



NONPROFIT SERVICES

How to Develop Your Professional Development Plan

Nelson L. Layag
Training Director, CompassPoint

CompassPoint Nonprofit Services

500 12th Street Suite 320
Oakland, CA 94607
ph 510-318-3755 fax 415-541-7708

web: www.compasspoint.org
e-mail: info@compasspoint.org
twitter: @cp_change

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Objective

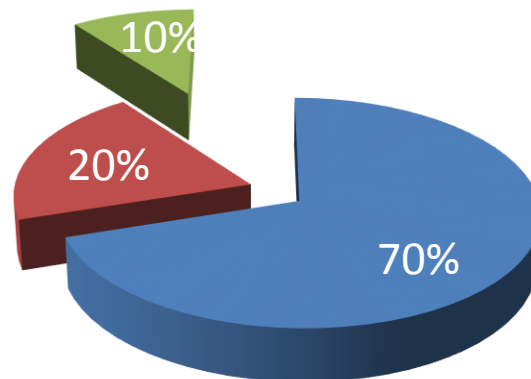
To understand a practical and meaningful approach to developing your professional development process.

Key Takeaways

- Prioritize professional development by understanding the different levels of professional development.
- Identify your personal strengths, talents, skills to draft a personal purpose statement.
- Be able to draft a practical professional development plan.

Principles for Staff Development: The 70/20/10 Rule

Organizations should value continuous learning and understand that in order to maintain the quality of services that the organization provides the community, it is essential to invest in staff development by providing a breadth of growth opportunities. Professional development plans should be based on the 70/20/10 rule which states that the most effective development plans utilize a blend of strategies as follows: (see *appendix for more detailed development plan template*)



■ On the Job ■ Peer/Mentor ■ Formal

70% On-the-job learning

Create conditions within the organization that support development and growth and hold leaders accountable for the development of their people.

Some ideas:

- Role conversations: Discuss with people the connections between their work and developmental needs by revealing learning opportunities in their day-to-day experiences.
- Stretch opportunities: Assigning additional projects, committee work, and new tasks. Think about upcoming opportunities that provide people a chance to work on “next level” job responsibilities.
- Shadowing and job rotations: Think about a temporary job or work rotation to provide someone with a range of experiences. Allow people to job shadow others.

20% Learning through relationships

Ensure that individuals are learning from other people. In addition to staff, leverage board members and volunteers with specific skills or experience.

Some ideas:

- Develop an internal mentor program and match individuals with board members, staff, donors, external partners. Develop internal coaches; peer-to-peer or across functional areas and levels. Provide external leadership coaches.
- Ensure supervision and ongoing feedback as people work on their goals.
- Join affinity groups, networking groups, learning circles.

10% Learning through formal training and education

Some ideas:

- Classes and workshops
- webinars/online learning
- Regular reading of publications, journals, articles
- Attending conferences

Personal strengths, talents, & skills

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Identify Life Experiences

Next, identify and describe 1-2 life experiences that were truly fulfilling for you. They are times when you were fully using, expressing, and manifesting your talents, skills, and abilities.

Exercise: Describe 1-2 experiences below.

For each experience, also note what was it like for you while going through this? What were you feeling? What was important, special or meaningful for you? What did you bring to the experience (your point of view, skill, talent, experience) that few others could have?

1. _____

2. _____

Clarify your Core Attributes

These are the qualities you use to manifest your purpose. Knowing your attributes and understanding how they are available to you in any context, offers a sense of security of self.

Exercise: List your core attributes and a phrase about what each looks like to you.

Core Attributes are descriptors and answer these kinds of questions:

- What kind of person am I?
- What's been true of me since I was young?
- How do approach life?
- I feel most comfortable when I'm

Examples of core attributes:

Honest; Compassionate; Independent; Determined; Curious; Thoughtful; Strategic, Empathetic, Problem-solver; Planner; Action-Minded; Researcher; Focused; Detail Oriented; Humorous; Laid-back; Observant; Relationship-minded; Goal-oriented.

What it might look like:

Determined: I will always finish what I set out to do.

Empathetic: In tough situations my I want to be mindful about the feelings of others.

Strategic: I tend to try to piece information together and think a few steps ahead.

Planner: I like to create a plan before taking action.

Action-Minded: I need to keep things moving even if the "path" is uncertain.

Researcher: I want to know as much as I can about something once I'm interested.

Focused: I can focus on a task for long periods of time.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Articulate Your Talents, Skills, and Strengths

Your skills, talents, and strengths (both internal and external) leverage your Core Attributes and translate your purpose into action. Your skills and abilities are those things that you have naturally developed over time and honed through informal and formal education.

Look to your life experiences. What have others said about you? What are you really good at? What abilities do you take for granted? What do you absolutely truly enjoy doing in your professional life? What do you absolutely truly enjoy doing in your personal life?

Exercise: List a few top skills and abilities and a phrase about what each looks like in action.

Examples of skills and abilities:

Listening; creative; artistic; organizational; communications (written, verbal, one-one, public speaking, etc.); relationship-building; teaching; financial; team-building, etc.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

* This material was developed by Danny Ceballos, ExceedSucceed, go to www.ExceedSucceed.com for more information on these resources.

Personal Purpose

You have now completed the steps for defining your personal purpose. Take a look at your **core attributes, skills and abilities**, and **life experiences** you've described to paint a picture that reflects the desired direction of your life. This collage of words, images, and memories are the crucial ingredients for articulating your personal purpose.

Exercise: Create a personal purpose statement from the work that you've done.

Begin to draft your personal purpose statement including the following components:

- **Your unique contribution** - how you engage with the world, what you bring to the work [talents, skills, abilities and values]
- **A central concern** - where your attention is focused; who is the beneficiary of your efforts [people, community]
- **An outcome** - the intended impact, what you ultimately hope for; your aspirations [results]

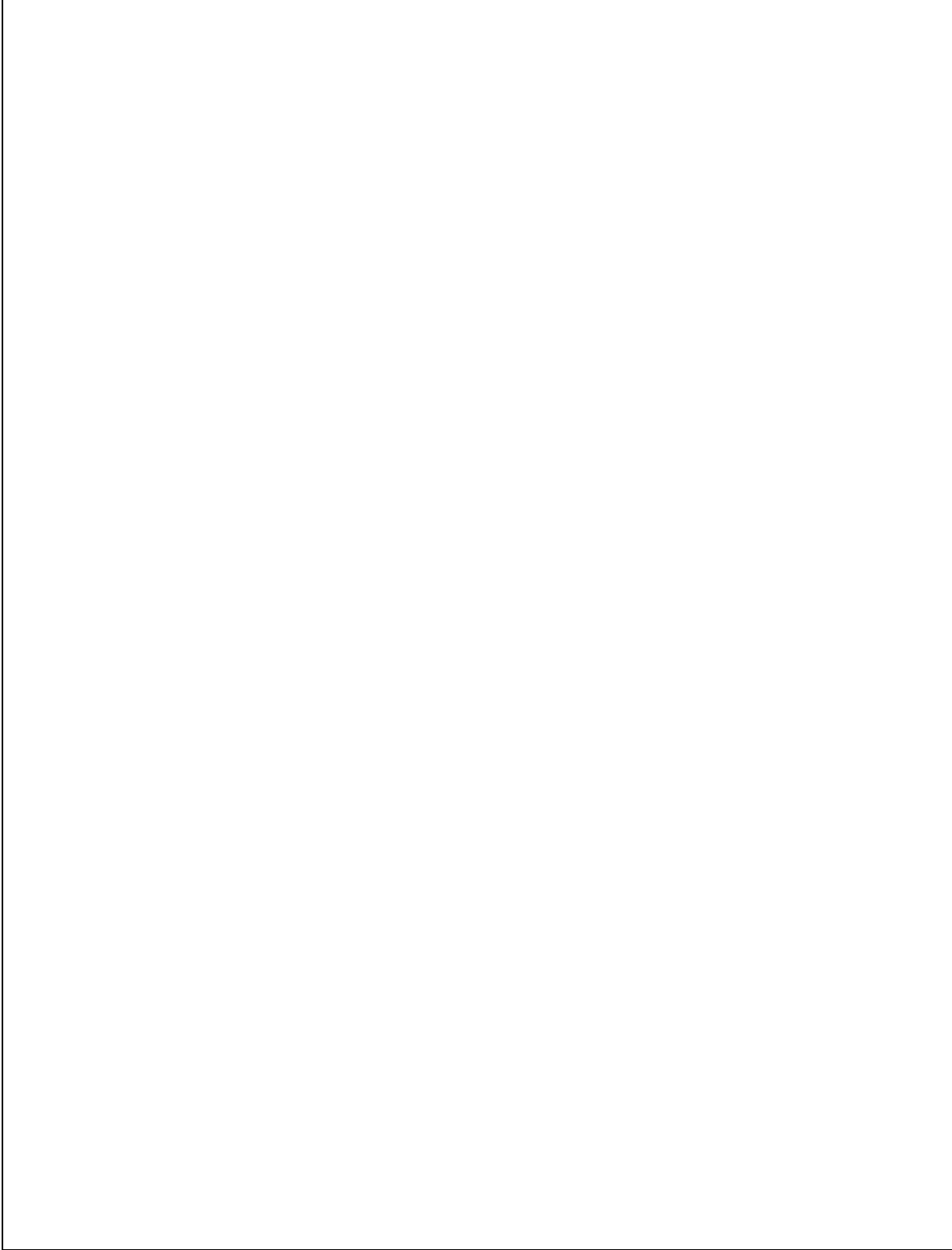
Examples:

"I will be a tireless advocate for the rights of others so that we may all live in a community free from inequity and oppression. I will blend my artistic creativity and my presentation skills to teach others how to hone their own communication skills so that they can enhance their impact as they work, as I do, for social justice."

"I am committed to helping women and girls achieve control of their reproductive rights, equity in the workplace, and freedom from sexual oppression and violence. My patience and attention to detail combined with my financial and planning skills can support an organization's financial sustainability so the organization can make a greater impact to achieve gender equity."

"I see great needs in my local community and know I want to be a part of making positive change. I love being around people and connecting on a personal level. I also have built interpersonal communication skills over time and can use them to build connections with others to help support meeting individual needs and community needs."

Play with the wording and feel of your PERSONAL PURPOSE until it truly resonates for you.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their personal purpose statement. The box occupies most of the page's vertical space.

Professional Competencies

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The following are the competencies identified by nonprofit organization executives as the ones most important for their future success. As someone interested in career development within a nonprofit organization, consider these competencies.

*The definition for each competency below lists the characteristics for being skilled in that competency.**

1. **Dealing with Ambiguity** – Can effectively cope with change; can shift gears comfortably; can decide and act without having the total picture; isn't upset when things are up in the air; doesn't have to finish things before moving on; can comfortably handle risk and uncertainty.
2. **Business Acumen** - Knows how businesses work; knowledgeable in current and future policies, practices, trends, and information affecting his/her business and organization; knows the competition; is aware of how strategies and tactics work in the marketplace.
3. **Composure** – Is cool under pressure; does not become defensive or irritated when times are tough; is considered mature; can be counted on to hold things together during tough times; can handle stress; is not knocked off balance by the unexpected; doesn't show frustration when resisted or blocked; is a settling influence in a crisis.
4. **Delegation** - Clearly and comfortably delegates both routine and important tasks and decisions; broadly shares both responsibility and accountability; tends to trust people to perform; lets direct reports finish their own work.
5. **Managing Diversity** - Manages all kinds and classes of people equitably; deals effectively with all races, nationalities, cultures, disabilities, ages and genders; hires variety and diversity without regard to class; supports equal and fair treatment and opportunity for all.
6. **Ethics and Values** - Adheres to an appropriate (for the setting) and effective set of core values/beliefs during both good and bad times; acts in line with those values; rewards others for same; practices what is preached.
7. **Hiring and Staffing** - Has a nose for talent; hires the best people available from inside or outside; not afraid of selecting strong people; assembles talented staffs.
8. **Humor** – Has a positive and constructive sense of humor; can laugh at him/herself with others; is appropriately funny and can use humor to ease tension.
9. **Integrity and Trust** - Is widely trusted; seen as direct and truthful; presents the unvarnished truth in an appropriate and helpful manner; keeps confidences; admits mistakes; doesn't misrepresent him/herself for personal gain.

10. **Interpersonal Savvy** - Relates well to all kinds of people, up, down, and sideways, inside and outside the organization; builds appropriate rapport; builds constructive and effective relationships; uses diplomacy and tact; can diffuse even high-tension situations comfortably.
11. **Learning on the Fly** - Learns quickly when facing new problems; a relentless and versatile learner; open to change and analyzes both successes and failures for clues to improvement; experiments and will try anything to find solutions; enjoys the challenge of unfamiliar tasks; quickly grasps the essence and the underlying structure of anything.
12. **Motivating Others** - Creates a climate in which people want to do their best; can motivate many kinds of direct reports and team or project members; can assess each person's hot button and use it to get the best out of him/her; pushes tasks and decisions down; empowers others; invites input from each person and shares ownership and visibility; makes each individual feel his/her work is important; is someone people like working for and with.
13. **Negotiating** - Can negotiate successfully in tough situations with both internal and external groups; can settle differences with minimum noise; can win concessions without damaging relationships; can be both direct and forceful as well as diplomatic; gains trust quickly of other parties to the negotiations; has a good sense of timing.
14. **Dealing with Paradox** – Can act in ways that seem contradictory; is very flexible and adaptable when facing tough calls; can combine seeming opposites like being compassionately tough, stand up for self without trampling others, set strong but flexible standards; can act differently depending on the situation; is seen as balanced despite the conflicting demands of the situation.
15. **Perspective** – Looks toward the broadest possible view of an issue/challenge; has broad ranging personal and business interests and pursuits; can easily pose future scenarios; can think globally; can discuss multiple aspects and impacts of issues and project them into the future.
16. **Political Savvy** – Can maneuver through complex political situations effectively and quietly; is sensitive to how people and organizations function; anticipates where the landmines are and plans his/her approach accordingly; views corporate politics as a necessary in organization's life and works to adjust to that reality.
17. **Presentation Skills** – Is effective in a variety of formal presentation settings; one-on-one, small and large groups, with peers, direct reports and bosses; is effective both inside and outside the organization, on both cool data and hot/controversial topics; commands attention and can manage group process during the presentation; can change tactics midstream when something isn't working.
18. **Priority Setting** – Spends his/her time and the time of others on what's important; quickly zeros in on the critical few and puts the trivial many aside; can quickly sense what can help or hinder accomplishing a goal; eliminates roadblocks; creates focus.
19. **Self Knowledge** – Knows personal strengths, weaknesses; opportunities and limits; seeks feedback gaining insights from mistakes; is open to criticism; is not defensive; is

receptive to talking about shortcomings; looks forward to balanced performance review (+’s and –’s) and career decisions.

20. **Strategic Agility** – Sees ahead clearly; can anticipate future consequences and trends accurately; is future oriented; can articulately paint credible pictures and visions of possibilities and likelihoods; can create competitive and breakthrough strategies and plans.
21. **Building Effective Teams** - Blends people into teams when needed; creates strong morale and spirit in his/her team; shares wins and successes; fosters open dialogue; lets people finish and be responsible for their work; defines success in terms of the whole team; creates a feeling of belonging in the team.
22. **Managing Vision and Purpose** – Communicates a compelling and inspired vision or sense of core purpose; talks beyond today; talks about possibilities; is optimistic; creates mileposts and symbols to rally support beyond the vision; makes the vision sharable by everyone; can inspire and motivate entire units or organizations.

* These 22 competencies were identified from a possible 67 as defined in the book *For Your Improvement* (and the corresponding resource cards- the Leadership Competency Assessment Deck) authored and developed by Michael M. Lombardo and Robert W. Eichenger of Lominger Limited Inc. Go to <http://www.lominger.com> for more information on these resources.

Exercise: Self Assessment

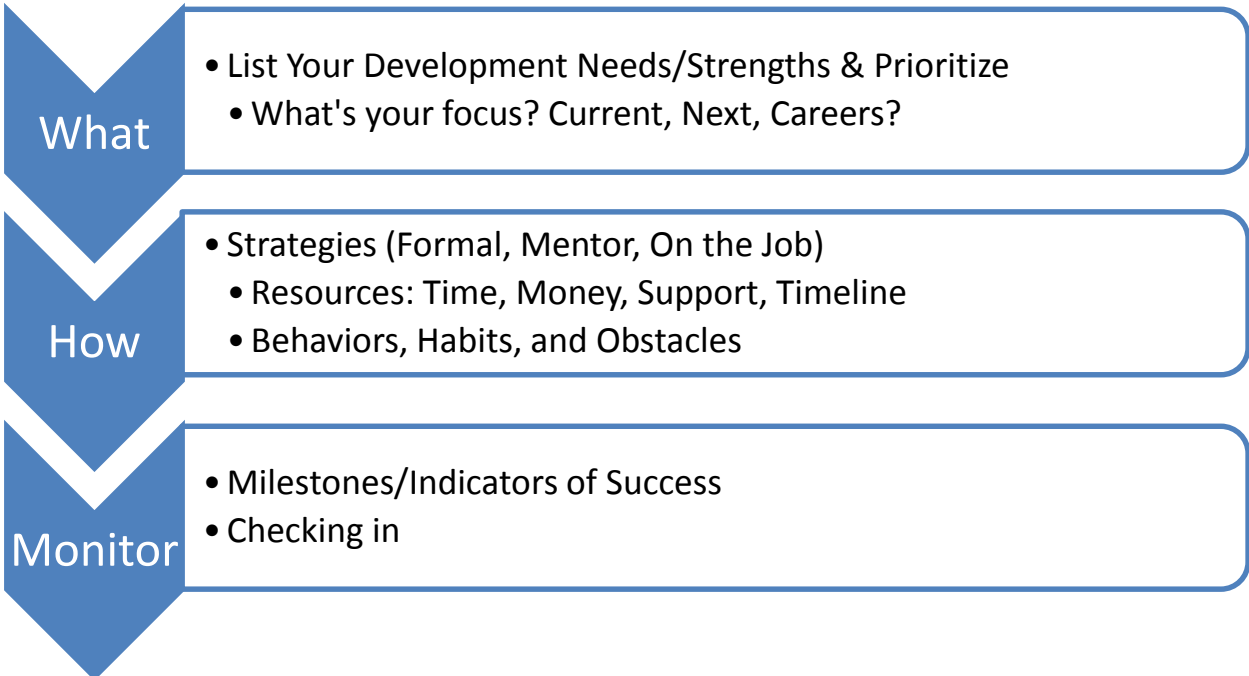
	SCALE 1 to 4		
	1=Not at all Important 4=Very Important		1=Low 4=High
	How Important to Me and My Career?	How Important to My Organization?	Current Level of Competency?
1. Dealing with Ambiguity			
2. Business Acumen			
3. Composure			
4. Delegation			
5. Managing Diversity			
6. Ethics and Values			
7. Hiring and Staffing			
8. Humor			
9. Integrity and Trust			
10. Interpersonal Savvy			
11. Learning on the Fly			
12. Motivating Others			
13. Negotiating			
14. Dealing with Paradox			
15. Perspective			
16. Political Savvy			
17. Presentation Skills			
18. Priority Setting			
19. Self Knowledge			
20. Strategic Agility			
21. Building Effective Teams			
22. Managing Vision and Purpose			

Creating the Plan

Focus of Professional Development



- **Required**
 - What should you do now to ensure that you are meeting all expectations of your current position?
 - **Stretch/Mastery**
 - What should you do now to ensure that you are exceeding expectations and excelling in your current position?
- What should you do now to prepare yourself for a promotion, increased responsibilities or a different job?
- What should you do now to prepare for your career 5+ years from now?



Make your job work for you!

If you wait for someone else to take control of your career, you've waited too long. There are things you can do in your job right now that will provide you with new skills and help build your career. If not, it might be time to find a new job that will!

Strategies:

- Set “stretch” goals for yourself.
- Find a mentor (either in your organization or outside).
- Ask to provide support on projects or programs outside your area to gain new skills and prove your competence and ability – let people see you in action.
- Take classes, read articles, ask your boss and peers what they do (or did) to get where they are now.
- Have a plan! And, tell your boss what that plan is. A good boss will help you find your next job – even if that means leaving the organization – if that is what is best for you.
- Do you want to stay where you are? If yes, work on making this the best job you've ever had. If not, find out what your options are. You may need to leave to move up – but knowing that is critical!
- Go to networking events and conferences and join online communities (such as YNPN, AFP, Idealist Career Fairs, and CompassPoint trainings and events)
- Volunteer; join a board!
- Keep your resume up to date and don't be shy to ask for an informational interview.
- **Most importantly, ask for feedback, feedback, feedback. Most people will not tell you what they think of you or your work until you ask.**

The What - List Your Development Needs/Strengths to Develop (goal setting)

Category	Competency/Skill/Knowledge to Develop Prioritize Priority (1 = Highest, 3 = Lowest) Within each category
Current Job Required (What do you need to succeed now in your current role?)	
Current Job Stretch (What do you need to excel/master your current role?)	
Next Job or Role	
Career Planning	

The How: Strategies (Formal, Mentor, On the Job)

Reflection Questions to Create Strategies

1. Who can provide you support? What kind of support would you need from this person?
2. What else do you need?
3. What information would be helpful for you to know?
4. What behaviors can you change to support your growth?
5. What opportunities are there in our regular work?
6. What habits might need to change?
7. What new practices can you start?
8. How will you know you're developing?
9. What would be an indicator of success?
10. What would keep you from developing in this area? What do you think would help overcome those obstacles?
11. When do you want to start? When do you want to finish?

Use this page as a way to organize your action steps.

Competencies/ Skills to be acquired	Learning Activities (including changes in behavior and/or habits)	Learning Resources (Please including financial and time resources needed)	Time Frame Start – Complete	Learning Success Criteria
<p><i>(Example)</i> Conflict Resolution Skills (Current Job – Required) specific to managing client conflict.</p>	<p>1. Read conflict management org manual. 2. Shadow current staff during a conflict situation. Debrief with experienced staff. 3. Even when a supervisor isn't there to observe, I will debrief the conflict situation and what happened with a peer.</p>	<p>1. manual. Need 1-2 hours to review material. 2. Find experienced staff to observe during client conflict. 3. Supervisor or peer staff availability. Time</p>	<p>1. By end of month 2. Over next 6 months 3. Over next 6 months.</p>	<p>After 6 months, demonstrates the use of effective conflict resolution skills including</p>

Competencies/ Skills to be acquired	Learning Activities (including changes in behavior and/or habits)	Learning Resources (Please including financial and time resources needed)	Time Frame Start – Complete	Learning Success Criteria

Commitments & Reflections

- **What can you do or start within the next week?**
 -
 -
 -
- **What are strategies you will put in place to keep yourself accountable and on-track?**
 -
 -
 -