

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT (SDV)

Continuous Development involves proactively taking actions to improve personal capability. It includes being willing to assess one's own level of development or expertise relative to one's current job or as part of focused career planning.

<i>This Means...</i>	<i>This Doesn't Mean...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actively seeking feedback and suggestions as a significant source of learning and improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waiting for clients or colleagues to provide you with feedback and advice.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working to improve your skills and push your "spare mental capacity" and seeking developmental projects and tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being content with what you already know and sticking to projects and tasks similar to ones you have done before
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regarding upgrading ones professional skills as a continuous process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading skills only when the topic comes up during a performance planning discussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring personal strengths and weaknesses and learning from mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generalizing personal shortcomings and viewing them as unchangeable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding how business issues, processes and outcomes effect Organization/Government's long-term outlook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting short-term job objectives without considering long-term opportunities for the Organization/Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying new tools, methods and concepts that will impact the way the Organization does business over the next 3-5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assuming that others will tell you about a new approach when you need to know
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actively managing your own career development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending courses because they are interesting rather than because they address a specific learning need

**Developmental
Activities**

Level 1-2 Activities

Purposely seek out opportunities to strengthen your own abilities and update your job knowledge and skills.

- Read the latest pertinent journals, books and articles which will extend your knowledge.
- Attend pertinent seminars, workshops, information meetings and/or courses regularly.

Reflection Tip:

- * Use the Internet as a source of information.

Keep a New Idea file.

- File any new ideas and key learning points you come across in readings, meetings, presentations, courses, conversations etc.
- Review your New Idea file periodically.
- Choose ideas that you will take action on and develop a plan for learning more to execute the idea.

Join a Professional Association.

- Join an association outside the government that consists of participants from all areas in your field of expertise, or service sector.
- Try to “learn” one new approach or idea from each session that you attend.
- Consider how that new approach or idea could impact the work that you already do.

Reflection Tip:

- * What are the challenges in other sectors?

Find effective ways of building your development needs into the work you do.

- Think of an area you consider to be “leading edge” in your sector.
- Identify a project in that area in which you should increase your knowledge.
- Assess whether you could be assigned to work in that area.
- List current qualifications and learning opportunities.

- Apply to work on this project. This may be a temporary assignment or an addition to regular duties.
- Maintain log of personal progress in growth areas.

Reflection Tip:

- * Look for leading-edge opportunities.

Ask your manager to identify key learning experiences in his or her career.

- Discuss the formal and on-the-job experiences that led to new knowledge, skills, or insights.
- Relate these experiences to your own areas of interest.
- With your manager's input, identify similar opportunities to develop your own expertise.

Review recent career experiences.

- Identify what you could have done to improve your performance.
- Identify specific learning needs/skills that would have contributed to a bigger success.
- Build a plan to acquire those skills (include timelines and markers of success).

Level 3-4 Activities

Explore your personal strengths and weaknesses with a view to improvement.

- List your perceived strengths and weaknesses.
- Discuss your strengths and weaknesses with your colleagues, superior and/or mentor.
- Draw up an action plan.

Reflection Tip:

- * Be open to suggestions.

Get feedback from your manager on your commitment to personal development.

- Solicit feedback and perceptions on your ability to recognize new and emerging ideas and apply them to the organization's mandate.
- Ask others to provide you with feedback in this area. Are you perceived as a leader or champion in applying new ideas and approaches?
- Observe others whom you consider outstanding in their commitment to personal development and what they do to learn about and apply new areas of expertise.

Reflection Tip:

- * Have you heard this before?

Meet with a colleague whose area of expertise differs from yours.

- Think of a colleague who you consider to be a "leading edge" expert in their field of expertise.
- Arrange a meeting with your colleague.
- Prepare a list of questions that you would like your colleague to address.
- Ask them for suggestions on how to increase your own ability in this field.

Develop an exchange forum of experts.

- Invite a number of experts and interested parties to participate in an ongoing exchange forum of ideas and learning.
- Include people from different areas of the government or even from outside of the government.

Develop a personal learning agenda.

- Refer to your long-term (e.g. 3-5 years) career goal(s).
- Keeping your career goal(s) in mind, prepare a list of all the knowledge and skill areas you will need to acquire. Be as specific and detailed as you can for each area.
- For each development area you identified, write the steps you will need to take to acquire the necessary knowledge and skill (e.g. formal educational programs, job experiences, etc.).
- Assign target completion dates for each step. Commit to taking the first step.

Reflection Tip:

- * Share your learning plan with your manager and ask for their support.

Identify a new or emerging trend that will have a future impact on the organization's/government's mandate.

- Continually scan the popular media for interesting or unusual trends in technology, demographics, innovative business education, politics, lifestyles.
- Read books written by futurists (e.g. Faith Popcorn).
- Identify one or two trends that could enhance or potentially threaten current services the government or your organization offers.
- Share your findings with your colleagues. Identify one or two actions that could be taken immediately to exploit your research.

Ask your mentor and/or a person who holds a job similar to the one you aspire for to identify key learning experiences in his or her career.

- Discuss the formal and on-the-job experiences that led to new knowledge, skills, or insights.
- Relate these experiences to your own areas of interest.
- With their input, identify similar opportunities to develop your own expertise.

Reflection Tip:

- * Apply what you have learned.

Assess your own learning style and gain insight into what drives your self-development.

- Reflect on your own past learnings and consider times where you felt particularly effective in your ability to develop new skills and acquire new knowledge.
- Consider the conditions that existed at the time and what motivated you to be so effective. Consider the following questions and try and recall specific events:
 - ⇒ When did you feel you were pushed to the edge of your capability?
 - ⇒ When did you feel your were operating at your peak?
 - ⇒ When did you actively need to learn new or additional knowledge to solve a problem or perform a job duty?
 - ⇒ When did you have the impression that you discovered something new about yourself?
 - ⇒ When thinking through a situation led you to discover a new way to do something?
- For each event write out a short synopsis of the circumstances of what happened and what you did. Then write out what you were thinking about at the time.

- Once you have your events synopsis look for any common trends and consider what drives you to reinvest and operate at your peak. (i.e., personal challenge, opportunity to impact others, fear/anxiety, success, failure, working with others, working on your own, being in control, drive to understand, your boss, recognition, personal interests etc.).
- Taking the time to examine how you've learned in that past can help you in your effort to be proactive in your self-development initiatives.

Volunteer for projects and new initiatives that involve topics that are new and different from your normal mandate, or represent “ground-breaking” areas for your area of responsibility, where existing policies and practices do not apply.

- Take advantage of this opportunity to experiment with doing things in a new way and exploring opportunities from a broad perspective.
- Integrate new trends to first time business issues. Make a conscious effort not to impose the old, comfortable way of doing things on this new initiative.

Reflection Tip:

- * What is the impact or outcome of this new way of thinking?

Do something dramatically different to improve your ability to think about learning from a broad perspective.

- Three or four times a year, read something that is dramatically different from the material you normally read or participate in an activity that you normally don't do.
- Make a conscious effort to broaden your perspective or thinking.
- Think of ideas, approaches or contacts that might be useful to your or your organization, to help develop business opportunities.

Reflection Tip:

- * Discuss what you've read with a peer and brainstorm implications.

Seek out creative thinkers.

- Identify people that are considered highly creative within your organization, outside your organization and beyond.
- Arrange a meeting(s) to discuss how they approach issues and identify new ideas. Incorporate some of their ideas into your business plans.
- Read about creative thinkers from the past and present, e.g., Einstein, Galileo, Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, etc.

Develop your knowledge of foreign business practices across broad governmental sectors.

- Identify government industry leaders in other countries and arrange discussions regarding business strategy and the unique implications of their culture/stakeholder groups.
- Consider what drivers influence approaches that differ from yours.