

# PGDRD

## Resource Book

# 01

## Soft Skill

# Personal Development and Communication

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Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development

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**PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND  
COMMUNICATION**

## **Personal Development and Communication**

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## SECTION ONE

# Develop Self-Awareness

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## 1.1 The Concepts Of Self-Management

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If you are effective as a manager, then you and your organization will benefit. On the other hand if you are ineffective as a manager, any deficiencies that you have can potentially translate into inefficiencies within your organization. It is therefore important for you to take control of your own development as a manager to ensure that you are able to address your weaknesses in your management skills and build further on your strengths.

Self-management is an essential skill for an effective manager. It will help you in your work role and therefore it will help you develop and benefit the organization you work for. It is important to remember that as a manager you have a critical role to play, which underpins the work of the organization, so if you have weaknesses, these may translate into weaknesses for the organization as a whole, creating a barrier to efficiency.

As a manager you have a range of different skills and attributes that are critical to your role. You will need to be able to manage time, communicate effectively with colleagues and staff, make decisions, delegate, maintain effective relationships with customers and manage all the technical requirements associated with your job. These are all aspects of your job role that will need to be managed as part of a self-development program.

So to initiate the process of self-development it is important that you are aware of some of the self-development techniques that have been developed to help managers manage the process. We will now look at a range of self-assessment techniques before giving you the opportunity to start to apply those most relevant to yourself and your work role.

### 1.1.1 Personal construct

Self-assessment is all about identifying and understanding who we are and what makes us function. The Personal Construct Psychology was developed in 1955 by George Kelly. He recognized that we all see the world differently. He felt that personal identity is developed by the way we ‘anticipate’ the world, by trying to make sense of it using our past experience. We therefore use what we know to ‘construct’ theories, to explain things that happen. If something unexpected happens, we then ‘reconstruct’ our views in the light of this, and therefore learn through our experience.

Kelly suggests that we have ‘core constructs’; those which are more personal to us. ‘Peripheral constructs’ may be about others and our environment, and even about our self, but the ‘core constructs’ are those that

define our identity. He felt that when these constructs are challenged, then we begin to feel anxiety.

Change can often bring anxiety. As you reflect on who you are, and how you function, some of these constructs may be challenged. As you begin to receive feedback from others, you may find that things are not the way you thought them to be. Work through these feelings. Knowledge is always power, and even when faced with our own failings, we can use this to develop ourselves in order to reach our own potential.

### 1.1.2 The johari window

To be able to self-manage we need to be able to assess ourselves, who we are and how we think. The Johari Window is a tool that can be used to support this process.

This model represents a matrix of our personal awareness. It also looks at how interaction with those around us can change our self-awareness. American Psychologists, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram (1950's) developed the Johari Window. The name was an amalgam of their names; Jo and Hari. This window model can be used as a self-assessment technique, and helps us to understand the elements that there are that make up our own knowledge of ourselves, and the possibility of the development of that self-awareness.

	Known to Self	Unknown to Self
Known to Self	Open/Free Area (1)	Blind Area (2)
Known to Self	Hidden Area (3)	Unknown Area (4)

#### Open/free area (1)

This area has the information that both you and others know about yourself. In a new team, this area will be small, but the aim is that as you get to know each other better, this area will increase. This can be increased by sharing with others, and listening to feedback about yourself. This area can be increased both by developing area 1 into area 3 where others will find out more about you, and area 2, where others will share things about your performance that you may be unaware of. You will recognize that this can be a painful process and you need to trust the people you share with. Obviously, any feedback needs to be honest but constructive, and developmental.

#### Blind area (2)

This area has the information that is known by others, but is unknown by yourself. We may find it hard to recognize to begin with, that there might be things that only others know about us. Think about this area as the

issues that we haven't recognized yet. These may be in our subconscious. We can often recognize things that are the truth about us when they are shown to us. We may have been giving the team good ideas for a while before recognizing that we are an 'ideas person'. We all have hidden potentials and weaknesses, and with more knowledge we may come up with strategies to develop these areas.

### **Hidden area (3)**

This area has the information that is known to ourselves but is hidden to others. These will include hidden agendas, undeveloped potentials, emotions, fears etc. This area is a natural area to have. No one should share everything with everyone, but there may be information that is work related that could be moved to the known areas.

### **Unknown area (4)**

This area includes information that is unknown both to ourselves and others. This area has hidden potentials, feelings etc that we are completely unaware of. Do you recognize that in an emergency (or in a new situation), we will sometimes surprise ourselves by the way we react. An example would be a person who has lived a quiet normal life, but has been heroic in a situation where others were threatened. As we become more self-aware, this area will decrease. We may begin to recognize why we act in the way that we do. Has a childhood event effected how we live now? Perhaps bullying has left us with a legacy of lack of confidence, or an inability to trust others. The ability to understand ourselves gives us the tools to develop strategies to challenge ourselves and achieve our own personal goals.

The Johari window, and the theory behind it, suggests that we have different areas of our lives; some which are open to others and others which are hidden to others, or even to ourselves. It seems to promote self-disclosure, however it is important to be wise in how much we disclose to others. We need to be open enough to others to promote good relationships, but also not cross the bounds of appropriateness. It could be said that extending the blind area, i.e. getting to know more about ourselves, both through the insight of others; and the hidden area, i.e. being more aware of our own motivations, is more useful to us.

The Johari window has more impact as an awareness tool, recognizing that we are not a product of what we know about ourselves. We are a sum of our knowledge, the knowledge of others, and of hidden potentials. The benefit of this knowledge comes when we try to collect information about ourselves, and grow in understanding of who we are, 'warts and all'. Knowledge is power. We can develop those areas that we are weak at, and cultivate our strengths. We may find that we intimidate our colleagues

because of our body language, which may be due to our own insecurities. This information can help us to overcome such barriers.

*PLEASE NOTE that by the very nature of this self-analysis, occasionally hidden emotions and pain may be disclosed. It may be that you need to consider professional help if dealing with these issues. Also find a trusted friend who you can rely on to support you at this time.*

### **1.1.3 Swot analysis**

It is not always easy to look at our own effectiveness with a clear and unbiased attitude. SWOT is tool that can be used to analyze ourselves. (It can also be used to analyze an organization).

**S** looks at Strengths

**W** looks at Weaknesses

**O** looks at Opportunities and

**T** looks at Threats.

This tool can be used to provide a general analysis. You should consider:

#### **Strengths**

What are your strengths in terms of:

- The specific skills you have
- The resources you possess (knowledge, expertise etc.)

#### **Weaknesses**

What are your weaknesses in terms of:

- Any deficiencies you have
- The specific skills you lack
- Any particular resources you lack (knowledge, resources etc)
- The constraints you face (rules, procedures, timing, conflicting roles)

#### **Opportunities**

What opportunities you have in terms of:

- Resources to support you in your role

- Environmental factors that will be helpful to you (media, people's perceptions)
- New openings in the development opportunities
- New technologies New staff and staff motivation
- New ways to diversify

### Threats

What threats do you face in terms of:

- Legislative changes that are in the pipe-line
- New competitors
- Skills and competence shortages (self and staff)
- Staffing changes
- Negative staff attitudes
- Job uncertainty

By working through this process you will be able to develop a picture of yourself and your qualities. These in turn will be useful for you in determining your individual needs and the actions that you and others can take to address them.

SWOT Analysis (Activity)
<p>Complete a SWOT analysis and list your own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?</p> <p>The focus of your analysis should aim to cover your role as a manager, making reference to your own personal traits.</p> <p>From your analysis you should identify your own development needs.</p>

After you have undertaken the SWOT analysis, you might decide that you have a need to develop areas of your personality, or abilities. If this is the case, you may have to do some training, reading or undertake reflection of some kind.

## 1.2 How We Learn

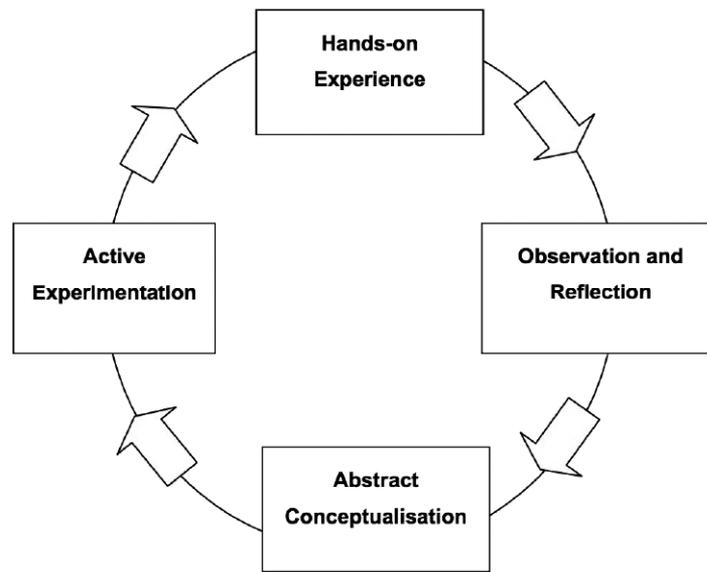
### 1.2.1 Learning cycle

Everyone learns in his or her own way. If you talk to a colleague, the

chances are they have their own individual method for absorbing, retaining and then using information. And it's probably very different to your method. Much has been done in the way of theory to analyse how we learn and there are some useful principles that trainers can use to improve the quality of their training.

One of the best-known learning theories is the Learning Cycle.

**Consider the Kolb Cycle which identifies:**



- **Hands-on Experience:** Taking action, or experiencing an activity
- **Observation and Reflection:** Thinking about this experience – looking carefully at what happened
- **Abstract Conceptualization:** Making sense in your own mind of what happened
- **Active Experimentation:** Testing what has happened, and planning your next step

The Learning Cycle suggests that learning happens when the person being trained shows that they have grasped the subject, made sense of it in their own interpretation, and then used their new knowledge.

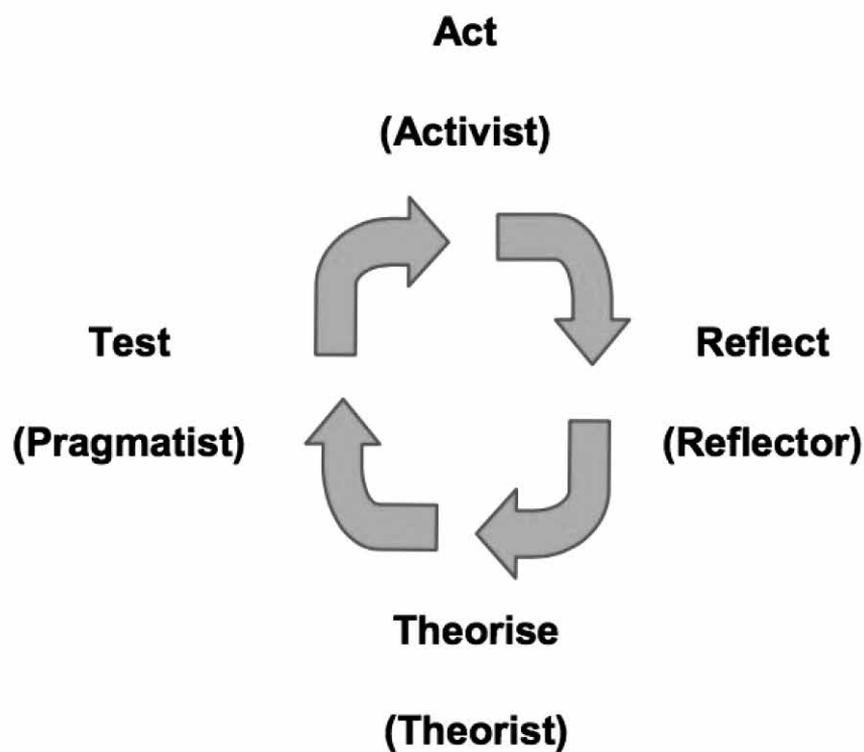
The best way to explore this theory is to illustrate it with an example. Cast your mind back to a time when you had to learn something new. It's a good idea to pick a practical incident, perhaps when you had to learn how to use a computer or drive a car. Alternatively, think about how a

small child learns that putting their hand near a fire for the first time will hurt them, and so they avoid doing it again.

### 1.2.2 Learning styles

Taking this theory one step further, it's been suggested that each of us has a preference for one of the four stages of the Learning Cycle. This doesn't necessarily mean that we learn better by receiving training that only focuses on one element. But it means that we each have a preferred way of learning, called a "learning style".

Learning styles are linked to the Learning Cycle as follows:



Each of the four types of learners ~ Activist, Theorist, Pragmatist and Reflector ~ has their own characteristics. You can learn more about each of them by looking into the work of Peter Honey and Alan Mumford, who developed the idea. In simple terms however, Honey and Mumford characterized learners and attributed the following behavioral descriptions.

**Activists** ~ learn best from activities where they encounter new problems, experiences and opportunities. They enjoy the here and now and often thrive on crisis situations. They love to be thrown in the deep end and have a go.

**Reflectors** ~ the preference here is more of a back seat role. Reflectors like to stand back on the edge of activity and observe what is going on from different perspectives. They are usually good at data collection and will make a thorough analysis in their own time.

**Theorists** ~ They like concepts, models, theory, systems and the opportunity to explore interrelationships. They like to be challenged intellectually and they tend to have analytical minds.

**Pragmatists** ~ A preference to relate learning to one's own position. They look for the earliest opportunity to implement what they have been taught. They are practical down to earth individuals who enjoy problem solving and making practical decisions. They focus on implementation and output.

There is a questionnaire that has been designed for learners, so that they can diagnose their preferred learning styles. Scoring using this questionnaire may identify someone who scores highly in all four areas, but most people will display preferences as well as under developed styles.

Think about how you prefer to learn. Do you like to be part of a group with plenty of discussion and involvement? Or would you prefer to be on your own, reading a book? Do you enjoy role-plays?

So what's the point of all of this? Well, the idea is that if you know your preferred learning style then you can undertake training that suits your style.

This theory of learning styles can be useful as once we recognize our preferred learning style; we can tailor-make our future learning. We can also recognize that our colleagues will also have their own learning styles, and any development activities should take this into consideration.

So why is learning important to you as a manager? Theory tells us that learning is: "A permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of an experience."

We can see that learning can happen in a variety of situations, whether formally as part of a training or coaching session, or a classroom; or informally as a result of the experiences we have in daily life.

Having identified the meaning of "learning" we can see that a learning need is brought about when there is a requirement to change behavior. Of course, change doesn't necessarily mean correction. It also means development, improvement, growth, progression and expansion.

Let's use some examples to illustrate this.

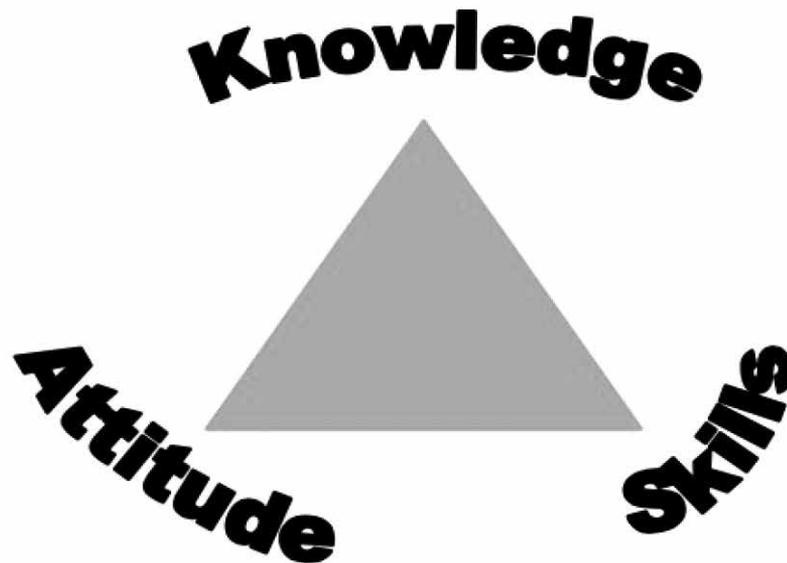
1. In an educational sense, the requirement for change could be for an individual to expand their knowledge through learning how to do mathematical equations.
2. In the workplace, the requirement for change could be for a colleague to improve their knowledge of handling a piece of equipment.

In both examples, the learning need has arisen because of the requirement to change behavior.

So far, we have talked about the need to change behavior. Behavior means acting in a specific way, so it's quite a general term and we need to be more precise. For self-development you need to decide on how to use learning experiences to change:

- Knowledge ~ getting information, retaining and recalling it
- Skills ~ performing a task
- Attitude ~ taking an approach

**KSA** - This is the training triangle:



Examples of each of these are as follows:

- **Knowledge** ~ recognizing the correct piece of equipment to use in a particular situation or returning to a particular location or site

- **Skills** ~ handling a dispute or disagreement, using or repairing a piece of machinery
- **Attitude** ~ being considerate or flippant

The three points of the triangle are interrelated. Knowledge without skill is useless in a practical sense. In the real world, we would be less successful at doing our jobs if we only knew the theory behind them and had never had any practice. And of course, our attitude constantly influences how we use our knowledge and our skills.

### 1.2.3 Approaches to learning

We all have an approach to learning which we may or may not recognise. An approach to learning is the way we look at any learning we need to undertake. This will depend on many factors:

- how much we recognize the need to learn the particular content in hand
- the time we have in hand to work on our learning
- the benefit that we might get from having undertaken the learning
- how interested we are in the content

The three approaches that are widely recognized are:

1. Surface learning
2. Deep learning
3. Strategic learning

Surface learning is the most basic approach to learning. This is when the content is memorized, often in unrelated sections. A learner with this approach will do what is necessary to achieve, but no more.

Deep learning is when what is learnt can be related to practice, and each area of new learning is related to existing knowledge. The learning with a 'deep approach' will read around a subject, doing more than is needed to achieve a pass mark. Deep learning often comes from an intrinsic motivation of interest in the subject.

Strategic learning is when the learner will strategically organize time and effort to achieve the greatest possible grade or achievement.

Some learners will develop their learning style from surface learning, through to deep learning, as they become independent learners, but this

is not always the case. Reflect on the approach you are using to achieve this course. Are you reading through this course, taking the opportunities for further research and working through the activities? Alternatively, you may be reading through the content quickly, reading the activity and research boxes, but not completing the required tasks.

As part of your reflection, think about your approach to learning in general. If you are a surface learner, are there reasons for this?

### 1.2.3 Learning needs

Having considered learning it is important to now think about your own development. A learning need is where there is a requirement to change knowledge, skills or attitude. For you as an individual, learning needs will be in line with the **KSA** triangle and are likely to arise for a variety of different reasons.

Consider the following:

**Targets/goals/performance** - You may not be achieving the targets/goals expected of you. The reasons for this could be various, from poor time keeping, or personal problems, to a failure to understand sufficiently what you are required to do.

**Change in job role** - Broadly speaking, a change in job role will create learning needs. Managers are a prime example ~ individuals who have excelled in their roles and been asked to lead others in their work. Flattering though this is, one doesn't become a manager without learning how to be one.

**Workplace** - For example: a change in workplace or work situation may stimulate a learning need.

**Equipment/Technology/Procedures/Rules** – Modern working methods are demanding constant

change in these areas, so you will continuously learn to adapt and update.

**Legislation/regulations** - Some regulations require individuals (or the companies that contract them) to be regularly trained or tested for competence. As a manager an obvious example which will impact on you is Health and Safety legislation, which is constantly being up-dated.

**New colleagues/team change** - There is a need for a team to capitalize on different skills within it, recognize strengths, manage conflict and work

harmoniously. You as a team leader and team member will need to change to maintain team dynamics.

**Customers/suppliers** - A change in supplier or customer may create a new demand on you requiring new skills and knowledge.

**Business Plans** - Where planning for the future of the business is concerned, there is often associated learning needs. It may be that there are plans to increase productivity or change outlet. In any event, new people, new ways of working, or even planning for business as usual, can create learning needs.

To conclude then, learning needs for you as a manager are really important as they form the base of all training requirements. They emerge at various times and levels.

Once we are aware of some of the elements that help us to learn, we can take this into account when we need to learn new skills. The closer the match between our preferred learning style, and the style of teaching; the more effective the learning should be.

## 1.3 Skills To Develop

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There are certain key skills that will underpin your role as a manager. This next section of the workbook aims to provide an insight into some of these skills, so you can reflect on where you are personally. As you reflect on your skills, reflect on your strengths and weaknesses. Once areas of weakness have been recognized, you will be able to use strategies to help you to develop these areas. Honest reflection is important. So is the will to improve. As you reflect on your work roles, the areas that you enjoy, as well as the areas that you find difficult, you may see patterns of need that can be addressed. In meeting these needs, you will become more effective and, more than likely, increasingly satisfied with your job.

Specifically, we have introduced the following skill areas:

- Time management
- Delegation
- Managing workload and stress
- Interpersonal communication
- Assertiveness
- Technological skills

It is important to consider your own skill levels so that you can identify your learning needs as a starting point for your own development. Remember however, that your managerial skills should not be considered in isolation. Your work role is likely to be affected by what is going on in your personal life, and your home life will be affected by how satisfying you find your work. These dynamics will change our effectiveness. The skills that we will now look at will need to be looked at regularly to see how we relate to those around us. Pressures on us will vary with deadlines, relationships with colleagues and availability of resources.

### 1.3.1 Time management

Being able to manage time is an essential skill for a manager and something you will need to be confident about. If you have ever thought about the commodity that is in shortest supply in the workplace, apart from money, it is probably time. We recognize the value of team meetings, but far too frequently these are likely to be dropped when we are working towards deadlines. We often drop 'the essential' in place of 'the urgent'. Therefore, as a manager you need to look carefully at how you plan your processes so that you can streamline in order to save time.

Think about the following activities. They are thought to be some of the main timewasters in the workplace:

- Unnecessary meetings
- Lack of priority setting
- Poor delegation
- Poor handling of paperwork
- Taking too long over decision making
- Travelling
- Answering the telephone/emails etc.

Your own situation will be specific to your organization. For instance, one company may have regular prolonged meetings, while others would save precious time by having various teams getting together to discuss a consistent approach to a joint problem.

Computers should save us time, but we are now barraged with emails; all need to be read, and many need answering. Mobile technology allows us to be 'on call' even we are travelling. We can easily be distracted when we should be working on other things. All these issues can erode time, so

it may be a good use of time to look at how much time we spend on each activity during a typical work day.

We have listed below a set of questions to help you reflect on your current ability to manage your time. Take some time to honestly reflect on where you are now, before completing the activity below. Please note that questions listed relate to some of the common symptoms of poor time management.

How good is your time management?

- Do your meetings start on time, or do we waste time waiting for team members to arrive?
- Are meetings effectively managed – how long does each meeting last – is there any wasted time?
- Do unpleasant tasks get left? Would it be more satisfying to clear unpleasant jobs in order to look forward the more satisfying tasks?
- Do you need to hold the meetings that you do? What would be the result if they didn't happen?
- Do your priorities tasks?
- Are there tasks that could more appropriately be undertaken by other members of staff?
- Do you do work at home that is not necessary?

<b>Think about your time management skills!</b>
Complete a detailed time log for a typical week at work. You should record what you do and how long you take to do it. Use the questions above to review your own time management skills and identify areas where you feel your time management skills need to be improved.

### 1.3.2 Delegation

Being able to delegate is a skill which is essential for managers. The art of delegation does not always come naturally. We will find it easy to give an unpleasant or boring task to someone else, but is that always efficient? It can be de-motivating to be 'dumped' with unchallenging and repetitive tasks. A good manager will fit the task to the skills of the available staff, and will look for ways to give responsibility to those around them. A good manager will delegate by empowering staff, enabling them to take on more responsibility. The concept of empowerment will be further explored in the Leadership Workbook.

It is important to recognize the danger that we often think that it would be quicker to do something oneself rather than asking someone else to do it. This is often because we need to train someone before some tasks can be done. To take the time to train someone can obviously be time consuming in the short term, but in the longer term is likely to benefit to both you and your organization.

Delegation is about sharing workload and passing on a certain amount of responsibility to others. To delegate successfully you need to be able to understand your staff. You need to take the time to know their strengths and weaknesses and abilities, so you understand their capabilities, and how they can support the work being undertaken.

To be able to delegate with confidence you need to:

- Be sure about your own abilities
- Be sure about your staff and their abilities
- Know your job role and the job roles being delegated
- Trust your staff and their abilities
- Communicate the requirements of work
- Empower

You should consider these points when you complete the next activity.

<b>How easy do you find it to delegate as a manager?</b>
Keep a work delegation log for a typical week at work. You should record the tasks you delegate and who you delegate to. Compare this to the complete scope of your job role and identify areas where you feel you could delegate more. For these areas, establish a strategy to help improve your ability to delegate. You can return to this strategy as you progress through your development as a manager to see how your ability to delegate improves.

### **1.3.3 Managing workload and stress**

Managers can spend much of their day planning the workload of their staff, but give little thought to their own workload. They have to deal with demands from their own managers, and often have to pass on some of these demands to their own staff. It can be stressful to have to make decisions that may not be popular. It can be upsetting if we feel that we are misunderstood, or actively resented. For some people this can lead to stress, which can be damaging to our health.

Stress is a normal phenomenon, which can be positive, as it can spur us on to action. It is when stress becomes destructive that we need to find strategies for dealing with this. As a manager it is important for you to be able to recognise stress both in yourself but also in your staff. Stress is actually recognized by the Health and Safety Executive as a work hazard and something that we must take seriously. According to the HSE:

- Work-related stress accounts for over a third of all new incidences of ill health.
- Each case of stress-related ill health leads to an average of 30.9 working days lost.
- A total of 12.8 million working days were lost to stress, depression and anxiety in 2004/5.

For employers to comply with Health and Safety law they have a duty to assess the risk of stress-related illness at work.

For you as a manager it is important that you recognise the different symptoms of stress. These include:

- Low self esteem
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Tiredness
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Headaches
- Irritability
- Apathy
- Irrationality
- Blood pressure
- Depression

Stress can be caused by a variety of pressures. For example:

- Change
- Overwork
- Lack of responsibility
- Poor work/life balance
- Inappropriate deadlines

- Jobs that ask for more skills than the staff has
- Job insecurity
- Poor relationships
- Financial insecurity

It is important for you as a manager to be able to recognize occasions when you and your staff become stressed. You should also be aware of the strategies that can be used for limiting the negative impact of stress.

<b>Stress at Work</b>
Produce a brief report that describes the occasions where you have become over stressed at work. Identify your symptoms and the strategies you have used to manage your stress.

### 1.3.4 Interpersonal communication skills

To become an effective manager you will need to develop effective interpersonal communication skills. You will need to communicate in a variety of different ways including:

- Verbally (face-to-face, telephone)
- In writing
- Using electronic communication (texts, emails, web-cams etc)

These are perhaps the most obvious methods and what you would typically associate with communication. These methods however are only the beginning, as we communicate in lots of other ways using non-verbal methods (body language). We all use this less obvious method of communication, but often we use these skills without recognizing that we are doing so. Think of body language. We all pick up and send these messages to each other, using the way we stand, facial expressions, clothing and gestures; all without being consciously aware of this process.

Body language is important to you as manager. It helps you get your message across to colleagues and staff. Being aware of the body language of others can give you an insight into how your staff are responding to you. What does their body language tell you?

To become a manager, you will need to reflect on your ability to communicate and actively develop your communication skills to help facilitate effective communication with colleagues.

Take some time to honestly reflect on where you are now in respect to communication skills.

How good are your communication skills?

- Are you a good speaker?
- Are you a good listener?
- How good are you at interpreting non-verbal messages?
- How good are your written communication skills?
- How confident are you with the telephone?
- How good are you at using email and other forms of electronic communication?

<b>Interpersonal Communications</b>
List the ways in which you communicate as part of your work role. Identify those you feel confident about and those where you feel less confident. For the areas where you feel less confident identify how you intend to further develop your skills.

### **1.3.5 Assertiveness**

Being assertive is a skill that managers need. Being assertive sits between aggression and passivity. This is not an easy balance to achieve, as there is a fine line between being assertive and being aggressive. The real difference is that being assertive is when you state your views without emotion, whereas being aggressive always includes personal emotion.

If you want to be assertive about a situation, you will need to state your position. It may be that you have been asked by a member of staff for resources which are too expensive for the existing budget. It's not productive to be sarcastic, or sharp. You will need to calmly state the impracticality of the request, but suggest some alternative proposals.

As a manager you need to develop the ability to be assertive. To do this you need to be able to develop a full understanding of the methods involved.

### **1.3.6 Technological (ICT) skills**

Increasing, the use of computers is becoming a mainstream part of what we do. As a manager it is likely that you will be expected to use ICT in some way or form to support your work activities. In developing yourself as a manager you need to look carefully at your existing IT skills.

You need to be sure you have the confidence to work effectively with the computers and computer applications you work with to help ensure the efficient use of your time and facilitate a streamlined process. For example you may think that you have a good writing style, but this may be spoiled by an inability to present word processed documents correctly.

## 1.4 Skills recording

Having analyzed your own skills, it might be that you need to take this information and record it in some way. Creating an updated Curriculum Vitae (CV) is an effective way of doing this. It is important to recognize the dynamic nature of a CV. It should be something that is continually developing as you develop. It should be up-dated on a regular basis as you develop yourself. You should record any new training undertaken and new experiences. It may be that you have only thought about your work skills, but we all have other abilities that we use at home or on a voluntary basis, which also need to be included on a CV.

It is good practice to have more than one version of a CV, or at least to modify a CV if you are applying for a new job. All information included needs to be focused towards the new job. Only include relevant information.

It might be that you have a master template which has all courses and skills included, which you could use each time as a basis for a new CV. These need to be professionally presented, short and accurate. Proof-read carefully to ensure that there are no spelling errors. Your CV needs to stand out, either by the quality of the information, or maybe by the style. There is a story of a CV that had a teabag clipped to the corner. This person was interviewed because the interviewer was curious as to why someone should have done this. This is not to be recommended, but does highlight the importance of catching the interviewer's interest so he/she gets the opportunity to see the quality of what you have to offer.

Do not underestimate the importance of transferable skills. These are skills that you possess and use in one area of your life that you could transfer to the workplace. Perhaps you are invited to speak to groups about a particular hobby. Although you may not speak to large groups at work, by including this experience you are showing evidence of your own abilities.

### 1.4.1 Creation of a curriculum vitae (cv)

They should be well presented, with clearly defined paragraphs, and no more than two pages long. Indeed many suggest no longer than one page. Before you start, read the information about the post that you want to

apply for. Focus on the skills and roles that they are asking for.

When developing your CV, you should include the following information.

#### Personal details

- Name, address and contact details
- Personal profile
- Skills and qualities
- Achievements

#### Work experience

- Employment history starting with the most recent. Include the employer's name, when you worked for them, the main duties and the job title. Include voluntary or unpaid work also. Make sure you do not have gaps in your history. If you do have breaks in employment, try to explain this

#### Education and training

- Education starting with the most recent study. Include the university/school etc you went to, the dates you were there and any qualifications/grades you achieved. Add other courses if they are relevant to the post you are applying for

#### Hobbies/interests

- These can tell the employer information about the sort of person you are. Try to keep this specific and brief

#### Additional information

- This is where you can include specific extra information that can help your application. This may include information about gaps in employment

#### References

- Include two references. One should be work related if possible

Finally, do not forget to check spelling and grammar. Make headings bold, but don't make all text bold. Stick to 'Arial' or 'Times New Roman' font for clarity.

## 1.5 Maintaining work-life balance

All workers have an existing work-life balance. This is the balance between the time and effort that we put into our work lives, and the time we have for our home life. This is not always easy to define, as you may have taken work home, or perhaps you check and answer work emails from home also. There was a time when the majority of jobs were 5 days a week and you were expected to work from 9am – 5pm each day. This is not always the case now. You may be required to work on the odd Saturday and on occasions, meetings may last way beyond 5pm.

In the current climate, the speed of change is encouraging workers to take a new look at different models of working. Technology is allowing thousands of staff to work from home. Other new ways of working include part-time positions and job sharing which work alongside the traditional full time positions.

It is said that staff that have a good work-life balance will bring financial benefits to the company. These included lower rates of absenteeism. The London Borough of Camden had a 2.5% reduction in sickness absenteeism in the first year of introducing new procedures of work

The awareness of the importance of a satisfactory work-life balance has been growing over the past few years. Legislation has been implemented in order to support these new initiatives. This legislation has included the ‘Fairness at Work Bill’ which includes working time regulations and parental leave. Maternity leave was extended to both parents including three months unpaid parental leave for either parent up to the age of five. Adoptive parents can also claim this leave. These rights are being updated and extended.

In 2003, a new right to request flexible working was given to parents of children under the age of 6, if it does not have a detrimental effect on the company. The Working Time Directive sets a maximum number of working hours that a worker is allowed to work per week.

Think about your own work-life balance. Recent research has shown us how our work and home-life cannot be separated. Often our work gives us our identity. We say, ‘I am an engineer’. This is why redundancy and retirement can be devastating to many. We take our stresses from work home and our concerns over our family into the workplace.

Think about your own personal balance. On a night out, do you find yourself talking about nothing but work. On holiday, do you have to take mobile phone calls from work? Have you ever cancelled a holiday because of work?

**Consider your own work-life balance.**

Write a report describing how well you balance work with home life. Identify anything you think you should change as a result of your research.

## 1.6 Integrity and ethics

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Another influence on you and how you are as a manager is your integrity and ethics. As a manager you will be expected to make decisions every day. These decisions will be made using your skills and experience and will be influenced by your own priorities. Each decision will have an effect on the organisation and your colleagues, so take time as you work through this section to try to analyse your own priorities and values.

As a manager you will be responsible for the welfare of staff, and some decision making. This is a huge responsibility, so it is important to look at the ethics of the work place. We know that we can influence our colleagues, but we must look at how we do this, and what values guide our behaviour.

We may:

- Be guided by specific rules
- Have our own sense of justice/fairness
- Follow the orders of others
- Follow our individual conscience
- Act out of self-interest
- Choose the way which is most beneficial to the needs of others
- Follow what we feel to be most financially beneficial
- Be put under pressure from our managers
- Pass this pressure on to those who work for us

Rarely will there be a decision that everyone will recognise clearly as having a right or wrong answer. It is difficult to please everyone, as decision making is usually a trade-off between possible considerations. We must try to remain consistent, and try to collect a broad base of information before deciding.

Some writers suggest that we can apply ethical theory to business, while others feel that organisations have their own ethical rules.

Consider the following questions and how you feel about them:

- Is there a behaviour that might be acceptable in business that would not be acceptable in everyday life?
  - Is there a point where ‘profit at any cost’ must stop?
  - Is it acceptable to use business practices in one country that would not be acceptable in another, e.g. giving and taking bribes?
4. Which group would you feel most responsible to?
1. Customers
  2. Shareholders
  3. The local community
  4. Work colleagues
  5. Employees
  6. Your family
  7. The environment
  8. Your religious/faith/belief group

By reflecting on these questions you start to be able to gain an understanding of your own values and ethics. Many organizations have looked at producing a ‘Statement of Aims’, or a ‘Mission Statement’. This gives an opportunity for discussion about what the focus of the organization should be. It provides an opportunity for people to gain an insight into what motivates an organization. For example: Is the main aim to create the best tyre in the world, to increase profits, or to open a new plant each year?

<b>Think about what ‘integrity’ means to you?</b>
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Identify the values held by the organization you work for. Write a report which compares these values with your own individual values.
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## 1.7 Conclusion

We have looked at self-analysis techniques by undertaking several self-analysis activities, and hopefully you will have more of an understanding of who you are, and how you operate, than when you started. This is an important first step in the development process leading towards your HNC in Management and in the development of your skills as a manager.

Remember we change with age and circumstances. As we become more aware of ourselves, we may become more sensitive to others, and therefore more responsive to their needs, knowing who can take responsibility

and who will need more support. Unfortunately, although it is beneficial to have an understanding of our own strengths and weaknesses, this is not enough, and we need to use this information to make the most of these strengths and work on our areas that need development.

<b>Self-Review</b>
Based on the techniques we have introduced in this first section provide a summary self-assessment describing yourself in terms of work, career, ethics and personal goals. You may want to summarize your findings on a CV.  You should introduce the different tools you have used as part of yourself review.

## SECTION TWO

# Implement A Personal Development Plan

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## 2.1 Continuous Professional Development

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Continuous Professional Development (CPD) looks at the nature of management development. This should be a continuous process, as well as an attitude of mind. This can effectively build on our self-analysis which you will have undertaken in the first section. If we are willing to look for new ways to learn, we will be flexible and will embrace positive change. We also need to recognize that it is not always easy to face new challenges, but if we see ourselves as ‘lifelong learners’ we will be able to deal with an ever-changing workplace environment and the challenges that this brings. If we are to move with the tides of change, and not to become stagnant, we need to look at how we can continue to grow and develop, not just in our professional role, but in our personal outlook. Some professional bodies will require members to undertake regular training to update their qualifications and to ensure competence. We need to look for opportunities to update our competencies in the workplace.

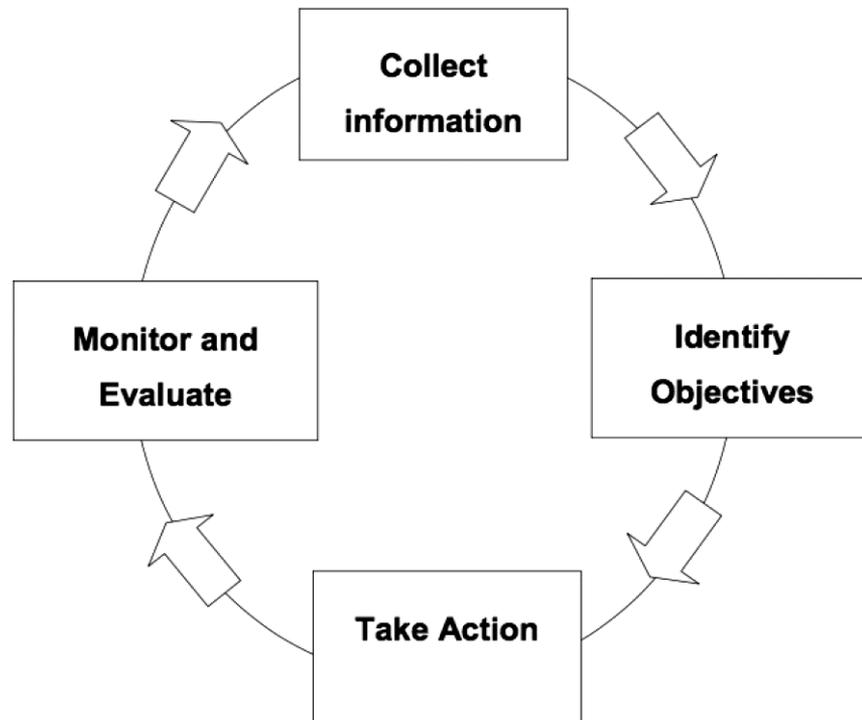
Can you find a mentor in the work place? They can encourage and support the professional development of their colleagues. Hopefully, mentors will be more experienced members of staff who will listen and encourage independent learning. Also, make sure that the mentor you choose not only has experience, but has the skills needed to share that knowledge. Don’t forget that they need spare time to take on this role! It could be your line manager, but this may not always be appropriate. Find someone with the time and honesty that you will need for this process to be effective. Above all, you need to respect their judgement, or have the strength of relationship to challenge and discuss their advice. Personal development will come not only from the learning process, but from the reflection on the process undertaken.

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## 2.2 Personal Development Planning

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Personal development planning is a tool that you can use to achieve your ambitions and overcome your weaknesses. You can look at those ambitions that you have, and look at the steps that you need to take to achieve these ambitions. The diagram below looks at the process we are embarked upon.



In section One we looked at tools that can be useful in identifying our skills, and understanding our own values. In other words, we collected information. In this section, we will be taking this information and then planning and undertaking a personal development plan. In this section we are going to look at ‘Identifying Objectives’ and ‘Taking Action’.

Often we can launch into development without enough reflection, but these sections will help us understand the importance of setting achievable goals.

We can think about what we want to achieve, but we must analyse, plan and then take action. When we start to look at what we want to achieve, we need to keep an objective view of our own skills and weaknesses. This is difficult, and we may need help from others.

We may already know what our goals are. They may be personal hopes, or something that is connected to our work role or our career. For others, we may not have thought about where we want to be in five years’ time. We have reacted to opportunities and changes. Think about being proactive; this means looking at what we want to do next, and taking the steps to get there.

As you have worked through some of the self-analysis techniques in section One, there will be areas that you recognise that need development. Prioritise these areas. It may be that you have recently been given an increased workload, and therefore Time Management is a priority, or

a new computer system has been installed in your office, and you have training needs in this area. If your needs are prioritised, you will be able to make more effective use of your development time.

<b>Ambitions</b>
<p>Think about yourself in five years' time. What are your ambitions? Make some notes on the following.</p> <p>What factors have influenced your career to date? Where do you see yourself then, both with your career and personally? Where would you like to be? What would you like to be doing? What would you need to do/change to make these things possible?</p>

## 2.3 Objective Setting

Goals/objectives are critical to any PDP as they provide direct links to our learning. Remember this is the second stage of the learning and development cycle which underpins your PDP planning. With a PDP it is important to remember that our objectives will be as individual as our motivations. We are a product of many factors. Psychologists have their own views of what makes us who we are. These include:

1. Culture and beliefs
2. Personal identity
3. Life experiences
4. Upbringing/genetics etc
5. Education

Objectives are important to your development as they represent statements about what you want to achieve, and the level that is required. They will always relate to one or more of the three components of the training triangle, knowledge, skills or attitude. It is important that objectives are clear.

It is worth noting that in applying the trainer's triangle it is easier to obtain a measurable objective associated with the development of knowledge and skills. Changing attitudes can be quite difficult and is far more subjective.

When you are developing your objectives the concept of SMART will be helpful to you. You may have come across it before on one of the other workbooks. In respect to personal development plans, it is a simple model for making sure an idea is business like and clever.

**SMART** is an acronym and stands for:

<b>Specific</b>	Clear and concise
<b>Measurable</b>	A mechanism for assessing the “before and after”
<b>Achievable</b>	Realistic and within the timescale, budget and abilities of the delegates
<b>Relevant</b>	A good business case, and of relevance to the delegates in their roles
<b>Time-scaled</b>	“by the end of the course”, “at the end of the training”, “at regular intervals after the training has taken place”

If your aims and objectives fit this model, then they are SMART and enable your development to be measured for effectiveness. And ultimately, of course, objectives must address your learning needs.

If you regard personal development as a commercial function, it’s easier to see why measurement of effectiveness is so relevant. You would not purchase a piece of equipment or employ a person without reviewing the contribution made to a business after an allowed period.

Objectives can only be designed after an analysis of learning needs has been carried out, and they then become the mechanism against which learners, the course and the trainer will all be measured.

We may find that we have some skill in a particular area, but not as much as we need to fulfil our role. Sometimes numerically grading a skill is useful. We may think that our skill is 0/10. We may want to develop this so that we improve to 4/10. We may find it easier to identify small achievable tasks. If we feel that we have no computer skills, quantifying a small task, such as being able to create a word-processed letter, would be a good step.

Having set a target with your objectives you can look back after your development activities to see whether you have met your target, exceeded it or missed. Each of these scenarios would give you cause for further reflection and action.

This is why objectives must be SMART. You can use them to show to your client or manager that you improved in your job. Or, if they have not been met, you can use them to discuss the plan of action going forward.

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## 2.4 Designing Your Development Plan

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At the development stage we have spoken about the need to know your learning needs. We have then linked it to objectives. In summary, this initial work will have allowed you to establish where you need to go. It will also have given you some food for thought regarding the learning methods you should pursue to best achieve your personal objectives.

As a learner it is important for you to consider how best you can achieve your objectives with the tools you have available. This again will link back to the work you completed in section one, regarding learning styles.

We will now spend some time looking into the important period of time you spend preparing your development plan. There is no right or wrong formula for preparation. The answer is to allow yourself sufficient time to develop an approach that will achieve your overall goal.

There are some steps that you need to go through that relate to what you will do when you design yourself a development plan, and it is these that we are about to explore. These give you a foundation for preparation.

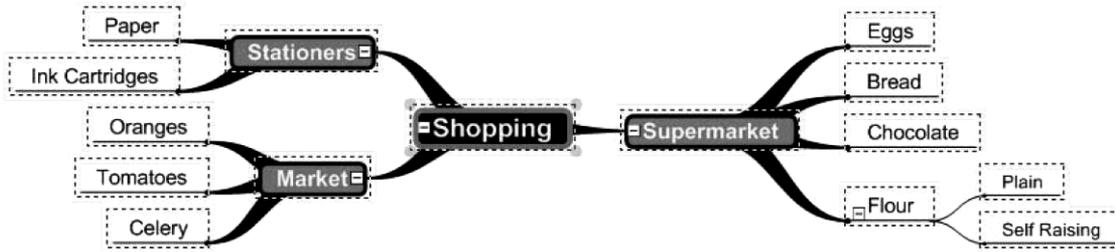
In the following section we will discuss some of the options open to you including:

1. Mind Mapping
2. Training Needs analysis
3. Force Field Analysis
4. Brain Storming/Thought Showers
5. Performance Planning

You should familiarise yourself with these methods before embarking on your actual planning process.

### 2.4.1 Mind mapping

You could prepare with the support of a simple thought map as shown below. The headings chosen could illustrate what you may need to consider when designing your course. Mind Mapping is a tool that can help you problem solve or plan. It can take a form of rough notes or can be created using special software. The example below is a simple example of how a mind map is used to create a plan for a shopping trip.



This is a very simplistic example, but hopefully shows you how a mind map works.

The main theme is shopping. You can look at this subject, and identify the main areas that you need to go. These can branch off from the main section. These sections can then be further developed.

If you have space put the title or development area in the middle of a large piece of flipchart paper; using post it notes or felt pens, record your ideas as they occur. Record everything that occurs to you. You can then prioritise and eliminate as you see fit.

1. Tips for ideas generation
2. To help you generate ideas, consider the following tips:
3. Identify times when you have your best ideas
4. Identify where you work best
5. Have the right equipment (pens, paper etc.)
6. Spend time researching
7. Review what has been done before
8. Take time out (walking, sport etc.)

It is important to be clear about the opportunities and constraints which impact on your development. For example:

1. Budget
2. The time available
3. Resources & facilities
4. Available preparation time
5. Equipment
6. Time of day

## 2.4.2 Training needs analysis (TNA)

This is a term that refers to a process commonly used within organizations as part of the Human Resources function. Normally the TNA process is developed on behalf of organizations to determine the training required by staff. The process can however be used by individuals to help support the development of individual PDPs. Refer to the CD for an illustration of the TNA in action.

## 2.4.3 Force field analysis

Force Field Analysis is a simple but highly effective technique that you can use to identify the forces that will support your planned development and those that will resist it. It consists of two columns, one listing the **driving forces** and the other the **restraining forces**. It may be useful to you as part of your planning process.

Kurt Lewin, the social psychologist, theorized that human behavior – whether individual or in a social group - is driven by forces, such as expectations and beliefs and cultures. These can be positive, urging us to behave in a certain way; or negative, pushing us away from that same behavior.

The Force Field diagram simply represents these driving forces and restraining forces that relate to a central question or issue. The key point of Force Field analysis is that your planned development **cannot occur if the restraining forces are greater than the driving forces**. For that matter, if drivers and restrainers are balanced, change will not happen either.

The simplest way to deal with this, to enable change to occur, is to make the driving forces outnumber the restraining forces. To achieve this the most effective route is to tackle the restraining forces head on, and to ensure that by removing some of them, the driving forces are in the majority. This will be even more effective if you overcome the strongest or toughest objections.

<b>Force Field Diagram</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write down your development aim at the top of a sheet of paper</li> <li>• Underneath create two columns, labelling the left “Driving” and the right “Resisting”</li> <li>• List those forces supporting the change under Driving, and the ‘against’ under Resisting</li> <li>• Mark arrows against each force, pointing towards the centre. Use heavy arrows where there is a major force, and lighter arrows where it is less</li> </ul> <p>If the resisting arrows are more significant than the driving arrows, you will need to deal with the restraining forces before you will be able to embark on your planned development.</p>

### 2.4.4 Brainstorming/thought showers

If you have a colleague or a team working with you, this tool can be very effective. Make sure that at the beginning, no thought or suggestion should be seen as being unacceptable. Encourage participation from everyone. A flip chart is a good way of visualizing the suggestions that have been made.

### 2.4.5 Performance planning

Performance planning can be useful when looking at a problem such as planning your own development. To prepare a Performance Plan, make a list of all the steps that you will need to go through. In developing your PDP you will need to specify all your planned development stages, think through everything that could go wrong at each stage. Think about resources as well as arrangements.

Also include areas where you feel that you are not confident. Discard everything that you have included which is highly unlikely, such as ‘Alien Invasion’, but instead focus on those issues that are possible. For each area, think up contingencies, looking at a ‘Plan B’ approach or issues where you can give yourself more confidence or preparation.

<b>Planning</b>
Write a report describing how you feel you could use the different approaches to planning to support your personal development. State those that you feel will be the most helpful.

## 2.5 Implementing Your PDP

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Learning is essential to effective workplace practice, but unfortunately both the quality and availability of training will vary from place to place. It may be that there is good quality training freely available, but if this is not linked to need, and is not appropriate, then this will be at the best, a waste of everyone's time, but at worst, de-motivating.

Learning needs should be identified and included on the appraisal forms. These learning opportunities should be supported in various ways. Working through your HNC is one. There are also professional organizations/bodies which may be able to help you here. Don't forget the expertise of in-house staff who have the required skills. This training can be formal or informal, but is usually less expensive than other forms of training. These in-house training sessions can build self-esteem for trainers, and can be less challenging for less confident staff.

Learning opportunities will come in many forms. You will need to decide on the development opportunities that will best support your own PDP:

- Distance learning/e-learning – This can be offered through specific e-learning companies or from Colleges. These can be accredited courses, or modules that can be built up towards another qualification
- Printed resources – Local libraries hold a wealth of information, and reading around theory can be hugely beneficial to your own role. There are also a great many 'how to' manuals that may be useful for certain skills
- Learning by doing – If we have a new role to undertake, then we can learn alongside actually doing the work. We can gain support and advice from colleagues and often we can learn from watching others, even those that we know in other companies.
- Shadowing – There may be certain experience that we can learn by shadowing someone for a while. It is good to watch someone work and also have the time to reflect on the effectiveness of their working methods. It can be appropriate to shadow a colleague, and then to reciprocate this by letting them shadow you. The feedback from this type of activity can be influential to the way that you see your role
- College courses – There is a good range of courses available in local colleges which may be appropriate to your needs

- TV/Media – Watching program on specific subjects can help us gain useful knowledge on how businesses work, and also the influences for future development

Planning these needs against available training can be difficult. Mind Mapping can be a useful tool to deal with this type of planning.

### 2.5.1 Problems and barriers

It is not possible to plan a development and not expect to be faced by problems as barriers which will restrict your planned development. It is important to be aware of these limitations from an early stage, so as part of your planning you should be identifying the issues that may limit what you are trying to achieve. An effective SWOT analysis should provide a good insight into problems and barriers.

It is outside the scope of this workbook to determine the problems and barriers that you are going to have to deal with. All we can do is highlight some of the areas that typically will impact on development plans.

**Time** ~ have you the time to undertake your planned development?

**Resource availability** ~ have you the necessary resources available to achieve your planned

development? For example: finance, training staff, equipment etc.

**Support** ~ as a manager, you must ensure that your team and your own manager is able to provide the support you will need to achieve your development

**Facilities** ~ have you access to the facilities you will need? For example: computing, learning etc. Training ~ is there training readily available to support the development you are planning?

Problem Solving
Earlier in this section you will have identified your objectives in the process of personal development planning. List the potential issues and barriers that may impact on your ability to achieve these objectives. For each of these issues describe a potential solution that will reduce their impact.

## 2.6 Conclusion

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We have looked at implementing a personal development plan. Take time to research opportunities available in other places, or look at how you can support your learning yourself by what is available locally.

### Personal Development Plan

Produce a personal development plan for yourself for the coming year, with a clear rationale, linked to your objectives. Identify within the plan appropriate learning opportunities both formal and informal and describe how you intend to deal with any problems and barriers.



## SECTION THREE

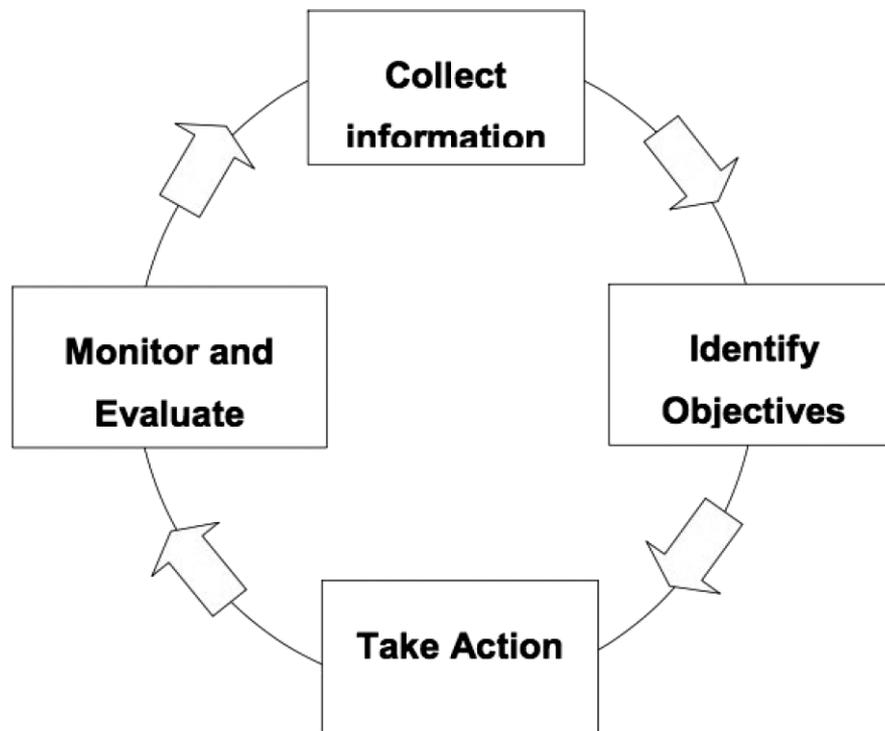
# Evaluate A Personal Development Plan

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## 3.1 Evaluation

Think back to sections One and Two where we introduced the process of creating a PDP. We considered the cycle below. This included the process of collecting information, developing measurable learning objectives, and taking action to achieve your identified needs and training objectives. We now need to consider evaluation.



This last section looks at evaluation as part of this cycle of professional self-development. Evaluation is often seen as the last thing that is done, but for it to be truly effective, it should be seen as part of a continuous process. We will be looking at methods you can use to monitor your own progress, introducing some of the tools you can use to support the evaluation process. It is important to note that the more you reflect on the evaluation process, the more value it will be to you.

It is easy to fall into the trap of working on your personal development plan and never taking the time to ensure its effectiveness. Evaluating progress towards objectives is therefore an important part of self-development, as it will help you identify your achievements, as well as areas where further development is required.

With self-development, it is important to try and evaluate and adjust your plan regularly. Take into consideration those areas where you have learnt new skills, as well as new areas requiring further development. If you have a plan, you may wish to book regular meetings with your mentor to see if it is still accurate and relevant. Any change in the organization you work for, or in day to day activities you follow, may require you to review your plan.

You should take evaluation seriously, because it validates your efforts and endorses your development as a credible and business-like process. Evaluation should be undertaken with the purpose of encouraging improvement.

To introduce the evaluation process it is important for you to understand the principles behind it, that is; why we evaluate, when we evaluate and how we evaluate.

## **Identify Objectives**

### **3.1.1 Why evaluate?**

Evaluation is an integral part of the learning cycle, and therefore essential to the implementation of your PDP. It completes the learning cycle, by providing opportunities for reflection regarding the learning you have undertaken.

Effective evaluation allows you to identify if:

- The development activities completed have been effective in meeting your development needs
- The learning methods suit your own learning style and are appropriate to your situation
- You have attained the knowledge, skills and attitudes you require
- You are addressing your shortfalls and improving your performance
- Your learning has impacted on your personal development
- You need to redefine your learning needs and revise your PDP

Without considering the points above, it will not be easy to maintain an effective PDP. In relation to your learning as a manager, evaluation will give you the chance to reflect on how your development has strengthened and enhanced your effectiveness within your role. The process of evaluation should consolidate your learning allowing you to identify what has gone well and what has not gone so well, so that that you can consolidate

and redefine your future actions. Within the evaluation process itself, it is important for you to be able to objectively recognize your successes and shortcomings, so that you can revise your programme of learning, to build on your successes and address your weaknesses.

Evaluation is critical to the concept of continuous improvement.

### 3.1.2 When should you evaluate?

If used, the concept of continuous professional development will support your personal development plan. Evaluation should form an integral part of your development process. It should therefore be on-going throughout, taking place before, during and after any training activity. Your evaluation should enable you to continually monitor your progress, both informally and formally, at times set aside specifically for this task.

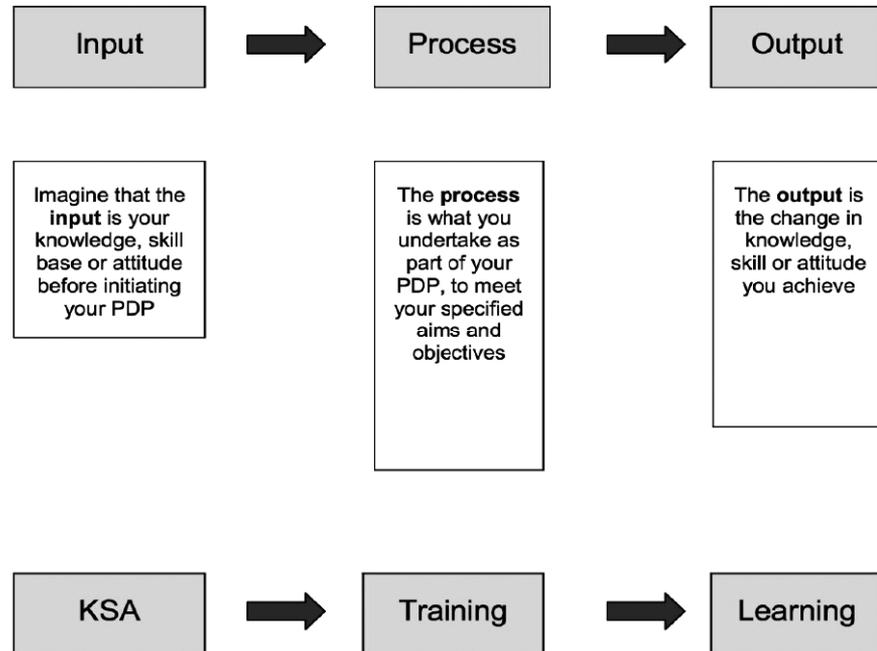
### 3.1.3 How to evaluate?

The evaluation process you implement should allow you to:

- Gain feedback on your progress
- Measure how effective your development has been
- Determine if you have achieved your objectives
- Identify if you have any outstanding development needs.

The method you use will vary depending on what you are trying to evaluate and what you are trying to find out. When deciding on the method you use you need, in the first place, to refer back to the identification of needs and the development of your aims and objectives. In developing your training according to these criteria, you will have established the criteria to measure your training against. In other words, have you achieved your aims and objectives? In other words, what you set out to do in the first place. We will now look at the methods of evaluation. You will have designed aims and objectives that will tell you what you are seeking to change through the training, be it knowledge, skills or attitude.

**Learning outcomes** – where you collect data to establish formally the outcome of the development activity will help identify what you have achieved. They are determined through assessment. By measuring learning outcomes, we are establishing what has actually been achieved. Let's illustrate this with a simple process model.



Identifying learning outcomes is part and parcel of the ongoing evaluation of learning needs and review of the aims and objectives. The intention will be for your training aims and objectives to be upheld by your learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes you achieve can be identified in a variety of ways. For example:

- Questionnaires ~ during and/or after the training
- Tests or exams ~ during and/or after the training
- Evidence of competence ~ during or after the training, whether observed by others or determined by self-assessment and review
- Interview, questioning or oral assessment ~ during or after the training

All of these methods will provide you with information about, and evidence of, your achievements. To complete your self-evaluation you will need to make a judgement regarding the evidence collected.

### 3.1.4 Evaluate yourself

It is important that you are able to evaluate your own performance. There are a number of different ways in which you can establish how well you have performed.

**You can make a judgement on your own performance** – this is something that you can do at anytime and anywhere. Obviously you can make an assessment of the learning outcomes resulting from the training. This will give you an indication of how well you have done, but for this to be truly useful you need an accurate assessment of training needs before you start your training.

**You can gain feedback from other training professionals** – You may also be observed as part of your training. It is important that you consider the feedback you receive as part of your own development as it will help you develop your own performance as a manager. It is really important that you have other professionals watch you; they should know the expected standard and can provide feedback to help you develop further. We will discuss feedback in more detail later in the section.

Just how you evaluate will depend entirely on what is agreed at the very beginning of the process.

### 3.1.5 Learning logs/journal

Learning logs can be effective tools for monitoring progress against your planned objective, and as a tool for reflection on what has already been achieved. We all do this in some way or another, but learning logs help us to be more structured. For some learners, using learning logs will be an alien activity, especially those who are not born reflectors, but reflective learning can be linked to each of the learning styles.

- Activists may look at what has actually happened in the situation
- Theorist may look at what they know, and what they have learnt
- Pragmatists may look at the learning and see what it means to them personally.
- Reflectors may consider the learning, and ask ‘what does it mean?’

There are many approaches to documenting your learning. Some learners have found value in writing about the experiences they have from a different perspective, i.e. from a third person. Looking at a situation from the outside will often help you be more objective.

Other examples of content for these types of journals could be:

1. Reports of specific incidents, looking at your own experience
2. Evaluation of work in a particular group/team
3. Feedback from other colleagues to reflect upon

4. Thoughts about evaluations from colleagues/clients/customers, and lessons learned

There are times when it is difficult to document an activity. Here are some ideas for statements to help you focus and identify issues that may be relevant to your development. In the light of the situation:

- Have I changed my attitude?
- Have I changed my practice?
- How do I feel?
- What must I remember?
- How did colleagues react?

Remember that some professional bodies ask for learning logs to show evidence of your competence.

### **3.1.6 Feedback**

Feedback is essential to any evaluation and can be received from colleagues, friends, the analytical tools that you have been looking at, assessments and any appraisals that you have been through recently.

If you are asking for feedback from friends or colleagues, choose someone who will give you feedback that is clear, specific and positive. It is easier to ask people that you trust to be honest. It is tempting to go to people who you know will tell you what you want to hear, but this is not constructive. Reassure them that you welcome their honesty, and try to be as emotionally detached as possible.

You could ask them to comment on the following:

- What do you think my strengths are? (ask them to give you examples)
- What could I be more effective at? (also ask them to be specific, and illustrate this with examples)
- With those suggestions about things to improve, ask them to suggest ways that you could have handled these situations differently.

We need to evaluate the feedback that we receive from those around us. It is important not to take feedback at face value, but we must honestly look at what is said to identify any issues that we can use for further action.

Think about the following:

- Is it something you already think or know?
- Is the feedback being given by someone you trust, or has experience in this area of work?
- Is it feedback you have received from more than one person?
- Is there evidence to support the feedback?
- Have they identified issues that cannot be changed?
- Is the feedback appropriate?
- Is the feedback verifiable?

### 3.1.7 Reflection

Reflection is looking back on previous actions, learning or events, and thinking about any lessons that it may teach us for the future.

We might wonder whether we are content with our performance both at work and as an individual. Usually there will be areas of our own weaknesses that we know about. It may be that you know that you are always late for work, or that you find deadlines impossible to meet. The more difficulty that this weakness presents us with, the more likely it is that we will want to find strategies for dealing with the problem.

We can develop informally, or we can implement strategies to encourage the process of reflection. Reflection is an essential tool if we want to become effective in our workplace. Many people find that keeping a reflective journal or diary can help them in identifying how and where changes can be made. They are tools that we can use for reflection.

Investigate further the methods and techniques used to evaluate personal development processes within your own organization.

## 3.2 Acting On The Results

To conclude this section it is important to refer back to the cycle of learning and to understand why we are evaluating the development activities. It is all about continuous improvement and striving for excellence in your role as a manager. It is about feeding back the findings into the learning cycle and carrying out further development.

This means, as a manager, you need to be able to develop your approach, take account of what you find, and look at ways of either continuing to maintain the standard, or improving what you do as a manager. Identify-

ing shortfalls in what you have achieved means you need to consider what to do next.

For example: what you discover could lead to a variety of different options.

You may:

- Identify your particular strengths, those which you should pursue
- Identify weaknesses in what you do. Could your approach have been better?
- If appropriate, adjust your programme to aim for higher rate of success
- Plan further training for yourself
- Review own training style and methods.

It is impossible to list here all the options that are available to you, but to conclude whatever you do, in the way of evaluation, should be thought through and planned to become an effective part of the training cycle.

### 3.3 Conclusion

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As already stated, we should consider ourselves to be ‘lifelong learners’. As you have followed through these three sections you will hopefully have gained new understanding of who you are, how you are perceived in the workplace, the skills that you use at work and the area that you need to develop to become more effective. This is not just an activity to be carried out as you go through this course. Try to build time into your schedule to carry out this type of reflection, and carry this on even after you have finished this particular course. This hopefully then will become a lifelong habit, which will enable you to continue your development as a flexible and responsive manager.

<b>Evaluate the success of the development plan produced</b>
Write a report which describes how you monitored your own performance, including the use of feedback to reflect on your performance and development. Detail any modifications made to the plan in response to the findings of your evaluation.



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