



Power Up Your Professional Development Plan

From the [N2025 Strategic Plan](#), “We believe in the power of every person. The most important asset at the University of Nebraska is its people — students, staff, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty. It is critical to **provide access** to individualized professional development and effective mentorship **for all members of the university community.**”

As a part of this plan, it is expected that all faculty, post-doctoral fellows, staff, and graduate and professional students have a documented and individualized professional development plan.



Self-assessment

Complete the *Brainstorming Worksheet Self-Assessment* section with your strengths, challenges, and visions. This will provide insight on areas of interest and focus for your plan. It is important to be as open and honest as possible when answering.

Resources

Complete the *Brainstorming Worksheet Resources* and *Barriers* sections.

- In the **Resources** section, identify what you need to be successful with your visions.
- In the **Barriers** section, list any concerns you have. E.g., time, budget, support

EXAMPLES OF RESOURCES & STRATEGIES

10% Formal professional development	20% Interactions with others	70% On-the-job experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University training and workshops • University e-learning portal • University classes with employee scholarships • Attend conferences, seminars, professional chapter meetings, and other presentations • Read journals, magazines, and books • Subscribe to newsletters in your field that are a good source of current information. • External course offerings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking feedback from direct reports, peers, or a critical friend • Maintain membership in professional organizations • Online networking opportunities, i.e., LinkedIn or discussion boards • Mentoring • Communities of practice • Attend networking events • Establish a personal networking team to whom you can turn for advice, suggestions, assistance, and knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking on higher duties • Job rotations • Job shadowing • Cross training • Request feedback on specific tasks to ensure accuracy • Site or campus visit learning opportunity • Stretch projects • Sign up for and participate in job-related committee work i.e. Wellness committee, UNOPA, Staff Senate, Safety committee



Human Resources, Organizational Development & Training

401 Canfield Administration Building South | Lincoln, NE 68588-0438 | 402.472.3101

Set your SMARTER Goals

You first need to narrow your focus and decide which vision(s) belong in your development plan.

- What are your top priorities?
- What's the most value-added goal for your unit?
- What does your supervisor support?
- What do you have time for?
- What has the least barriers to accomplishment?

Complete the SMARTER Professional Development Plan worksheet.

Specific	(Significant, Simple, Strategic)
Well defined, clear, and unambiguous.	Who is involved in this goal? What do I want to accomplish? Where is this goal to be achieved? When do I want to achieve this goal? Why do I want to achieve this goal?
Measurable	(Meaningful, Motivating)
Quantify an indicator of progress.	How many/much? How do I know if I have reached my goal? What is my indicator of progress?
Attainable	(Action-oriented, Appropriate, Ambitious)
Include the action-based steps that you will do to make the goal happen.	Do you have all the necessary skills and resources to achieve this goal? If not, can you obtain them? Is this goal achievable given current conditions? Is it too limited or too ambitious?
Relevant	(Realistic, Results-oriented, Resourced)
Realistic standard to your position and your vision of your career's future.	Does this align with the department, college, university, and overall system objectives? Is this supportive of your current position or your future career goals? Have others done it successfully before?
Time-bound	(Time-based, Time-sensitive)
If the goal is not time-constrained, there will be no sense of urgency and, therefore, less motivation to achieve the goal.	Does my goal have a deadline? By what date do I want to achieve my goal?
Execute	(Evaluate)
Write it down and keep it visible. Recognize and celebrate your accomplishments.	Who will help hold you accountable, Supervisor, employees, coworker? What will indicate you have met this goal? How will you evaluate your progress?
Reflect	(Reassess, Revise)
Reflect on and learn from your progress. Don't be afraid to reassess and revise.	What checkpoints do you have built in your plan for reassessment and possible revisions? What date did you achieve your goal?