

SET YOUR GOALS FOR SUCCESS!

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ABSTRACT: Planning and setting goals for staff development is essential for successful staff development programs. This paper looks at the questions an individual needs to ask when developing goals and plans for individual staff development.

INTRODUCTION

Alice: Which road do I take?
Cat: Where do you want to go?
Alice: I don't know.
Cat: Then it doesn't matter.

Alice in Wonderland
Lewis Carroll

Many of us, like Alice, are confused about where we want to go when we attempt to set staff development goals for ourselves. It is necessary to decide on our destination in terms of goals, define our map of the environment in which we work, and determine the road which will take us to our destination in the form of a well thought out and realistic plan.

YOUR DESTINATION

There are several steps in designing your individual staff development goals. First, clearly and succinctly describe what you want to achieve. Do you need to acquire a specific skill or ability? Do you want to develop a trait or attitude?

Second, define the nature of each of your goals. Should it be concrete and self-fulfilling such as a specific skill, e.g., the need to learn a word processing program so that naming the goal and reaching it is self-fulfilling? Or, should it be sustainable and self-renewing such as needing to continually learn the ever-changing technology paramount to your work?

Third, determine each goal's relationship to the responsibilities of your current position. Does it help you do a better job? Will it add dimension to your position? If it adds dimension to your job, will it lead to a promotion or a higher level of job responsibility?

Finally, decide if your goals can be achieved in your current organizational reality. Does your organization support and encourage individuals to set and pursue individual staff development goals? Does your organization provide support in the form of flexible scheduling, financial aid, leave time, etc.?

YOUR MAP

In order to reach your goals, you need to develop a plan, or map, to direct your course. Begin by considering your current work environment. What is your position within the department or organization? Do you work independently or as part of a team? Can you set a goal which applies only to your job responsibilities or should the goal be shared by the members of the team in which you work?

Is your position unique, requiring specialized skill development outside the arena of training offered by your organization? Or is your position one within a class of positions, all of which receive the same training?

What are your responsibilities to your co-workers, your supervisor, your department, and your organization? Will the staff development goals you establish be aligned with and supportive of the other employees and your organization as a whole?

YOUR ROAD

Once you know where you're going, the goals you want to achieve, and you understand the environment in which you work and pursue goals, then you are ready to plot your path to successful goal achievement by practicing reflective self-analysis and self-assessment.

Practicing reflective self-analysis requires you to be honest about yourself and to reflect on your work experiences. What do you do well? What do you try to avoid doing? What would you like to do more of?

Also, reflect on your characteristics as a learner. What is your preferred learning style? What is your level of perseverance?

In practicing self-assessment, evaluate your basic knowledge, skills and abilities, learning strengths and weaknesses, and your need to grow in each of these areas. Assess your capabilities to build competencies. Ask yourself questions about each of these areas as they relate to your job duties.

When setting your staff development goals, be cautious about roadblocks - roadblocks you erect yourself. Potential roadblocks include: lack of confidence, lack of relevance, time constraints, low personal priority, cost, personal or work problems, and unrealistic expectations.

If you lack the confidence to take action in achieving your goals, setting them is a futile exercise?

If you find little relevance in the goals you set, they aren't worth achieving?

If you believe you don't have the time to pursue your goals, why take the time to establish any?

If there is no financial support when needed, how realistic is your goal?

If you place a low priority on setting staff development goals, what is your priority for job growth?

If you experience overwhelming personal or work problems, what potential is there for successful goal achievement?

If you hold unrealistic expectations as to what your goals will gain you, are you following a self-defeating course of action?

SUMMARY

Setting your staff development goals requires positive thinking and planning; in other words, a constructive attitude and lots of hard work. Know yourself and your work environment. Gather needed information and gain support from pertinent staff and administrators.

If your goals are realistic and you are prepared and confident to achieve them, success is just around the corner.

Without goals, and plans to reach them, you are like a ship that has set sail with no destination.
-- Fizhugh Dodson

MAREPAC: A COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT: My poster provides a background on the establishment of the Marine Resources Pacific Consortium (MAREPAC) as well as a look to the future development of this group, which includes entities in Micronesia and American Samoa. MAREPAC was established in 1999 to meet the needs of resource managers and educators in the region, and membership consists of key government agencies, community groups and NGOs, and research and educational institutions in each member entity. Library involvement in MAREPAC is an essential component of the group's first five-year plan, and this activity will be coordinated by the respective college libraries in the region covered by MAREPAC. The potential role of IAMS LIC in assisting our regional efforts will be discussed.