendix D***: Complete the PDP

**Selecting Different Types of Professional Development**

For development activities to be optimally effective, they need to be suited to the individual(s) undertaking the development.

You may need to consider issues such as:

* The delivery method;
* Time away from productive work
* The amount of work involved
* The recognition and transferability of any qualification awarded
* The learning style of the participant(s)
* The cost
* The duration of the training
* Travel and accommodation
* The relevance of the development in relation to organisational goals
* The business case for return on investment.

One major factor to look at when selecting any form of professional development is the relevance of it and is the course CPD approved?

In deciding what methods of development are most appropriate for personal and professional development there are numerous options available.

***See Appendix E:***

**Development Needs and Skills Gap Analysis**

At a practical level, managers who wish to identify individual, or collective training and development needs could follow a simple 6-step approach to training needs analysis.

The ROGUE approach requires managers to:

**R**eview … team members' job descriptions

**O**bserve… team members at work

**G**ather… additional data (e.g. performance metrics)

**U**nderstand and unpick… the data, sifting it to determine what is important

**E**ngage… with team members to agree an Action Plan/Personal Development Plan

While ROGUE lends itself particularly well to individual training needs analysis, the amalgamation of the data collected for several team members can soon create a picture of potential collective training needs. For example, staff working in a customer call centre might all report or indicate a need for customer service training to learn how to better handle customer complaints.

A skills gap analysis involves defining the skills and knowledge required for a role or future role and then comparing an individual’s current skills and knowledge to the requirement. On the basis of the analysis, a plan is created to fill the identified skills and knowledge gaps.

**SWOT Analysis**

Perhaps the simplest method of establishing training needs is to undertake a SWOT analysis. ***See appendix C***

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats – is easy to use. Simply create a grid and list what you think are:

* Your strengths – what are you good at?
* Your weaknesses – what do you not do very well?
* Your opportunities – what skills might you need or want to develop for the future?
* Your threats – what could stop you developing and addressing your weaknesses?

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| Skill Requirement | Current abilities and duties relating to skill requirement | Score |
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***Appendix A*** Skills gap analysis

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| **Key: Criteria to adjudge competence** | |
| 1 | NO current skill or knowledge |
| 2 | some awareness but not sufficiently competent to use it |
| 3 | some level of competency as familiar with and able to use the knowledge or skill |
| 4 | high level of competency as proficient in the knowledge or skill and able to show others how to use it |
| 5 | fully competent as expert with a high degree of skill and/or comprehensive knowledge |

***Appendix B*** Training analysis

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of staff member | Job title | What is the identified learning need? | How will you meet the learning need? | What will be achieved from the learning? | How will the achievements be monitored and when? | What is the impact on the setting?  (Review at intervals of 3,6 and 12 months) |
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***Appendix C*** SWOT Analysis

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| The current picture | |
| *Strengths:* | *Weaknesses:* |
| The future picture | |
| *Opportunities:* | *Threats:* |

***Appendix D***: professional Development Plan (SMART)

| What do I want or need to learn? (Specific) | How will I know when I have achieved this? (Measurable) | What will I do to achieve this? (Achievable) | What resources/support will I need? (Realistic) | Review dates (Timescale) |
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***Appendix D***: professional Development Plan – Review

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| Activity undertaken | Outcomes | How this has assisted your development | Any on-going actions required |
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***Appendix E***

Consider the following list of options for personal development. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of each and score each option on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is not appropriate for you in your current circumstances and 10 is highly appropriate for you.

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| Development Method | Advantages | Disadvantages | Applicability  Score  1=low, 10=high |
| Having more  challenging work  delegated to you |  |  |  |
| Short periods of work  Shadowing |  |  |  |
| Specific short  courses/workshops |  |  |  |
| Web-based learning  Modules |  |  |  |
| Reading materials |  |  |  |
| Observation of a peer |  |  |  |
| Mentoring |  |  |  |
| Coaching by internal  Coach |  |  |  |
| Coaching by external  Coach |  |  |  |
| Internal formal/  informal training and  or development  programmes |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Development Method | Advantages | Disadvantages | Applicability  Score  1=low, 10=high |
| External training and or development  Programmes |  |  |  |
| Distance learning  Courses |  |  |  |
| Professional  Qualifications |  |  |  |
| Inclusion on a working  Group |  |  |  |
| Responsibility for a  new area of work |  |  |  |
| Secondment |  |  |  |
| Job swaps |  |  |  |
| Servicing or  supporting a  committee |  |  |  |