



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN - SUPPORT STAFF

Talented people are drawn to organizations that help them develop new skills and abilities, that offer them new challenges and provide opportunities to learn and grow in their careers.

An essential element in developing strong talent within the organization is an effective Career Development Planning (**CDP**) process which can be readily accessed by employees who are ready to “take charge” of their own personalized learning and career plans. Whether you are contemplating a career change, aspiring toward career growth or just interested in learning more about yourself, a CDP can be a valuable tool for helping you reach your destination.

The CDP helps you to understand the key phases career planning as well as introducing you to key activities which will assist you in making informed choices. These activities include:

- Creating An Inventory of Work/Life Experiences
- Summarizing Your Learning Experiences (Formal & Informal)
- Key Personal Attributes (Strengths; Areas for Development)
- Clarifying Your Work Values
- Creating An Inventory of Your Transferrable Skills
- Identifying Influential Factors (Supportive & Obstacles)
- Setting Meaningful Goals (Short & Long Term)

These self-guided activities function as a suite of key planning resources which help you to craft specific career development plans reflective of **YOUR** interests and skills, **YOUR** strengths, **YOUR** work values....**YOUR** life!

You most likely have family, friends, trusted peers, supervisors and other career mentors who form a strong support network for your career development goals.

Let's Get Started.....

## Career Development Guiding Principles

Our Career Development process begins with a set of foundational guiding principles. These principles will guide you through a set of actions and supports designed to help you think about and craft your own career development plan.

- This planning template is only one of a number of complementary initiatives and supports offered by the College which link to other fundamental activities such as recruiting, development/retention, etc.
- Career Development connects individual career goals and broad College needs and provides the impetus for continued growth of both the individual and the College.
- Career development involves **personalized continuous career growth**, which is about being more effective in the current role as well as positioning individuals for future roles. This growth can take many forms – developing high performing skills, being well-qualified to compete for positions, becoming multi-skilled, etc.
- The focus of this planning process is to **develop our own talent first**. Our objective is to create an environment where individuals have the desire and opportunity to realize their full potential and where building and developing our talent will help the College realize future success.
- The **employee is accountable** for his/her own development. The role of the manager is to mentor the employee, to help clarify goals and to foster development. Ideally, the employee and manager will reach agreement on the final career development plan.
- All employees are encouraged to create a career development plan to help them be more effective in their current role and/or prepare them to compete for future roles. These development plans provide opportunities to become better qualified for the future.

REMEMBER: Career development is about creating opportunities by being ready to compete effectively when job opportunities arise; it's not about specific guarantees for the future.

### 1. CREATING AN INVENTORY OF WORK / LIFE EXPERIENCES

Your first step is to take some time to reflect on all the various **work-related and life experiences** you have gained over the years. Rarely do these moments occur without some

type of learning being realized once the “dust settles”. You may not have considered it from this perspective before, but all of these experiences quite likely have some relevance to your career development goals. Consider:

- Paid work experiences
- Unpaid work experiences
- Hobbies & leisure activities
- Competitive sport experiences
- Travel experiences
- Community volunteer experiences
- Family experiences
- Personal health experiences

Once you have your key experiences inventoried, step back and observe whether or not you see **any patterns**, either similarities or direct contrasts?

For each of your key experiences, can you identify at least **one piece of key learning** or a new skill that is relevant to either your current job/career or the one that you are aspiring to?

## 2. Summarizing Your Formal Education Experiences

Next, use the space below to summarize all of your **formal education** including academic programs (completed and incomplete), vocational trainings and professional learning activities

you have experienced. Be sure to include post-secondary courses, professional seminars and conferences, and online learning such as webinars, etc.

For any incomplete credentials, have you researched the available **pathways** which exist to help you fill in the gaps and/or transfer existing credits into a more suitable program that you wish to complete?

Formal Education Credentials – Completed

Formal Education Credential – Incomplete / In-Progress

Vocational Training & Certifications

Professional Learning (Seminars / Workshops / Conferences)

### **3. Key Personal Attributes (Strengths; Areas for Development)**

There are a variety of self-assessment tools available in the marketplace and each person will need to choose the tool that best suits their needs based on how comprehensive you want the

assessment to be, how much time you want to invest in completing an assessment, and whether or not you are willing to pay the fees associated with the more detailed tools.

This CDP identifies two options for you which are either low-cost or no-cost:

### **StrengthFinders 2.0**

Written by Tom Rath, this book (ISBN #978-1-59562-015-6) is a reasonably short read and includes an access code to utilize a confidential online assessment tool that helps you identify and understand your unique strengths. In addition to receiving a full report that summarizes your top five (5) key strengths, the assessment tool also provides additional resources for how to effectively leverage your strengths.

NOTE: All full-time support staff who participate in Fleming College's "Support Staff Professional Development Certificate" program receive a complimentary copy of StrengthFinders 2.0.

### **Jung Typology Test**

This is a free online assessment tool based upon the work of Carl Jung and Isabel Briggs Myer. The assessment consists of 72 short questions which require a "Yes" or "No" answer response. From this simple online assessment, you will receive an immediate summary paragraph that describes you on the basis of Jung's & Briggs-Meyer's personality models.

### **Other Resources**

You may also wish to check online with Service Canada's Training & Careers page for additional self-assessment tools.

### **Areas for Development**

Make a list of any areas where you feel you have a specific skill gap or where you feel you require additional learning and/or practice in order to fully develop a particular competency.

## **4. Clarifying Your Work Values**

Whether or not you have consciously thought about them, you likely have a fairly well defined set of parameters that form the basis of your **work values**. These are the elements of your daily work environment that help you stay energized, inspired and engaged in your work.

These elements speak not only to the intellectual aspects of your work but also to your physical environment and the “tangibles” such as compensation and benefits.

Some of the common work values are noted below. Rate each one on a scale of 1 – 5:  
(1= most important; 5= least important)

- Challenging work / problem-solving
- Variety of tasks / task rotation
- Research / data
- On-change / flexibility
- Clear rules / Established routines
- Creativity / innovation
- Competition / excitement
- Independence / autonomy
- Leading / influencing
- Coaching / mentoring others
- Front-line customer service / public interactions
- Advancement / stretch assignments
- Harmonious workplace relationships / friendships
- Opportunities to help others / volunteering
- Continuous learning / education
- Honesty / workplace ethics
- Rewards / pay incentives
- Regular work hours / limited overtime
- Economic security / stable benefits
- Recognition / praise
- Generous leisure time (vacation)
- Defined work space / private office
- Open work space / creativity pods
- Working in teams
- Regular work-related travel opportunities
- Access to green space / outdoor space
- Quiet work space
- Lively work space
- Active work / physical demands
- Adventure / risk-taking
- Other:

Review your list. What are your **top five work values**? Do these align well with your current role/career? Do they align well with the role/career you are aspiring to?

## 5. Creating An Inventory of Transferrable Skills

In addition to job-specific skills, think about your toolbox of **transferrable job skills**. These are skills which have been gained and refined through a variety of on-going experiences (work and life) and which have relevance for success in almost any job.

Some common transferrable job skills are highlighted below:

- Analytical thinking / problem-solving
- Flexibility / adaptability
- Interpersonal skills
- Empathy
- Communication skills (verbal; written)
- Time management skills
- Organizational skills
- Ability to effectively prioritize
- Project planning/coordination skills
- Coaching skills
- Collaboration
- Personal resilience / buoyancy
- Team-building skills
- Research skills
- Creativity
- Design thinking / design skills
- Public speaking / presentation skills
- Consultation / facilitation skills
- Conflict resolution skills
- Instructional / training skills
- Literacy / numeracy
- Continuous improvement
- Curiosity

How have your past work and life experiences helped you to build your personal toolkit of transferrable job skills?

What activities could you participate in to further enhance your toolkit?

## **6. Identifying Influential Factors (Supportive & Obstacles)**

Regardless of what direction you have decided to focus your developmental efforts on, it's important to be realistic about **influential factors** that can either support your efforts or will be an obstacle for you to overcome. Obviously, the more support factors you have, the easier the journey toward your desired career goal will be. It is reasonable to expect to encounter at least one obstacle though that will have to be overcome in order to reach your goal.

Some common influencing factors you may need to consider are:

- Family circumstances / dependents
- Financial requirements to maintain lifestyle choices
- Dedicated funds to cover education and training costs
- Time to fully engage in formal education / course work
- Work schedules / work responsibilities
- Personal health circumstances
- Transportation considerations
- Your level of commitment to stick with your plan
- Your ability to respond to obstacles
- Support system for encouragement

What are the key influential factors that will be **supportive** in your career development plan?

What are the key influential factors that may be an **obstacle** in your career development plan?

## 7. Creating a Personal Professional Development Plan

The Personal Professional Development Plan is designed to help address a need, a skill gap or to expand an existing strength.



- a) In the first column, list the **areas for development** . Refer back to Step 3.
- b) In the second column, write out your development goal. Be specific by utilizing the SMART approach to goal-setting:

**Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Relevant; Time-bound**

- c) In the third column, estimate the **time frame** for completion of the goal.
- d) In the final column, identify any **resource implications** (e.g. technical support, access to software or hardware, financial) that will be necessary to achieve the goal.

You may choose to develop several parallel strategies or focus on just one or two. Also consider identifying goals as either short-term and long-term. You may have some goals that are short-term, stand-alone goals or, you may have one larger, long-term goal which needs to be broken down into several smaller, goals which are staged over a short, medium and long range time frame. Prior to completing the template below, please consider the following questions:

What would bring more meaning/enrichment to your time here?  
 What would motivate you to complete this plan?

Focus Area	Development Goal	Timeframe	Resources

Once completed, you should review this career plan with your manager.



**Areas to Consider when Crafting a Personal Professional Development Plan:**

The following are some possible development steps that should help you to be specific when putting together personal professional developmental plans. When deciding upon the development strategies, it is understood that the strategies will not hinder or interfere with your normal duties and responsibilities.

**Possible Development Areas to Consider:**

- Job Assignments – explore the potential for new/special tasks within your own role
- Job Enrichment -- taking on a special, project or specialized responsibilities within your job in consultation with your manager
- Special Project(s)
- ‘Designate’ for Your Manager – explore potential opportunities to represent your manager as their ‘designate’ at meetings or conferences, etc.
- Temporary Assignments – consider applying for temporary assignments at the College if the assignment aligns with your career goals and would develop new skills
- Coaching – asking for feedback around a particular topic
- 360 Feedback – the ability to get feedback from peers, manager, self
- Mentoring – consider a mentoring relationship (refer to the College’s “Mentoring Program”)
- Taskforces/Committees
- Formal Training – internal or external
- Workshops / Seminars / Conferences
- Increased Visibility – consider exploring creative ways to showcase your skills
- Special Presentations
- Community/Volunteer Experiences – consider time required and should be consistent with career goals as well as benefits to College

All of these suggested areas depend upon the skill being developed and the time required.