

## Purpose

A professional development plan (PDP) is a valuable document that establishes your career development goals and a strategy for meeting them. Whether you are starting your professional career or reassessing your future development, a PDP serves as a useful roadmap that outlines strengths, areas of opportunity, and available resources. A PDP empowers you to hold yourself accountable for your career trajectory. It also helps facilitate more meaningful career discussions with leaders throughout your division and the university.

The document is intended to be a fluid, ever-changing tool to assist with your career discernment. The template was developed to create some consistency to allow for easier conversations with leaders and mentors; however, it is not set in stone. Please feel free to make it your own.

## Completing Your PDP

In the sections listed below, share more information about yourself: your background, skills, and interests. This will help your supervisor, mentor, and/or other leaders understand where you are coming from and what you are interested in.

There are two PDP options - the multi-year plan or a more streamlined, one-year plan. You can pick the version that is best for you.

### Multi-Year Plan:

- **Identifying Information:**
  - Enter your name, current title, and division.
  - Upload a small professional headshot in the designated box.
- **Educational Background:**
  - List schools attended and degrees/certificates awarded.
  - List any other relevant education and/or industry certifications
- **Recent Employment:**
  - List your three most recent positions, starting with your current role. Title, department, and organization are sufficient.

- **Skills & Strengths:**
  - List your current skills and strengths (i.e. proficiency in Photoshop, analysis).
- **Service/Interests:**
  - List current or most recent service positions.
  - List outside interests that you would like to highlight.
- **Career Aspiration:**
  - In this section, you may list either a specific job title you hope to one day hold (i.e. senior regional director, VP) or list attributes of what would be your dream position (i.e. a position that would allow me to interact with students every day).
  - Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. You always have the power to edit and update your PDP as your interests and goals evolve.

The remaining sections of the PDP help you identify the steps that will lead to your ultimate career goal. These steps are broken down into ranges of time: the annual plan (next 12 months), short-term plan (1-3 years), and medium-term plan (3+ years).

- **Skills to Enhance:**
  - List the skills you feel you need to master to reach the next level of your career (i.e. data analytics, strategic thinking) within the appropriate time range.
- **Training & Growth Opportunities:**
  - Reflect on what actions or resources could help you develop the targeted skills for each time period. These might include development opportunities such as HR learning programs, conferences, employee resource groups, books, Stayer Center programs, and certification programs.
  - List one to three specific actions or resources for each time range.
- **People to Engage (Annual Plan Only):**
  - Identify one to three managers or leaders to meet with over the next twelve months to assist you in discerning your future career path.
  - Your supervisor or mentor should also be able to give you ideas of potential connections.

- **Roles I am Ready to Take Today (Annual Plan Only):**
  - If you have a role in mind that you feel prepared to take today, list it in the box provided.
- **Roles/Areas of Interest (Short-Term & Medium-Term Plans):**
  - When completing the short and mid-term plan sections, try tackling the “Roles/areas of interest” first. Keep this goal in mind when filling out the other sections for that time range.
  - If you don’t have a specific role identified, try noting the attributes you hope for in your future position.

### One-Year Plan:

- **My Skills & Strengths:**
  - List your current skills and strengths (i.e. proficiency in Photoshop, analysis).
- **Roles/Areas of Interest:**
  - If you don’t have a specific role identified, try noting areas of interest or the attributes you hope for in your future position.
  - Keep this goal in mind when filling out the other sections of the PDP.
- **Skills to Enhance & How:**
  - List the skills you feel you need to work on in the upcoming year to reach the next level of your career or advance in your area of interest (i.e. data analytics, strategic thinking).
  - Identify the learning programs or training you will engage in to help build these skills.
- **People to Engage:**
  - Identify one to three managers, leaders, or colleagues in areas of interest to meet with over the next twelve months to assist you in discerning your future career path.
  - Your supervisor or mentor should also be able to give you ideas of potential connections.

## Additional Considerations

- **Mentoring & Networking:**
  - While there is no dedicated box for listing your mentors, it is highly encouraged that you identify at least one to meet with regularly regarding your PDP.
  - Mentors can guide you through potential career-growth opportunities, help you improve soft skills such as communication and networking, and offer ideas around strategies for career progression and promotion.
  - If you are unsure how to find a mentor, consider asking your supervisor for suggestions or applying to a formalized program.
  - In addition, informal informational interviews can be a great way to learn about roles and departments with which you may not otherwise interact. Consider reaching out to co-workers on other teams to learn more about their work and whether it could be a good fit for your professional development.
  
- **Privacy:**
  - A PDP may be put together with the assistance of your manager or Human Resources staff and can provide a foundation for conversations with mentors or informational interviews. However, it is ultimately your choice whether to share the actual document.