

ACADEMIQUE

DIPLOMA OF BUSINESS BSB50215 or BSB50207

Study Support materials for

Manage Personal Work Priorities and Professional Development BSBWOR501



STUDENT HANDOUT

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
1. Establish personal work goals	1.1 Serve as a positive role model in the workplace through personal work planning 1.2 Ensure personal work goals, plans and activities reflect the organisation's plans, and own responsibilities and accountabilities 1.3 Measure and maintain personal performance in varying work conditions, work contexts and when contingencies occur
2. Set and meet own work priorities	2.1 Take initiative to prioritise and facilitate competing demands to achieve personal, team and organisational goals and objectives 2.2 Use technology efficiently and effectively to manage work priorities and commitments 2.3 Maintain appropriate work-life balance, and ensure stress is effectively managed and health is attended to
3. Develop and maintain professional competence	3.1 Assess personal knowledge and skills against competency standards to determine development needs, priorities and plans 3.2 Seek feedback from employees, clients and colleagues and use this feedback to identify and develop ways to improve competence 3.3 Identify, evaluate, select and use development opportunities suitable to personal learning style/s to develop competence 3.4 Participate in networks to enhance personal knowledge, skills and work relationships 3.5 Identify and develop new skills to achieve and maintain a competitive edge

HANDOUT FOR MANAGE PERSONAL WORK PRIORITIES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to manage own performance and professional development. Particular emphasis is on setting and meeting priorities, analysing information and using a range of strategies to develop further competence. No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of endorsement.

Elements of Competency and Performance Criteria

Element	Performance Criteria
1 Establish personal work goals	1.1 Serve as a positive role model in the workplace through personal work planning and organisation
	1.2 Ensure personal work goals, plans and activities reflect the organisation's plans and own responsibilities and accountabilities
	1.3 Measure and maintain personal performance in varying work conditions, work contexts and contingencies
2. Set and meet own work priorities	2.1 Take initiative to prioritise and facilitate competing demands to achieve personal, team and organizational goals and objectives
	2.2 Use technology efficiently and effectively to manage work priorities and commitments
	2.3 Maintain appropriate work life balance and ensure stress is effectively managed and health is attended to
3 Develop and maintain professional competence	3.1 Assess personal knowledge and skills against competency standards to determine development needs, priorities and plans
	3.2 Seek feedback from employees, clients and colleagues and use this feedback to identify and develop ways to improve competence.
	3.3 Identify, evaluate, select and use development opportunities suitable to personal learning style/s to develop competence
	3.4 Undertake participation in networks to enhance personal knowledge, skills and work relationships
	3.5 Identify and develop new skills to achieve and maintain a competitive edge

Every one of us has the same number of minutes in a day or in a year:

1 year = 525 948.766 minutes

1 day = 1440 minutes

But some people are more productive than others.... Why???

Plan, organise and complete own work schedule.

Constant changes in knowledge and technology mean that the skills, knowledge and capabilities individuals need to perform competently in their workplace are also changing. As well as organising our own work schedule, and monitoring and obtaining feedback on performance, we must find the time to undertake career planning and coordinate our professional development. To do this we use time – a valuable but limited resource.

We all have the same amount of time each day, but how effectively we use that time is a matter of choice. We may allow time to control us so that we are pressured by it and achieve most of our workload in a haphazard way, dealing with tasks and people by reacting to them as they become urgent. Alternatively, we can choose to manage our time by establishing priorities, scheduling tasks and eliminating habits that slow down performance.

The latter approach will, of course, give you more control and less stress. Organising and completing your own work schedule allows you to make time work for you. In managing your own work performance it is useful to be aware of the various sorts of time, the different levels of priority and the strategies available for scheduling time and priorities effectively.

Effective prioritising and scheduling is about getting the most important things done. By giving you time to think and put things into perspective, setting priorities enable you to concentrate on important activities and to keep trivial matters in perspective.

Prioritising helps you to distinguish between primary, secondary and urgent activities and to make choices that balance short-term and long-term goals. You are thus able to allocate time to activities in proportion to their real importance.

Primary activities are the important activities in you work schedule. They have a high priority. They should be done but are not urgent, unless you plan badly or delay them until the last minute. Think about your primary, secondary and urgent activities and distinguish clearly in your own mind those that should be done, could be done or must be done. Make the decision to do the primary activities according to the priorities on your work schedule.

While setting priorities is important, it is not the key to achieving work goals and objectives. The key is a time-management plan, which allows you to schedule and complete tasks according to the priorities you set.

Type	Description
Primary activities	Are those that produce the most in terms of results? They have high priority and should have a considerable amount of effort given to them. Primary activities are the most important elements in your time-management and personal planning.
Secondary activities	Are the less important or secondary items that could be done. They receive lower priority than those that should be done. Some secondary activities may even be put aside until later.
Urgent activities	Are not part of your time-management plan? They are the interruptions that MUST be done. They cannot be avoided. When you bunch urgent tasks together and do them in one time slot, you can save.

Effective time management is about focusing on the right priority task at the right time. It is important to know what the priorities are in your job. Once they have been established, you can set goals to help achieve these priorities. In order to prioritise tasks for work, you need to be clear about the purpose of your job.

Think about what are your primary activities? Do you always give them the high priority they deserve?

What are your secondary activities? Do they often seem to interfere with your primary activities and disrupt your work schedule?

How can you become more effective?

Measures of Success

Once you know your job's overall purpose and key areas of responsibility, you can set targets. Targets help you in two ways: they establish a performance standard, giving you something specific to aim for, and help you track your progress and monitor your performance. Each key result should have two or three targets, or measures of success (MOS) – also called key performance indicators (KPI's) and measures of performance (MOP).

Choose targets that measure the most important or critical aspects of a KRA and in some way contribute to the overall goals of your department or organisation. Make each one "SMARTT".

Specific and concise

Measurable

Ambitious (achievable yet challenging)

Related to the overall department and enterprise goals

Time-framed

Trackable, or easily monitored.

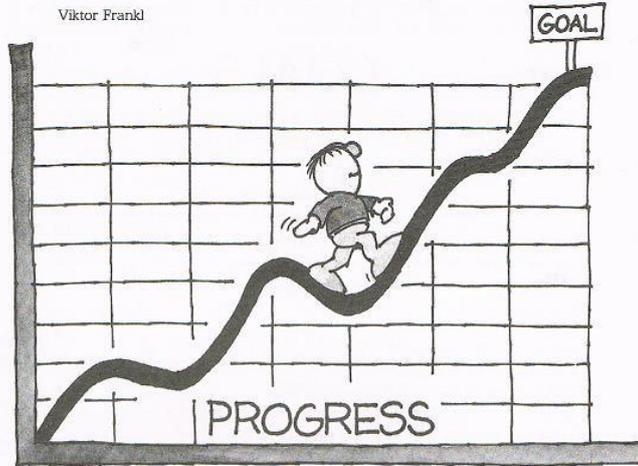
Make your measures of success ambitious. When you think about the accomplishments you're most proud of, they probably took effort, stretched you and extended your skills. When a task is too easy, you won't put much effort into it, yet when it's too hard and seems impossibly out of reach, you won't put in much effort either. The lesson: set targets that stretch you, but don't break you. That makes rising to the challenge of meeting them motivating and satisfying,

(Extract from Management: Theory and Practice. Kris Cole)

GOALS

"Life asks of every individual a contribution and it is up to that individual to discover what it should be."

Viktor Frankl

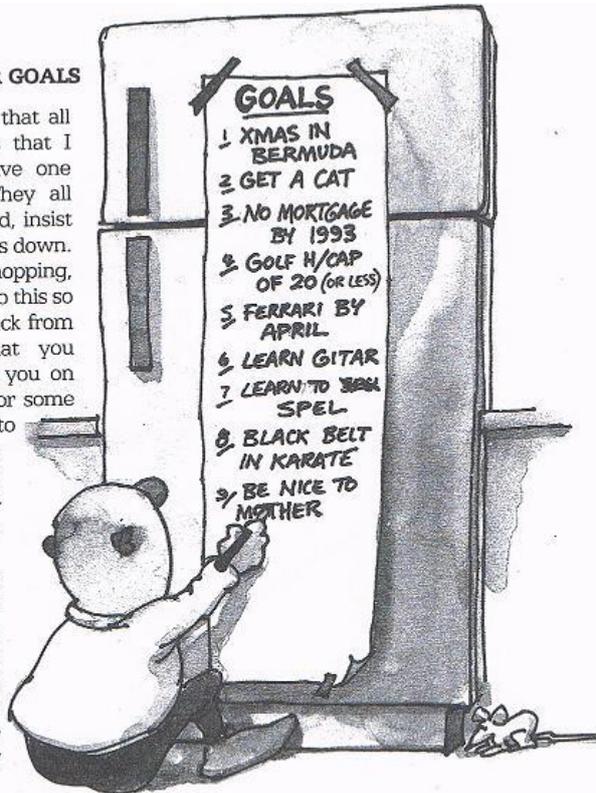


WRITE DOWN YOUR GOALS

I have observed that all motivational speakers that I have ever heard, have one thing in common. They all suggest, instruct, plead, insist that we write our goals down.

When you go shopping, you make a list. You do this so that you will come back from the store with what you wanted. A list keeps you on track. If you go out for some lunch, you don't want to arrive back saying to yourself, "What am I doing with this screwdriver? I went out for a hamburger!"

People make great long lists for parties. They list the napkins and the drinks and the cakes and the cookies to be sure that they have everything they want.



Goal setting gives you something to work towards...

Work Life Balance

If you know how to apply balance in your career and personal life, then you know how to work smarter not just harder.

They say knowing your priorities, having good time management, and having strong drive to reach all of your goals are all the things that you should do in order to achieve work-life balance. Yes, these are all important in having a well-balanced life. But aside from these common or usual tips, there are more things that you can do to avoid experiencing job burnout and have an extra time to do other activities. Here are a few tips for maintaining a healthy work-life balance:

1. Refocus Your Priorities

Each of us has our own priorities. In the workplace, some people focus on getting a lot of benefits from doing a job well. Their main priority is to earn money, more money, and get a promotion. If this is the main reason why you are spending most of your time in the office or in your business, then you are leading into a wrong path. No matter how hard you work, or how much time you invest in your job or career, if your intention or purpose is not good, it will eventually lead to failure and job burnout.

2. Make Your Career Your Friend

You chose to venture into the business or field you're in now because it's where your skills fit and you love to do it, right? This may sound as an old cliché, but it's one thing everyone should always remember: doing what you love will never feel like work.

The reason many employees or workers hate their jobs is because they treat it as their enemy. They don't enjoy doing it and they complain every time things aren't going their way. If you don't like this exhausting and stressful lifestyle, then you should treat your job as your friend. Seek out tasks and discover new things. Enjoy everything about it because if you do, you will never feel tired and stressed.

3. Don't Let Work Dictate Your Level of Commitment

Some people depend their level of commitment to the amount of work that they've accomplished. This should not be the case. As a professional, you must learn to set some boundaries between work and social life. Your job is not forever, but your relationships with people and things will last a lifetime. Don't give all of your time to your clients or customers. Your family and friends also deserve at least some of your precious time.

4. Respect Your "Me" Time

Respect your private time in the same way you respect your clients or co-workers time. If you set a time for yourself or for your family, try your best not to take home work. Give yourself enough time to rest and sleep. You need it in order to become more productive and focus in things that you do.

Initiative and Creativity

Initiative and creativity move the world. They foster the realization of innovative ideas in various industries and contribute to constant development.

There is a great demand for energetic professionals who are inventive and enterprising enough to be proactive in everything they do.

Here are nine tips to help you be one of those proactive professionals and take more initiative at work:

1. Never Stand Still

People who do the things the way they have always been done will in the best case get the same results all over again.

It's not a secret that even for staying in the same place you have to run faster and faster. Thereby, for standing out you need to be creative. You should constantly search for new solutions and more effective approaches. Ideas are the most expensive matters nowadays and so far the best contribution you can offer to your organization.

2. Do More Than is Required of You

Ability to perfectly implement the delegated tasks is, of course, an important quality for being effective at work. But this won't give you the opportunity to stand out. There may be a plenty of people in your organization who succeed in that.

Do you want to be exceptional? Then act exceptional. Try to do something extra all the time. One important rule is to concentrate on areas where you can generate the most visible and remarkable results.

3. Think as a Team Member, Not an Employee

You can't care and devote yourself fully to something that you don't consider as yours. We have the same concept in the workplace too. If you decided to take initiative at work, then think about yourself as a team member.

This means that each success, each achievement of the organization is yours as well. Corporate prosperity will lead to your personal prosperity too. As soon as you establish this mindset you will start caring about each detail and dedicating all your efforts to achieving profound outcomes.

4. Speak Up and Share Your Ideas

Do you have a brilliant idea? Then go ahead and speak about it. A million wonderful ideas haven't meant anything to this world just because they were not told; no one knew about them.

There is always need for fresh, powerful concepts. If your suggestions are based on broad research and adequate facts, then you have a great chance to see them being realized in the near future.

5. Fake it till You Make It

It's not a secret that self-confidence is one of the most powerful characteristics of successful people. It is extremely important in any sphere, place, or circumstance. Your confident gestures, voice, and behavior will have a crucial role on your way up the career ladder. So, develop your self-confidence all the time. Focus on your strengths and build on them to realize your goals.

6. Consider Every Opportunity

Opportunities are hidden everywhere, and people who see them are the ones who prosper. Make a habit of constantly asking yourself: "What opportunities for growth can I carve out of this situation?" If needed, think about this same question again and again. Gradually you will find the answer. You may see a chance to show

your unique professional abilities. You may discover a possibility to take up a perspective project, which will open new career horizons. All you need to do is analyze and act.

7. Always Be Prepared

Tackle new skills and refine your abilities all the time. You learn and grow by challenging yourself. This will give you the knowledge and confidence to show more initiative in current or upcoming projects. It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one than to have an opportunity and not be prepared. That is why you should aim high and constantly grow both as a person and a professional. As soon as you see a chance to use the acquired competence, go ahead and do that.

8. Be Self-Promotional

If you firmly believe in something, don't accept every criticism you receive. So many successful entrepreneurs' ideas were initially considered to be a failure. But they persisted and won. If you have a firm foundation for certifying the success of your insight, then do your best to convince others of its importance. Each situation may require a different approach. Find out the best one to promote your ideas depending on a current circumstance.

9. Ask Too Many Questions

To take initiative you should know how things work and how you can improve them. For this purpose, try to observe everything going on around you as much as you can. Be curious and ask questions. Try to find out how the things work and analyze each situation. This will give birth to new ideas and ways to contribute to the growth of your organization more and more.

<http://www.fastcompany.com/3037092/how-to-be-a-success-at-everything/9-ways-to-take-more-initiative-at-work>

Accept That Some Stress Will Always Be There

Noticing and accepting that stress is a part of what it means to be human and to have a meaningful life is the first step in turning around negative attitudes toward it. "Sometimes, when you're feeling stressed out, you literally have to say to yourself, 'I'm stressed out right now because I care about my job,' or, 'This is stressful because I'm a parent and parenting is stressful,'" McGonagall says.

Look for the Message

Stress is often a reaction that's trying to tell you something. Look for the part of the stress or anxiety response tricking you into thinking you can't handle it. That part is the part that drives you to avoid doing what you need to do."

When you start looking at why you're stressed, you either find meaning or have an opportunity to dissolve it. If your stress level is rising because you're in the 10-item checkout line and the person in front of you has 15

items, ask yourself why that matters. If you can realize that it doesn't matter, it makes it easier to let go of stressors that aren't important. But when the answer is something you care about—such as when you're anxious about your health or job—the realization allows you to connect with that value and put the stress in perspective, she says.

Identify that stress is connected to something you value, it changes the way your body responds to it. How you respond to stress can not only have an impact on your health, including your immune system, but it's also more likely to motivate you to engage with the stress in a way that is productive.

Let Yourself Feel the Stress

The people who do best in stressful situations aren't the ones who seem deliriously happy all the time. In fact, quite the opposite—being able to see the darker side of stress and what you need to learn from the stressor is essential to making it work for you. That may mean feeling anger, recognizing injustice, or admitting mistakes. Those actions are all necessary for using the stressful situation or state as "a catalyst for deepening relationships with colleagues or family members, for strengthening their priorities," she says.

Your Options for Dealing with Stress

When you realize the stressor is there and it's real, you have options in how you're going to deal with it, Fight: Anger or blame are typically the drivers here.

- Flee: This is where we shut down or pretend the stress isn't there.
- Fold: In this option, we surrender or become helpless.
- Face: This option has us facing our fears and dealing with the stressor head on.

The key is to find the best way to deal with the stress at the time versus falling into patterns and coping mechanisms in a knee-jerk way, is

Share Your Stress

Dealing with stress is difficult, and those who are better at it have a safe place to be open about what's bothering them, confiding in a trusted family member, friend, or colleague acts as a pressure valve, and you'll often feel better after you've talked out the situation.

Use It

While dealing with unrelenting negative stress can sap our energy and have a negative effect on performance, optimal performance is usually achieved with a moderate amount of stress, put your anxiety to work by listening to what's causing it, paying particular attention to those factors, and using your heightened state of awareness to do a better job, she says.

<http://www.fastcompany.com/3049879/how-to-be-a-success-at-everything/how-to-make-your-stress-work-in-your-favor>

Another site to have a look at is: <http://www.startupsmart.com.au/home-based-business/20-tips-for-maintaining-a-healthy-worklife-balance.html>

How to help manage your time effectively

A key business driver for a business is time, so using your time efficiently enables you to successfully manage your business and achieve work-life balance.

Time is like money. If you control how you use it, you can create a productive and profitable working environment. If you don't, you can spend your working life always being busy, but not getting the important things done.

It's good to set goals

Few people have the time to do everything so it's important to focus on priorities. Set goals and spend most of your time on activities that help you to achieve these goals.

Give the highest priority to activities that are important and urgent. Consider whether you need to spend time on things that are urgent but not important. Can you delegate them to someone else? Should you be spending any time at all on things that are neither important nor urgent?

Developing plans

Base your plans on your priorities, taking into account your way of working. You might find it useful to plan first your week, then your day:

- Identify which tasks will help you achieve your goals, and allocate your time accordingly.
- Get small, urgent tasks out of the way first.
- Delegate work if other people can do it as well, or more quickly, cheaply or effectively.
- Ensure other people know what they need to achieve each day.
- Divide the principal tasks for the day into achievable blocks of work.
- Tackle them one at a time.

Setting deadlines

Set realistic deadlines for all your activities. With long-term projects, set interim deadlines and a final deadline.

Allow time for contingencies – the longer the project, the more contingency time will be needed.

Decide whether your deadlines are fixed or flexible. Don't allow work (particularly less important work) to take longer than it should. If ten minutes is all a job is worth, make sure it's done in ten minutes.

Schedule your work to suit your temperament at different times of the day or week. For example, if you're at your liveliest and most outgoing in the late morning, schedule your customer calls at that time.

Routines and systems equals benefits

Managing a small business can be made easier by creating systems for routine tasks:

- Consider investing in contact management software or other technology that will help you schedule and manage regular calls and activities.
- Use email for regular contact with customers and employees.
- Use a personal organiser or notepad to capture ideas.

Common occurrences

Establish written procedures for dealing with common events so you can delegate routine tasks wherever possible. For example, develop clear systems others can follow for handling sales queries, logging customer contacts, answering queries, processing sales and invoicing.

Arrange procedures for monitoring performance, until you're certain the tasks are being performed efficiently. Once systems are established, in many cases you should be able to stop worrying.

Build unpleasant or long-term tasks into your routine. For example, automatically call late payers the week a bill becomes overdue. Or, if you have to monitor a project, make sure everyone knows you will want progress feedback at the same time every week.

Handling information better

Find ways of dealing with information overload. For instance, ask for the information you need in a form that suits you. Ask for summaries or charts if you find them easier to deal with.

Consider regularly analysing or summarising the information coming in. For example, summarise reasons for complaints, so you can draw up ways to tackle specific causes.

Restrict your information gathering to what you really need to know. Exclude areas outside your responsibility that don't affect you.

Apply this four-part procedure to all paper that comes across your desk:

1. Act on it – if it's relevant and important.
2. Delegate it – if it's relevant but less important.
3. File it – if it's relevant but not immediately important.
4. Otherwise, bin it.
5. Set deadlines for making decisions. Don't wait until you know everything.

Minimising distractions

However carefully you prioritise the use of your time, your attempts to manage it efficiently will be undermined unless you can find effective ways of dealing with distractions:

1. Manage mail at the beginning of the day. It may have a bearing on your activities during the rest of the day and you will be in a position to deal quickly with any subsequent queries.
2. Limit the time spent on each call, and differentiate calls from VIPs, regular contacts and timewasters.
3. Avoid unproductive and inefficient meetings. Agree on start and finish times in advance and establish an agenda.

4. Use email as a less intrusive form of communication and pick up your messages when it suits you, rather than having to respond immediately.

Be careful not to cut yourself off completely, or you could stifle the flow of ideas and creativity from your colleagues and contacts.

Time analysis

Monitoring your own use of time is an effective way of improving your time management. This involves logging your activities in some detail over a given period, for instance a week. You'll have to do this anyway if you charge for your time.

Once you've worked out how you spend your time, analyse your activities, such as working out which activities contributed most towards achieving your goals and which can be classified as:

- urgent and important
- urgent but not important
- important
- neither urgent nor important

You may well find you're spending 30% of your time on unnecessary activities. This analysis will help you decide what to delegate and what to abandon.

Writing 'to-do' lists

One of the simplest forms of time management is a 'to-do list'. This will remind you what you have to do and help you learn how realistic your scheduling is. Note down what you have to achieve today, or this week.

Tick off tasks as you complete them. Seeing what you've achieved will increase your motivation. Remember to add any new tasks that arise from a completed job.

For long-term projects, it makes sense to use project planning tools. These can be anything from simple memos listing key dates and tasks, to flow charts or project planning software. Choose tools that enable you to see at a glance how well you're performing and whether you need to reschedule tasks or provide additional resources.

Time management tools

Use your diary, Smartphone, or computerised calendar for both day-to-day organisation and forward planning. Calendars that can be accessed by your colleagues will enable them to identify the gaps in your schedule in which they can organise meetings or discussions. Such devices can also record how you've spent your time, jog your memory, alert you to meetings and important tasks, and store useful information such as to-do lists and contact details.

Typical pitfalls

Following are some suggested solutions for the most common time management problems.

Doing it all yourself

Trying to do everything on your own is a common mistake. Aim to delegate jobs that are routine, require no special skills or are time-consuming. Also delegate any jobs that someone is keen to take on – delegation can be good training and an opportunity for people to progress in their jobs.

Next steps

1. Regularly sort out your systems and ensure files are in order.
2. Tackle large projects in sections – you don't have to do everything at once.
3. Concentrate on staying focused and keep this message above your desk: 'What is best use of my time right now?'



Q: How do you eat a whole elephant?

A: One piece at a time

You will be able to accomplish more during your Peak Performance Time. Consider when you are most productive (morning, afternoon, night) and schedule the most important tasks during that time. Perform more routine tasks during non-peak hours of the day. Keep a log to record how much energy and focus you feel at each hour during the day. Keep this log for a couple of days and see if you spot any consistent trends of energy and focus.

Innovation benefits of adopting new technology

Technology has a vital role to play in any modern workplace and can make a huge difference to the way your business operates, and how well your staff carry out their tasks. These days, an online presence is also expected by customers and therefore is an essential component for businesses.

How new technology can help your business

New technology can not only speed processes up, or allow flexible new ways of working, but can transform how your business functions, and can often save you time and money.

There are several ways that an innovative business can make use of technology. For instance, you could use new technology to:

- manage, develop and retain ideas and internal knowledge
- communicate and interact more effectively within an organisation
- create more environmentally friendly and sustainable business practices

Choosing the right technology for your business

In order to understand whether a new technology could help your business, you should review the technology you are presently using and assess how well existing systems work with your current and future business requirements.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Who is using your existing IT systems, and what are they doing?
- How efficient are your current operations?
- Are there any bottlenecks which cause problems?
- Are staff getting stuck on less important tasks?
- Are you duplicating effort between different departments?
- Are there ways of working faster or tasks that could be automated?
- Is your current technology going out of date or causing compatibility issues?
- Are your business needs or processes likely to change in the near future?

Once you have considered these questions, you should have a clear picture of any issues that could be solved by introducing new technology into your workplace.

Greatest benefits of business productivity software:

Using technology to maximize your business productivity creates the platform to realize true business success. Business productivity software ensures organizations have the tools to overcome the challenges of executing on strategy every day and prospering in today's economic times. Increased business productivity can be traced to the automation of processes allowing for faster communication of strategy, increased time spent on strategic priorities and greater project completion rates.

The following are additional ways business productivity software drives business processes more efficiently to gain optimal results:

Create an open and communicative environment. By centrally locating the performance appraisal information within a formal online framework, managers can more easily communicate business strategy and create measurable goals for their employees that will support overall company objectives. It also allows for greater visibility, thereby allowing employees to see the whole picture and understand better how individual goals fit into the company's business objectives. This creates energized and engaged employees, thereby raising the business productivity of the company.

Connect teams virtually within the company. Create employee portals and team sites to help people work productively across the organization, no matter what location or team. You will eliminate "corporate silos" that effectively cut off communication because employees can utilize technology to reach out to others working on similar projects or find experts to answer their questions throughout the organization.

Motivate your employees using technology. Based upon the information gathered in an online performance evaluation, managers can compare current skills with those required for advancement or other recognition or reward opportunities that present themselves as the manager tracks progress on employee goals throughout the year. You may also find you need to redirect employees to different departments if you feel their business productivity could increase elsewhere. If there are impediments to better performance, the company should review why it is happening and try to eliminate these through better allocation of resources or additional training.

Monitor business productivity and employee progress on goals. Online business productivity software solutions enable managers to more easily track progress during every phase of goal completion and offer immediate reinforcement or coaching to keep performance and deadlines on track. This process leads to greater business productivity because your organization is staffed with a workforce of people who are continually learning new skills and being challenged to do their very best. When it comes to the people who work for you, alert, motivated, and happy employees will work harder. Encourage your staff by rewarding them for their successes, using both monetary and non-monetary incentives.

Analyze performance - Today's technology provides advanced reporting and business analysis capability to help you gain a deep understanding of business performance, customer preferences, and market trends. And, your executives and business managers can access performance metrics and analytical reports and use this information to work together to set or redesign strategy.

Conclusion:

Generally speaking, employees want to be appreciated for their hard work. Business productivity software can bridge the gaps in communication and convey to each member of your team that they are valued. With your people working at their highest capabilities and your business aligned from top-to-bottom, you will be creating

a workforce that is engaged, productive and loyal. Feeling valued is the key to employee loyalty which leads to greater business productivity.

Exert from: Success Factors Business Execution for Dummies

Assess personal knowledge and Skills

As you progress through your career, you acquire many different skills from a broad range of experiences and training. Skills fall into a number of categories, and there are different ways to describe them.

Here are some examples:

Skill category	Examples
Using your hands	Assembling things, operating machinery, repairing things
Using your body	Doing outdoor activities like camping, being physically active, having muscular coordination as in gymnastics
Using words	Reading, writing, speaking, teaching
Using your five senses	Observing, inspecting, diagnosing
Using numbers	Counting, computing, record-keeping
Using intuition	Acting on gut reactions, anticipating future events, sizing up a situation or person
Using analytical thinking or logic	Researching, analysing, prioritising
Using originality or creativity	Imagining, inventing, designing, engineering
Using helpfulness	Having sensitivity to others' feelings, conveying warmth, drawing others out, motivating, guiding
Using artistic abilities	Fashioning or shaping things, composing, playing an instrument, painting, decorating, cooking
Using leadership	Initiating new projects, organising, directing, making decisions, taking risks
Using follow through	Using what others have developed, following through on plans or instructions, attending to details, filing, retrieving information

What are your strongest skills?

As you begin exploring developmental opportunities at your organisation, you'll need to know which skills they require. That way, you can decide to what extent these opportunities will allow you to do the following:

- use skills you already have in abundance

- prompt you to stretch skills that you possess to some degree but would like to strengthen
- require you to obtain entirely new skills
- some combination of the above

A great career strategy relies on strong foundations

The form of your career strategy will depend on the kind of person you are. It may be very structured, or you may just need a few notes in each area - such as knowledge, skills and qualities, what you like doing and the type of jobs that interest you.

Step 1: Self-assessment helps you understand your personal and career goals, your interests, preferences, strengths and weaknesses.

Step 2: Consider your career options and identify which available roles fit your interests and abilities.

Step 3: Decide on your career goals

Step 4: Develop and implement a career strategy

Step 5: Review and adjust your career strategy

Step 1 Self-assessment

Life values

Consider what is important to you. We all have different values, needs and motivations. Our work takes up a significant part of our day - usually a third or more - and has a significant impact on other aspects of our life, including our sense of self-worth and wellbeing. This is why it is very important to carefully consider your values and needs when planning your career direction and developing your career strategy.

Use these exercises to help you establish your life values:

- career planning chart
- examining life values
- career/life planning timeline
- general requirements of a job

These exercises will help you decide your essential and preferred job requirements:

- Where am I right now?
- motivated abilities patterns
- career questions

Skills, knowledge and personal qualities

It is important to understand your skills, knowledge and personal qualities so you can match them to jobs you would like to do. This will also help you identify the knowledge and skills you might need to acquire, or the personal qualities you might need, to achieve your career goals. An accurate and realistic assessment of these things is vital to an achievable career strategy.

This kind of understanding is a powerful aid when selling yourself for potential jobs. It will also boost your self-esteem and confidence.

Try to think of your skills in terms of those that are transferable and those that are specialised. Think about how the skills you use in one job could be used or adapted elsewhere. A smart career strategy needs to be flexible and adaptable. So describe your skills in a way that makes them applicable to the widest range of situations.

Career planning barriers

Despite working hard on your career strategy, you might sometimes come up against obstacles or hindrances you were unaware of or had not considered. The 'Examining the barriers using force field analysis' exercise will help you to explore those obstacles.

Step 2 Consider the options

Often, the most difficult part of career strategy and planning is finding out what jobs are likely to suit your best. The good news is your choice might be wider than you had realised. It's important to consider each of the options against your values and preferences. Your options are broadly described in the table below. You can also get more information about jobs in government by browsing these links:

Step 3 Decide on your goals

If you have not decided on your career goals, or you want to revise them, start by considering your career goals for the next two years. What do you want to be doing in two years' time? What about five and ten years' time? This kind of thinking helps break down big picture career strategy and planning into manageable pieces. The SMARTER system can be useful for planning your career goals:

Specific: be as clear as you can and avoid ambiguous statements.

Measurable: so you can see what you have achieved.

Achievable: provides motivation, but also keep your goals reachable.

Realistic: be reasonable and avoid the realms of fantasy.

Timely: create timeframes for completing steps, for example, doing short courses or talking with someone about the skills required for a particular job.

Empowering: make sure your goals feel right for you and help you make the changes you want.

Reviewable: do not set your goals in concrete; be flexible.

Step 4 Develop and implement your career strategy

Now you have decided on your goals, you can develop an action plan to help you put your career strategy into action. Remember, planning will increase the likelihood of success, but it's important to remain flexible and open-minded. You might have a couple of choices that interest you so take opportunities to prepare for both.

As you progress, your ideas might become more specific. The career planning chart provides a simple way to put the information together. As a starting point, here are some questions to ask yourself:

- **Career planning checklist**
- Do you need additional job skills, experience or information?
- What areas of yourself will you need to develop?
- Do you need to develop a wider network or links with specific people?
- Is there a course you need to do (perhaps to gain specific qualifications or skills)?

- Do you need to find ways to demonstrate your skills and knowledge so you can provide evidence of what you can do?
- What actions do you need to take to realise your career goals?
- Do you need to find out more about what would be required to achieve your career goals?
- Do you need to find out more about what is available? If so, how will you do this?
- What kind of work experience would be helpful to you?
- What new job skills or knowledge will you need?
- Do you need to demonstrate you have job skills in particular areas?
- Are there contacts you can make, or relationships you can develop, that might help you?
- Are there any changes you could make to the way you deal with people or work situations that might increase your likelihood of achieving your goals? How will you start to do this?
- Who can you discuss your goals with? When will you do this?
- Are you clear about the type of work you would like to do? How can you clarify this further?
- Do you have a supportive network? Do you believe you are recognised as able to contribute information to this network? If not, what could you do about this?
- Do you have a mentor with whom you can discuss both the technical content and the intangibles of your job? If not, have you thought about finding a mentor? Is there someone in your workplace or elsewhere you could approach?
- Do you need to make some radical changes to your present direction? What are the first steps to achieving this change in direction and how will you take these steps?
- Do you think you will need to undertake further study? What steps could you take to do this?
- Do you feel in charge of your own career direction? If not, how can you gain more confidence and take charge?

When preparing your career strategy action plan, include WHAT you will do and HOW you will do it. Make a list of people whose help you will seek and draw up a time plan of WHEN you will do each action. The timeframe should be at least 12 months, however, a longer period may be appropriate.

Step 5 Review and adjust your plan

Career planning is a way of making the best use of your current situation and foreseeable opportunities. Given that unpredictable events and changes can occur over time, view your plan as a guide and allow space for adjustments and changes to your approach.

Draw on your experiences at work to help you achieve your goals. You will generally find it helpful to revisit your plan each year. Remember, the career strategy you put in place at one stage of your life may not be relevant once you have achieved certain goals and experienced other job and life events.

Revisiting your strategy will help to reinforce and clarify your thinking, and can help you decide if you need to change your career strategy, seek help or advice or put more effort into achieving your goals.

The first step, though, is to take stock of your existing skills, and to assess which ones are your strongest. There are several ways to do this, including these:

- experimenting with assessment tools, checklists and short exercises
- asking your friends, family, and colleagues to give their opinions about what you do best

Know your transferable skills

When assessing your skills, it's especially important to identify your transferable skills. These are skills that have value regardless of the business context in which you're using them.

For example:

- writing
- motivating others
- organising data
- interpreting information

Knowing this information allows you to widen the selection of potentially interesting work opportunities to include all those in which you would use your transferable skills.

You can avoid the common misconception that, in order to try a new work area, you need to develop a whole new set of skills. You may realise you don't necessarily need to go back to school to develop new skills for a different opportunity.

You can market yourself to potential new supervisors in a whole new area of work by pointing out your transferable skills.

Do you worry that you can't apply your current skills to a new job? By identifying your transferable skills, you might find that you have the necessary qualifications after all.

Four points about skills

In assessing your skills, keep these points in mind:

1. Skills are a threshold variable in your ability to do a job successfully. You need enough of a certain skill (being able to lift 50-pound bags, for example), but in many cases, having a lot more of that same skill (being able to lift 500-pound bags) won't make you any more successful.
2. It's easy to vary your skills. Compared to your core business interests and work values, your skill set can change relatively easily. That is, you can strengthen existing skills or acquire new ones through practice, training, and new experiences.
3. It's perfectly okay to have both strengths and weaknesses. Often, when people begin exploring new positions at work, they assume that they have to be good at just about everything. The fact is, we all have both strengths and weaknesses — that's part of what makes us who we are. Don't feel bad if you lack certain skills; everyone does.
4. Weigh the benefits of developing new skills. Investing in skill development can be costly, in terms of time, effort, and money (possibly).

So, when you're evaluating a potential new opportunity at work, spend some time deciding whether you want to invest in developing the skills that the opportunity requires.

Put it all together

Once you've assessed your skills, the next step is to get a complete picture of who you are by combining the skills information with what you learned about your core business interests and work values.

You can now use this knowledge and information to redefine your current role in order to develop yourself professionally.

You can also begin evaluating the growth opportunities available at your company and pick the most

appropriate one for you.

Throughout this process of gaining knowledge and information about yourself, your interests, values, and skills, remember that interests and values matter the most. When evaluating a career development opportunity, make sure that it matches your core business interests and work values. If it does, you may well decide to obtain the skills that will help you perform in that new position.

Start the growth opportunity search

With help from other sections of the career management module in HMM you have hopefully now worked to identify your deepest business interests, clarify your most important work reward values, and assess your strongest skills. Maybe you've even defined a career-opportunity target.

What's the next step on the path? Many companies have an explicit process in place to enable employees to explore and pursue new opportunities. For example, some organisations suggest that you visit their career management centre, review the job bank, and then follow their guidelines.

Other companies ask that you first talk with your supervisor. That way, he or she can become aware of your search and help you either redefine your current role or identify potential opportunities elsewhere in the organisation.

Indeed, in most organisations, helping direct reports clarify their goals and find appropriate growth opportunities are important responsibilities for managers. By supporting you in this way, your manager helps the organisation retain a valued employee - a key step for any company that wants to stay competitive in today's economy. You can provide the same kind of support for your direct reports.

<http://www.cimaglobal.com/Thought-leadership/Newsletters/Insight-e-magazine/Insight-2009/Insight-September-2009/Career-management-how-to-assess-your-skills/>

Helpful links:

<http://smallbusiness.chron.com/positive-modeling-workplace-35099.html>

http://www.hrdaily.com.au/nl06_news_selected.php?selkey=1228

https://www.successfactors.com/en_us/lp/articles/using-technology-to-increase-your-business-productivity.html

<http://www.industryweek.com/leadership/12-key-strategies-achieving-work-life-balance>

<https://www.education.gov.au/career-development>

<http://students.fortresslearning.com.au/bsbwor501a-manage-personal-work-priorities-and-professional-development/section-3-develop-and-maintain-professional-competence-3/>

<https://www.apaexcellence.org/resources/creatingahealthyworkplace/employeegrowth/>

<http://techcrunch.com/2014/06/28/the-rise-of-the-social-professional-networks/>

<http://careers.vic.gov.au/exploration/job-programs>