

ASSP-NC Education Committee Knowledge Sharing Series (KSS)



Continuous Professional Development: A Vehicle for Career Development

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Introduction:

A career is a profession or occupation that an individual pursues for a significant portion of their life in order to support their livelihood and attain personal and professional growth. A career can include one or more jobs over time and can be shaped by an individual's experience, skills, interests, and goals. It may require education, training, certifications, and other qualifications, and can provide opportunities for advancement and specialization.

Introduction contd:

Some careers are highly specialized and require a narrow set of skills and knowledge, while others are more general and offer a broader range of job functions. A successful career typically involves a combination of hard work, dedication, and a commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

What is career development?

Career development is the lifelong process of expanding your career. It may involve the following:

- 💡 Determining your passions and skills
- 💡 Setting career goals
- 💡 Progressing within one company for several years or
- 💡 Switching careers as your interests and skills changes

While you are ultimately responsible for your own career development, your employer may have an interest in your progression as well. Not every company, but some invest time and resources into an employee, and to increase team member retention, they may offer additional training and educational programs for a specific role.

Guidelines for career development

1 Explore Your Interests

You can explore your interests at any age. Doing so, may help you decide what career to pursue or if you are ready for a career shift. You can think about someone you admire, who is making significant impact in your area of interest and reflect on which interests you. Consider other occupations, perhaps those of your parents, older siblings and role models, that you find interesting. These may be helpful areas in which to explore career options.

2 Determine Your Ideal Career

Finding a target professional industry or job is the foundation of an effective career development plan. The goals you create to advance your career will depend on your passion and values. Consider the following when choosing a job:

Guidelines for career development contd.

- 💡 **List your strengths:** Make a list of strengths and interests, then think about what careers might match those traits. For example, if you're good at resolving conflict and perform well in stressful situations, you could be a lawyer or police officer.
- 💡 **Determine values and purpose:** Your core values are important, and you should choose a job that aligns with your beliefs. Finding a purpose in your work will increase your satisfaction and motivate you to advance your career.
- 💡 **Visualize your ideal career:** Visualizing your ideal career can help you develop an effective career development plan. To do so, consider your ideal job environment, work-life balance, salary and other factors important to you.

Guidelines for career development contd.

3 Set SMART Goals

Setting specific career goals can give you something tangible to work towards as you improve your career development. When setting career goals, it can be useful to set SMART goals. SMART is an acronym that includes the following:

- 💡 **Specific:** A specific goal focuses on a clear outcome.
- 💡 **Measurable:** A measurable goal includes metrics or milestones by which you can easily track your progress.
- 💡 **Achievable:** An achievable goal is one that you can reasonably accomplish with the time and resources available.
- 💡 **Relevant:** A relevant goal is one that aligns with your career and development trajectory.
- 💡 **Time-based:** A time-based goal includes a timeline or deadline by which you can operate.

Keeping the SMART guidelines in mind can help you create effective goals that you may be able to achieve and track successfully.

Guidelines for career development contd.

4 Learn New Skills

Acquiring new and relevant skills can help you progress toward your career goals. Here are four soft skills that nearly every position can benefit from:

- 💡 **Critical thinking:** Critical thinking allows you to identify and overcome challenges by analyzing data and facts. To expand your critical-thinking skills, learn more hard skills related to your role to make it easier to identify and solve problems.
- 💡 **Emotional intelligence:** Emotional intelligence involves interpreting conversations and nonverbal actions of others and effectively communicating your ideas. This skill is key in conveying clear goals and understanding your coworkers, managers and customers.

Guidelines for career development contd.

- 💡 **Teamwork:** Teamwork involves sharing ideas and assisting coworkers with tasks to achieve goals and create a cohesive and enjoyable work environment. When learning teamwork skills, make sure you listen to your coworkers and attempt to include them in activities.
- 💡 **Negotiation:** Negotiation is a conversation that helps two or more parties reach an agreement and can be a useful workplace skill for solving coworker conflict or discussing a raise with your manager. Developing this skill can also help improve relations with your team and clients.

Guidelines for career development contd.

5 Expand your network

You can create a comprehensive professional network to help achieve your career goals. To expand your network, consider:

- 💡 Attending conferences that relate to your field
- 💡 Joining online professional networking groups (LinkedIn)
- 💡 Scheduling informational interviews with successful professionals in your field
- 💡 Joining a professional association

For example, if you are a safety officer, you can attend ASSP Professionals Development Conference to not only meet other safety professionals but also to learn additional skills. Your network can help you find a job that fits into your career path or can help you form achievable goals

Guidelines for career development contd.

6 Find a mentor

Mentors are advisors that offer young professionals advice and guidance while they progress in their careers. Your mentor could be any of the following:

- 💡 A current or past manager
- 💡 A member of your professional network
- 💡 A co-worker with more experience

A mentor will provide you with a trusted, experienced perspective that can help you define your career goals. Consider meeting with your mentor weekly or monthly to share your accomplishments, establish more career milestones and maintain your motivation.

Guidelines for career development contd.

7 Enroll into a career development program

Most employers want team members to expand the skills that are specific to their role or the business. These programs are ideal for high school and college graduates who want to gain valuable on-the-job training. If your current company has a career development program, consider enrolling. These programs may:

- 💡 Provide courses to help you learn new skills
- 💡 Include in-person and remote training options
- 💡 Allow you to complete certificate programs to improve your resume
- 💡 Offer tuition assistance for college courses that relate to your position

Creating a career development plan

A career development plan can help you create a thorough outline, you can follow to achieve specific career goals. Follow these steps to form an actionable plan:


Determine long-term goal: A long-term goal will help you find focus in your career interest. This goal could involve a dream job title, salary or lifestyle.

Decide on milestones to meet long-term goal: Separating your overall goal into smaller steps will make completing tasks easier and helps you remain motivated. For example, if you would like to become a safety director, you may first set goals like completing relevant education or becoming a safety officer, supervisor, coordinator, superintendent, assistant manager, manager and the director.

Creating a career development plan contd.

Create actionable tasks: You can draft a list of activities, classes or programs that will help you reach your goal. A mentor can offer advice about particular training you could undergo.

Track your progress: Understanding relevant duties and how you're progressing towards your goal can allow you to create a realistic understanding of your progress. You might make a list of your current responsibilities, note the ones that are most aligned with your career goals and make an effort to focus on those responsibilities at work.



Questions?



Resources:

<https://www.oshacademy.com/>

<https://academy.theknightsofsafety.com/>

<https://www.pcr-global.com/health-and-safety>

Thank You.