

The Process for Developing Your Personal/Professional Growth Plan

1. Think about your leadership skills, strengths and areas for potential growth. Think about those areas for potential growth as your 'growth edges'. All growth edges are behaviors, dispositions (clarifying definition below), areas of knowledge or a combination of two or more of these three descriptors.

dis·po·si·tion (from the Merriam-Webster Online Search)

2 a: prevailing tendency, mood, or inclination b: temperamental makeup c: the tendency of something to act in a certain manner under given circumstances

To address some of your growth edges will require you to **polish** your existing skills

And to address others of your growth edges will require you to:

develop new and different ways of behaving

develop new and different dispositions

gain **new and different** knowledge

As your coach, I am asking that you think about one or more leadership behaviors, dispositions or areas of knowledge that you want to be **new and different**

2. Make a list of those behaviors, dispositions or areas of knowledge you see as targets for significant personal/professional growth (things you want to be new and different). These are potential focuses for your intentional growth.

Keep your list and add to it as you discover additional behaviors, dispositions or areas of knowledge that you would like to significantly improve

3. From the list choose one behavior, disposition and/or area of knowledge that is a current priority for your growth. This will tentatively be your target for your goal.

Think about specifically how you would like to be different

Think about how you would want to handle a general responsibility or challenge differently

Think about new knowledge, behaviors and dispositions you may need to develop to become different in this area.

Make sure the goal is worth your effort and that it will stretch you to be different when it is accomplished

4. Write your draft goal statement.

Make sure the goal is about **changing** your knowledge, performance or disposition.

Make sure the goal is about **you and not someone** else. An example of a goal about someone else is “improve our organization’s ability to set and maintain agreed upon norms for interacting with each other. An example of a goal that is about an individual is “improve my knowledge of and ability to add stability and productivity to the groups I participate in”.

5. Share your draft goal with someone.

Talk about it with him or her, providing some context for the goal

Listen to his or her comments

Answer his or her questions

6. Return to work on your own and finalize your goal statement.

Think about the general strategies that you might pursue to fulfill your goal

Ask yourself some questions:

What do I need to learn?

Who do I want to learn from?

Are there formal ways to learn (conferences, a course, etc.)?

Can I observe or shadow someone that would be a good model for me?

Should I do a web search or talk to trusted friends?

Are there books or articles I need to read?

Should I solicit a coach (informal or formal) to help me intentionally grow?

7. Make a list of three to five strategies you will follow in pursuit of your goal.

Example 1: *I am going improve my listening skills so that I will more effectively respond to complaints*

Example 2: *I am going to going to learn to de-escalate potentially confrontational situations so that I will more effectively respond to complaints*

8. What specific activities do you plan to engage in to fulfill your strategies?

The following are examples of activities that could apply to Example 1 above. I am going to:

~ observe and talk with individuals I know to be good listeners or are recommended to me as leaders that are good listeners

~ seek out and enroll in an ‘active listening’ skill building workshop

~ read Active Listening: Improve Your Ability to Listen and Lead, published by the Center for Creative Leadership Press, 2006 and at least one other book on listening skills (title to be determined after some study)

~ do a web search related to Active Listening to find potentially helpful information

~ ask my fellow worker, Jim Smith, to give me feedback on my attempts to listen effectively

The following are examples of activities that apply to Example 2 above. I am going to:

- ~ observe and talk with individuals I know to be good at de-escalation or are recommended to me as leaders that are good at de-escalation
- ~ seek out an individual that would be an effective coach on the process of developing skills in de-escalation
- ~ practice de-escalation techniques in role playing situations with a trusted associate
- ~ explore my dispositions that may lead to my defensiveness when confronted with a complaint
- ~ search the web for articles and/or books on customer service to improve my awareness of how I can become effective at de-escalation

Note: each activity needs a timeline for its completion

9. Think about the resources (time, money, assistance, materials, etc.) you need to implement the activities for the strategies.

10. How will you know you have reached your goal? Will you have benchmarks along the way? Record this information under Monitoring and Measurement Plan.

11. Set and record a completion date for the Growth Plan.