

## Creating an Individualized Professional Development Plan

Professional development is the advancement of skills or expertise to succeed in a job position. With professional development opportunities available in a variety of formats both on and off campus throughout the year, intentional planning is key to maximizing your time and efforts. Follow these steps to complete your Individual Professional Development Plan.


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### Step 1: Conduct a self-assessment

Reflect on your strengths, interests, and areas that may need to be developed. Solicit or consider feedback you've received from supervisors, students, coworkers, or others.

Review the following to determine how your strengths align:

- [knowledge areas for the Division of Student Affairs](#)
- expectations of your position/performance appraisals
- competency areas for your associated professional organizations
- [mission and vision of the Division and Illinois State University](#)



<b>SMART Goals:</b> Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Time-based
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### Step 2: Determine your professional development goals

Based on your reflection, determine 1-3 specific professional development **SMART goals**. Use the professional development planning tool to break down each goal into the knowledge or skills needed to achieve your goal. Write these in **column A**. Consider the connection between each knowledge/skill area and your individual goal (**column B**) as well as the goals of your department, the Division, University, and/or profession (**column C**).

Also decide how you will know you've developed in each area (**column D**). These are your measures of progress or success. By focusing with the end in mind, you can best determine which methods will help you gain the knowledge and skills you are seeking.

### Step 3: Select your methods of development

There are a variety of ways to gain new knowledge and skills. Knowing how you want to develop (**column D**), what methods will be most effective for you? List these in **column E**.

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|--|--|------------------------------------|
| • Participate in Student Affairs professional development events | • Listen to a webinar  | • Join a professional organization |
| • Listen to an on-campus speaker or event                        | • Self-study with relevant books or articles; discuss readings with others | • Mentor others or be mentored     |
| • Complete a course or training in the classroom or online       | • Give a presentation  | • Network                          |
| • Attend a professional conference                               | • Participate on a committee   | • Shadow others                    |
|  | • Complete a special project   | • Cross-train                      |

Decide on a realistic time frame to develop in each specific knowledge/skill area (**column F**).

**Step 4: Take action and track your progress**

Time to get busy! Be sure to track your progress as you move through your plan. Use the “Progress toward goal” section (**row G**) at the bottom of your Individual Professional Development Plan to keep track of actions you have taken.

**Step 5: Reflect on your progress and revise your goals**

On at least an annual basis spend time reflecting on the progress you’ve made completing your plan. Did you accomplish what you had intended to? Consider how you will proceed if you did not. Reflect on knowledge gained and skills developed so that you may revise your goals and actions. Mark **row H** with your next steps.