

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

**A Personal  
Professional  
Development Plan  
Workbook**

Michigan State University Extension  
Adapted from Colorado State University Extension

**Adapted 1/03**

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# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

## A PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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# **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: Your Responsibility**

## **Introduction**

Michigan State University Extension is sincerely concerned about program and personnel. The system believes in equipping everyone with the necessary skills so that each employee's performance adds excellence to the organization and the individual. We understand that informed staff will deliver useful programs with high impact. This workbook is a guide, designed to assist you on a path of professional excellence.

Every member of MSUE must be aware of the need to continuously improve job performance and efficiency through self-improvement activities.

Individual professional development becomes increasingly important in times of rapid change. The increasing complexity of society will require that extension employees engage in lifelong learning in order to maintain professional expertise. Some changes affecting Extension professionals are: the knowledge explosion, higher educational levels of clientele, new Extension audiences, new and different program demands, and the changing roles of Extension professionals.

## **Managing Your Professional Growth**

A career, the pursuit of consecutive, progressive achievement especially in public, professional, or business employment, is a personal choice that entails commitment, perseverance, and a plan.

Professional growth in a career requires the continuous acquisition of knowledge and skills through study, instruction, investigation, and practice. It is an on-going process.

Career planning involves visualizing what you want to be doing in the future within your profession. Career planning enables professionals to set goals and define specific tasks that must be accomplished in order to reach those goals. At the same time, career planning considers options, and alternatives. Flexibility is important as we cannot know the future.

You can work to create your future (proactive) or you can let the future happen to you (reactive). MSUE encourages you to be proactive.

## **Expectations and Responsibilities**

There are two expectations for the professional development of personnel in Michigan State Extension. These expectations explain the relationship between the employee and the organization.

The first expectation is that Extension professionals will grow in their profession; that they will continually maintain a cutting edge state of knowledge that includes technical, people, and process knowledge and skills. Many privileges and opportunities are provided by the Extension organization and Michigan State University. However, the initiative for professional development must come from you.

Your immediate supervisor assumes the primary responsibility for coaching you in the identification of training needs through the appraisal and counseling process. In Extension, everyone is expected to have a professional development plan. Your plan will be included in materials presented for your annual performance appraisal.

The second expectation is that the organization will offer guidance, growth opportunities, time, and some financial support, when available, for the professional development of staff. It is our belief that greater employee skills result in higher quality programming.

There can be many different paths to the same professional development targets. No two individuals will travel the same path the same way at the same time.

### **Resources for Professional Development**

There is often financial support available to help you accomplish your goals. University scholarships and loans are options to consider. Outside organizations may have support monies available for specific workshops. Extension may fund appropriate knowledge and skill acquisition. Contact your Regional Office and the MSUE Staff Development webpages for current information on these resources. In all cases, the requested resources should be consistent with the individual's professional development plan.

The time necessary for professional development activities can be official leave or study leave. Each professional has 18 days of professional development time available per year to pursue learning activities. Additional time may be requested to participate in a special workshop or attend graduate classes.

### **Who Can Help?**

There are many resource people who can assist you in career planning.

Family and friends can give assistance in identifying options and resources, as well as providing support and understanding. You may want to ask other people to listen and reflect on your thinking and planning.

Peers often know the employment environment very well. They have probably thought about many of the same questions that have occurred to you, understand the available resources and options, and have considered similar professional growth opportunities. Some may be willing to share their personal plans and results with you.

Supervisors have experienced one possible direction you may be considering. You might ask them what they did to prepare, difficulties they had, surprises they experienced, what they might do differently for their present position, and whether supervision is a satisfying career direction for them.

Human Resource Professionals are trained specialists who have experience in the professional growth process. Tests, measurements, employment records, and knowledge of resources are tools that trained counselors can use to assist you. Contact the Staff Development Office for suggestions or

referrals.

Mentors assist new staff in learning about the Extension profession and how to be successful. The mentor program for new Extension employees is a part of the new staff orientation and is intended to complement the responsibility of your supervisor who is primary in the orientation process. The Mentor Program will function for the first thirty-six months of your employment.

The mentors duties/roles include:

- represent Michigan State University Extension
- help new staff understand the role of a professional in MSUE
- encourage new staff to work within the system
- assist with the understanding of the Extension education process, including program development
- provide advice on/critique of program plans
- make referrals to appropriate staff within the MSUE system, or elsewhere as needed
- be a good listener, provide counsel
- serve as a sounding board, advisor, and coach
- provide a confidential point of view in a safe environment

For New Staff, the mentoring relationship is secondary to the supervisory relationship and complements the formal orientation process. During your first year you will visit with mentors by phone, and periodically at their office.

The supervisor supports the mentor and the mentoring process.

You will also identify informal mentors throughout your professional journey.

Staff Development Personnel can help you find information, references, and resources to support your professional goals.

## **Types of Staff Development**

Each individual professional development plan will be built on a combination of experiences. Extension staff need a variety of professional development opportunities which will maintain and strengthen professional competencies. The following opportunities may be included in your plan:

### **Orientation**

Regardless of previous training, education, and experience, staff need an appropriate introduction to the job. Learning experiences for new personnel, generally referred to as orientation, begin the first day on the job and continue through the first few years of employment. The objectives of an orientation program are to enable beginning Extension employees to accept their responsibilities with confidence, to understand what is expected of them, and to feel secure in their work environment.

The exact content and nature of the experiences must be individualized to the background of the

staff member and the requirements of the particular position assignment. Just as important as orientation for new personnel is orientation of experienced employees who have been promoted or reassigned to new job responsibilities. Training designed to facilitate the transition should be planned. The benefits of an orientation program include:

- Staff become effective and productive more rapidly.
- Staff learn more quickly to measure up to standards of performance and job expectations, thus increasing their value to the organization while also satisfying human needs for personal growth.

Staff needs will differ. However, all personnel will likely have educational needs in each of the following areas:

- Extension philosophy, history, organization, policies and internal procedures, including those which assure equal opportunity in programs and employment.
- The methods and procedures essential for planning, implementing, evaluating and reporting Extension programs.
- Roles and relationships within the Extension system.
- Relationships with the total university and external agencies.
- Human, technical and other support resources available.
- Personnel policies, procedures, expectations and performance criteria related to specific work involved in the assigned position.
- Expectations and resources available in specific role assignments.
- Staff development and career opportunities available for future growth and development.

These needs may be met through learning experiences organized on an individual and/or group basis. In all aspects of orientation, the immediate supervisor is responsible for assuring that needed learning opportunities are provided and utilized. Staff development personnel should provide leadership in developing policies and procedures and should assist in designing orientation programs with supervisors and appropriate other persons. Staff development experiences should be coordinated to provide sequence, continuity, integration and timeliness.

Effective orientation programs are an essential part of a strong professional development program. Such programs are invaluable for creating a healthy organizational *Aesprit de corps*. This often results in future informal contacts among participants. Orientation class members often seek and share information, receive and give guidance and moral support, and establish many on-going working relationships.

## **In-Service Education**

Changes in society present challenges and opportunities that necessitate new programs, new methods, and new and increased abilities of staff members. An expanding knowledge base, new technology and increasingly diverse clientele groups demand continuous adjustment by Extension personnel. A comprehensive staff development program provides opportunities for staff to maintain and enhance technical knowledge and process skills. Such a program assures a continuous high level of staff competence and upholds the Extension System's reputation as a highly respected and trusted educational institution.

In service education will help experienced staff members to:

- Enhance existing and develop new technical subject matter competencies to keep current of and, if possible, stay ahead of change.
- Maintain and enhance competencies in program development, educational methodology and communication processes, including use of new educational technologies as appropriate to program responsibilities.
- Enhance ability to communicate with Extension's various publics as appropriate to their position of responsibility.
- Become more effective in working with and through existing leaders and to develop leadership abilities in others.
- Build the analytical skills needed to inventory and assess the human, physical, economic, social and political resources and trends critical to decision making.
- Take a broader view and yet focus more sharply on particular Extension roles and responsibilities and update approaches to carrying out responsibilities.
- Acquire the capacity to deal with changing situations.

In exploring both group and individual opportunities for continued learning, both non-traditional and traditional approaches should be considered. Staff development programs can be used as models for introducing educational methodology which participants can later adapt and use. Also, persons having staff development leadership responsibility should maintain communications with others involved in adult and continuing education whom may be knowledgeable about innovative approaches which would be useful in Extension.

## **Pursuit of Undergraduate or Graduate Degrees**

As an integral part of a university system and to more effectively serve Extension clientele, staff must attain academic excellence. Both Program Associates and Educators need to continually strive to improve their basic and applied knowledge. The technical knowledge and process skills derived from degree work adds to staff capacity to meet clientele needs and increases the stature of staff among

colleagues and clientele. A comprehensive staff development program provides opportunities for staff to engage in continuing education through college credit acquisition, graduate study programs and formal professional development activities. Information on study leaves may be found in the Administrative Handbook.

## **External Training Opportunities**

A comprehensive staff development program includes support for short-term individual professional experiences which are not as extensive as the graduate education programs or in-service education programs sponsored by the organization. Educational programs tailored to meet individual needs have far greater flexibility in content and scheduling than Extension sponsored opportunities. Many private, nonprofit public sector organizations offer valuable training that can significantly contribute to professional development.

Michigan State University Extension provides some financial support for such activities. Professional Improvement Funds are available for delivering papers at national and international conferences, for specific professional development activities and for graduate study. Proposals are due periodically throughout the year. Go to the Staff Development section of the MSUE website for further information and forms.

## **Informal Learning**

Informal learning can be very valuable in your professional growth. A multimillion dollar research study by the U. S. Department of Labor finds that 70 percent of workplace learning is informal.

Informal learning includes learning by doing and processing through verbalization. Examples are team and committee work; asking a peer for advice; discussing a journal article with a colleague; interactions with customers, mentors and supervisors; and meetings with volunteers, decision makers and collaborators. Some people describe it as *learning on the fly* and *just doing one's job*.

Informal learning helps develop skills in conducting productive meetings, constructing action plans, negotiating, resolving conflict, facilitation and more. Part of your Professional Development Plan may include a concerted effort to apply formal training through informal learning methods. Indeed, informal learning is applying sound adult education methods to your own professional skill development.

## **Other Opportunities**

Journals, Books and Periodicals: Most Extension professionals have developed their own personal libraries of professional journals, books and periodicals in keeping with their professional interests and job assignments. In addition, many offices have small Extension program-oriented libraries.

Personal library materials are the financial responsibility of the individual. However, journals, books and periodicals needed as resource materials related to programs may be purchased from county/or state budgets with approval of the individual's supervisor. Such materials become the property of Extension and should become a part of the office library. In addition, books may be checked out of the

MSU Library or local libraries for a convenient length of time. Many useful journals and periodicals are also accessible at libraries in both paper and on-line form.

The Journal of Extension is the official, professional Extension publication and is available only "on-line." The Journal serves as the in-house publication reporting research in informal educational methods and program development. On this basis, it is applicable to all Extension workers, regardless of their role and responsibility in the organization. The Journal can be found at <http://www.joe.org/joe/>.

Professional Associations: Memberships in Extension professional associations appropriate to your field or Extension assignment is encouraged. Additionally, Epsilon Sigma Phi membership, a national professional honorary society, is available to extension professionals with six or more years of service. Association's specific to content responsibilities such as the American Dietetic Association or the American Society for Horticultural Science, in addition to Extension related national organizations provide state and national seminars and conferences. Professional development time can be used for participation in professional meetings.

## **The MSUE Framework for Professional Development**

MSUE has organized the skills needed for effective extension performance into three sets:

1. Core Competencies—those basic process skills needed by all educators to be effective change agents.
2. Technical Competencies—that set of knowledge, skills and competencies associated with one's programming area responsibilities.
3. Management Competencies—those skills and competencies necessary for the effective administration of extension programs and personnel.

It is anticipated that staff need to develop their skills and competencies, to some degree in all areas. But depending on one's role, responsibilities, past experiences and anticipated future goals, the mix of skills and competencies will vary.

MSUE has embraced a "Core Competency" initiative since the mid 1990's. This initiative established a set of 10 Core Competency areas with additional sets of competencies within. That list includes:

1. Professional and Career Development
2. Educational and Information Technology
3. Written and Spoken Communication and Skills
4. Program Planning and Development
5. Program Facilitation and Implementation
6. Applied Research and Evaluation
7. Facilitative Leadership
8. Diversity and Pluralism
9. Marketing and Public Relations
10. Linkages with External Audiences

These sets of competencies are closely associated with the performance expectations of educators, and have thus proved to be useful in helping staff identify their strengths and weaknesses in a

holistic manner. The organization has developed a CD-ROM called “C-CAP” (Core-Competency Assessment Program) to help staff self-assessment themselves on these 10 areas of programming. The database of items provides a random selection of 12 items per competency area each time a person enters the program. Thus individuals can periodically “test” themselves without repetition. All new staff are encouraged to assess their competencies early in their employment period to be able to focus their professional development time. An accompanying “MSUE Professional Development Portfolio” provides an easy way to record one’s investments in professional development activities in each of these core areas.

In the technical areas of competence, MSUE is organized around a set of AOE’s (Area of Expertise Teams) who have the primary responsibility to provide training, updating and support to field based staff in the various programming focus areas. The number of AOE’s varies around 30. Staff are encouraged to join at least one AOE and to network with others to maintain close contact with cutting edge developments in science, technology and educational outreach. AOE’s host in-service trainings, websites, resource materials and research-extension projects that advance programming in their areas. Involvements with AOE’s are important ways that staff develop and maintain their technical skills and competencies.

Throughout the state, MSUE staff are encouraged to work in teams to address local issues. Thus leadership, teamwork, management and supervision are all skills needed by staff, not just administrators. The Management Competencies include skill sets needed by staff who manage grants and special projects, who lead collaborations and teams, and those associated with “supervisory” and “administrative” roles. The competencies associated with this area include:

1. Understanding self and one’s management role
2. Human Resources Management/Interpersonal Skills
3. Financial and Facilities Management
4. Program Management & Accountability

## **The Importance of A Plan**

### **Benefits of Planning**

A professional development plan provides a system and process that can help you plan for the future. Some of the specific benefits are:

- to help determine where you want to go and what you need to do to get there.
- to provide an opportunity to discuss professional development goals with colleagues who can offer ideas, support and feedback.
- to reinforce the concept of “everything’s possible” and that goals aren’t overwhelming if tackled step-by-step. The plan makes goals manageable.
- to assist you in preparing information and plans for annual performance appraisal, honors and awards, professional leave, and building your resume and vita.

- to help you determine needs for in-service training and professional development.
- to assist you in planning for lateral or vertical career opportunities with Extension.

## **Recognizing Various Aspects of one's life and career**

We are all multidimensional. It is difficult and unnecessary to try to separate one aspect of one's life from another in terms of change and development. In fact, we know that success in reaching one's goals in one part of one's life can give a boost to efforts in other parts of one's life. The opposite is also true. So whether you have a personal goal, such as to lose weight, or take more time to be with your kids, or be more careful in your spending....these goals should be kept in mind as you also develop your aspirations for your professional performance. There may be times when one set of goals are given priority over others—such as when trying to finish a degree. But these times should be kept contained and you should make the choice, not feel dragged into it! Taking control of your life can be difficult, but satisfying at any age or circumstance.

## **Steps in Carrying Out a Plan**

Although there are various approaches to carrying out a professional development plan, five basic steps are useful:

Step 1 **Take charge of your own life.** It is the responsibility of each of us to take steps to increase our self-insight, plan our own future, assess our career and professional growth, and focus on our targets and goals.

Step 2 **Engage in mind, body and spirit stretching.** In this step it is important to recognize that personal growth requires new experiences for mind, body and spirit. Branch out into interdisciplinary approaches in learning and living. Develop new linkages with people, organizations, and activities that develop new insights and experiences. This takes an experimental attitude which will involve risk.

Step 3 **Inventory your life.** Periodically inventory your capabilities, desires, and resources. Review the constraints on your life as well as your achievements.

Step 4 **Develop an action plan.** In any integration of career and personal growth, each of us needs an action plan that involves setting targets and re-examining our lifestyle to determine if it contributes to our goals. This action plan reviews past learning experiences and develops lifelong learning plans for personal education experiences, challenges, and opportunities.

Step 5 **Plan for support, review, and evaluation.** Identify and value the support of significant others in your life...those friends and colleagues who can give feedback on behavior, competencies, and limitations. Evaluate new directions to assess their meaningfulness and satisfaction. Build spontaneous celebrations of achievement and successes into life to reinforce the value of continuous growth.

## Setting Goals, Accomplishing Goals

Your accomplishments will be determined by your ability to direct your day-to-day actions toward clearly defined, measurable goals. Self-esteem does not come from plans; it comes from accomplishments!

A story from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* captures this point:

*A*Cheshire Puss, she began rather timidly, *A*would you tell me, please, which way ought I to go from here?

*A*That depends a good deal on where you want to get to, said the cat.

*A*I don't much care where, said Alice.

*A*Then it doesn't matter which way you go, said the cat.

One of the most frequent reasons for not setting goals is the conscious or subconscious fear of failure. If you don't set goals, you can't fail. Not so **B** the clearest failures of the future will be those who can't move ahead, can't risk. In a rapidly changing society, no career can stand still for long. Even if you're on the right track, if you're not moving forward you'll be run over.

After you have planned and defined your goals, there are several actions you can take to **A**stay on task. First, be sure your goals are so clear that you will know when or whether you have accomplished them. Second, write them out on a card. Give your goals top priority by keeping the card visible on your desk every day. You may also wish to carry the card with you. Third, visualize, in your mind with your eyes closed, the successful results of accomplishing your goal. Daily spend 3-5 minutes recalling your goals and visualizing the positive results of success.

## The Plan

### Dreaming

Nearly everyone spends time dreaming of what they'd like to be later in their life. Some act to achieve their dreams. Some focus their life on their dream.

Some dreams are realistic, others are truly **A**fairy tales. Yet many great and small accomplishments begin with dreams. Martin Luther King's **A**I have a dream speech and the inspiration those lines provided to so many, are as well known as his accomplishments.

What are your career dreams? Write some key words here that will help you remember your dreams.

### Professional Development Ideas

Following are a set of questions to help guide your self analysis. The information is for your personal use--to help you think about what works best for you and what needs you have for professional development. Reading through these items will prepare you for actually writing down your professional

development plan. These items are incomplete. You will have good ideas that are not listed. Include them in your plan.

1. Which methods/approaches do you feel are most effective for your professional development?

(Check as many as apply)

- |                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. ___ Group Meetings          | 8. ___ Professional Meetings |
| 2. ___ Self-paced Instruction  | 9. ___ On-the-job-work       |
| 3. ___ Mentoring/coaching      | 10. ___ Tours and visits     |
| 4. ___ University Courses      | 11. ___ Conferences          |
| 5. ___ Training with follow-up | 12. ___ Technology based     |
| 6. ___ Seminars                | 13. ___ Other                |
| 7. ___ Lectures                |                              |

2. What incentives would encourage you to participate in professional development activities? Rank top three with 1 being top priority and 3 being least.

1. \_\_\_ Certification (i.e., PDU-s)
2. \_\_\_ Academic credits
3. \_\_\_ Increase Salary
4. \_\_\_ Technical growth
5. \_\_\_ Personal and professional growth
6. \_\_\_ Public recognition and credibility
7. \_\_\_ Recognition by supervisor
8. \_\_\_ Able to function better on the job
9. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal Development

Check those areas where you wish to become more effective:

1. \_\_\_ Balancing career and personal life.
2. \_\_\_ Managing time.
3. \_\_\_ Improving human relation skills.
4. \_\_\_ Keeping abreast of new technology.
5. \_\_\_ Improving physical fitness.
6. \_\_\_ Learning to recognize and handle stress.
7. \_\_\_ Establishing and prioritizing goals.
8. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Subject Matter/Technical Skills

Check those areas where you wish to become more effective:

1. \_\_\_ Knowledge of and confidence in being able to conduct plans already prepared in my area.
2. \_\_\_ Knowledge of fundamental definitions/concepts in my area of program responsibility.
3. \_\_\_ Identification of/and confidence in discussing key issues of conflict in my discipline.
4. \_\_\_ Identification of sources for up-to-date, research-based knowledge in my area.
5. \_\_\_ Skill in more specialized area of discipline
6. \_\_\_ Knowledge of how discipline interacts with other disciplines.
7. \_\_\_ Understanding of basic knowledge, research findings in discipline.
8. \_\_\_ International or Global concerns of technical area
9. \_\_\_ Other

5. Core Competencies: Educational and Information Technology
  1. \_\_\_\_ Understanding and using the computer
  2. \_\_\_\_ Using word processing programs efficiently
  3. \_\_\_\_ Using spreadsheets and database management software.
  4. \_\_\_\_ Making exciting powerpoint presentations
  5. \_\_\_\_ Accessing and using the world wide web
  6. \_\_\_\_ Using and managing e-mail communications/messages
  7. \_\_\_\_ Understanding how to create and update webpages
  8. \_\_\_\_ Using TV/VCR/DVD/WEB materials in programming
  9. \_\_\_\_ Producing Video/digital images for programming
  10. \_\_\_\_ Inserting visuals into newsletters or handouts
  11. \_\_\_\_ Understanding the expectations of audiences for the use of technology
  12. \_\_\_\_ Incorporating technology education as appropriate for audiences
  13. \_\_\_\_ Other:
  
6. Core Competencies: Communication Skills
 

Check those areas where you wish to become more effective:

  1. \_\_\_\_ Relating to your audience(s) through your writing
  2. \_\_\_\_ Writing and organizing newsletters.
  3. \_\_\_\_ Writing press releases.
  4. \_\_\_\_ Writing for scholarly publication.
  5. \_\_\_\_ Translating scholarly language to public usage.
  6. \_\_\_\_ Speaking to the public, youth, stakeholders, professionals, and other audiences.
  7. \_\_\_\_ Improving listening and feedback skills.
  8. \_\_\_\_ Understanding non-verbal communications.
  9. \_\_\_\_ Facilitating group discussions.
  10. \_\_\_\_ Facilitating group decision-making.
  11. \_\_\_\_ Facilitating communication on topics of controversy.
  12. \_\_\_\_ Communicating with difficult people.
  13. \_\_\_\_ Communicating with difficult supervisors.
  14. \_\_\_\_ Diffusing anger from argumentative clients.
  15. \_\_\_\_ Understanding effective conflict resolution.
  16. \_\_\_\_ Report writing basics.
  17. \_\_\_\_ Managing electronic communication, files, list serves, etc.
  18. \_\_\_\_ Giving radio/television interviews.
  19. \_\_\_\_ Presenting proposals for funding, partnerships, etc.
  20. \_\_\_\_ Other
  
7. Core Competencies: Program Planning and Development
 

Check those goals you need to include in your professional development plan.

  1. \_\_\_\_ Environmental scanning and involving stakeholders in planning.
  2. \_\_\_\_ Futuring and strategic planning.
  3. \_\_\_\_ Writing and prioritizing measurable educational objectives.
  4. \_\_\_\_ Motivating participants to change behaviors.
  5. \_\_\_\_ Developing project plans and specific lesson plans.
  6. \_\_\_\_ Knowledge of alternative instructional strategies and their implementation for example: group processes, computer-managed instruction, problem-based

discovery methods, competency/outcome based education, experiential learning.

7. \_\_\_ Eliminating discrimination and stereotyping in programs and materials.
8. \_\_\_ Organizing and participating in interdisciplinary team approaches.
9. \_\_\_ Preparing informative and exciting presentations
10. \_\_\_ Designing and organizing demonstration/problem solving activities.
11. \_\_\_ Adapting state programs to local realities.
12. \_\_\_ Using packaged programs from WEB, notebooks, etc.
13. \_\_\_ Effective grant writing.
14. \_\_\_ Effective grant administration
15. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. Core Competencies: Program Facilitation and Delivery

Check those areas where you wish to become more effective:

1. \_\_\_ Designing hands-on activities for programs
2. \_\_\_ Determining the most effective audio-visual materials and/or equipment for a program.
2. \_\_\_ Using simulations/role playing.
3. \_\_\_ Using community resources as teaching tools.
4. \_\_\_ Applying adult learning theory to instruction.
5. \_\_\_ Structuring interdisciplinary programs.
6. \_\_\_ Establishing and maintaining a volunteer management system to support program delivery.
7. \_\_\_ Utilizing group process facilitation skills.
8. \_\_\_ Conducting effective meetings.
9. \_\_\_ Being an effective committee member/leader
10. \_\_\_ Using distance learning technology and strategies.
11. \_\_\_ Using computer-based training.
12. \_\_\_ Outreach to non-traditional audiences.
13. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

9. Core Competencies: Applied Research and Evaluation

1. \_\_\_ Conducting effective needs assessments.
2. \_\_\_ Identifying appropriate evaluation techniques for attitude, knowledge, skill, and practice change.
3. \_\_\_ Using and interpreting secondary data for evaluation.
4. \_\_\_ Identifying indicators, and writing and developing valid, reliable evaluations questions.
5. \_\_\_ Writing short evaluation questionnaires, quantitative and qualitative.
6. \_\_\_ Gaining cooperation from clients in collecting evaluation information.
7. \_\_\_ Collecting standardized evaluation data as part of a larger study.
8. \_\_\_ Evaluating educational outcomes/impacts.
9. \_\_\_ Strategies for end-of-activity evaluations.
10. \_\_\_ Creating phone interview evaluations.
11. \_\_\_ Creating an evaluation database.
12. \_\_\_ Analyzing evaluation results.
13. \_\_\_ Writing outcome/impact statements and success stories.
14. \_\_\_ Reporting evaluation results to EIS, stakeholders and the public.
15. \_\_\_ Using evaluation results in program development and promotion.
16. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. Core Competencies: Diversity and Pluralism
  1. \_\_\_ Understanding self and one's background
  2. \_\_\_ Recognizing biases and stereotypes in self and others
  3. \_\_\_ Developing familiarity with multiple cultures/groups
  4. \_\_\_ Developing relationships and trust with diverse groups
  5. \_\_\_ Monitoring and modifying materials/communications for inclusion
  6. \_\_\_ Developing and promoting programs for inclusion
  7. \_\_\_ Promoting a global perspective
  8. \_\_\_ Assisting in resolving community differences
  9. \_\_\_ Recruiting diverse staff/volunteers and audiences
  10. \_\_\_ Maintaining civil rights compliance
  11. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
11. Core Competencies: Marketing and Public Relations
  1. \_\_\_ Marketing, promoting, and identifying sponsorship for programs.
  2. \_\_\_ Developing marketing plans for specific educational events and activities
  3. \_\_\_ Organizing periodic marketing research to understand audience needs and interests
  4. \_\_\_ Contributing to unit-wide efforts to communicate systematically with the public
  5. \_\_\_ Developing effective advisory committees.
  6. \_\_\_ Developing and maintaining collaborations and partnerships
  7. \_\_\_ Identifying and developing positive relations with media contacts
  8. \_\_\_ Modeling and supporting a "service ethic".
  9. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
12. Core Competencies: Linkages with External Audiences
  1. \_\_\_ Understanding roles and operations of state and local government
  2. \_\_\_ Developing skill in public affairs programming
  3. \_\_\_ Participating in public issues analyses
  4. \_\_\_ Recognizing constraints and procedures associated with government finance
  5. \_\_\_ Understanding the legislative process
  6. \_\_\_ Creating and participating in partnerships/collaborations/networks in support of programming
  7. \_\_\_ Understanding civic structures and local agencies/organizations
  8. \_\_\_ Identifying and working with community leaders and power structures
  9. \_\_\_ Supporting community action initiatives
  10. \_\_\_ Developing/training community leaders and elected officials
  11. \_\_\_ Dealing with and helping to resolve public issues in areas of responsibility
  12. \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary:** What did I learn about myself from the above responses?

1. My abilities in the core competencies can be described as:

2. My technical competencies or areas of expertise can be described as:

3. Other personal and professional competencies:

**Self Assessment**

1. What skills have I gained from my past experiences and employment that can be applied to my current position?

2. What are my strengths as I now see them?

3. What are my weaknesses, or areas needing improvement, as I now see them?

4. What pressures do I feel from my current setting that indicates a need for growth and development?

## **Action Plans**

The next five pages will become part of your Professional Development Plan. After completing the thought process here, transfer this information to your Plan and submit it to your immediate supervisor and Regional Director/Department Head (if appropriate). Annual plans should be placed on the EIS system.

## **Long-Term Career Goals**

It is important to have a job that is both challenging and satisfying. Consider future professional directions that will suit you best in 5-10 years and beyond. These may include a change in program direction, a different assignment or location with Extension, or a job in another organization. Your goal(s) should be clear and concise. It may be helpful to visit with your supervisor or an Extension administrator to explore specific opportunities within Extension.

1. Career goal or goals (no more than threeBone is sufficient).
2. Knowledge, abilities, skills, and attitudes necessary to achieve goal (if more than one goal, match these to each goal.)
3. Resources I will need (list by goal number).
4. Time line (one for each goal).

**Short Term Goals and Plans**

Here is your opportunity to develop short-term areas of focus or goals, those that may be accomplished within the next year. They may, for instance, be needs that have been identified in your Performance Appraisal or things you've wanted to do during the last year but didn't get accomplished. These may be professional goals such as **A**learn how to organize and work with a program advisory committee**@**or **A**improve promotion of my educational programs**@** Or they may be personal goals related to your job: e.g., **A**improve time and office management so that all mail is processed promptly**@****A**manage work and calendar to have two one-week vacations with family during summer and winter**@**

Goal 1: Areas of Focus:			
How to Accomplish? Professional Development Activities	Resources Needed	Targeted Completion Date	Follow-up/Continuation or Completion Comments

Goal 2: Focus Areas:			
How to Accomplish? Professional Development Activities	Resources Needed	Targeted Completion Date	Follow-up/Continuation or Completion Comments

Goal 3: Focus Areas:			
How to Accomplish? Professional Development Activities:	Resources Needed	Targeted Completion Date	Follow-up/Continuation or Completion Comments

## **Barriers**

What barriers, threats and distractions are most likely to deter you from reaching your goals?

How will you overcome these barriers? What support do you need from others around you?

## **Record of Professional Development/Continuing Education**

Each new employee should have been provided with an MSUE Professional Development Portfolio. This portfolio (or other systems that you might create) provides a handy place to collect documents, materials, reactions and evidences of your efforts to develop competency as an extension employee. Such documentation will be useful in communicating with your supervisors during performance appraisal, at times of review for promotion or role changes, and for other professional pursuits.

Within the portfolio there are folders that can be used to:

- file your professional development plans,
- keep necessary information you might need about polices concerning professional development and instructions for accessing study leaves, financial support, etc.
- have important forms such as continuing employment procedures and forms so that you can anticipate what information will be needed in the future.
- maintain records of your strategies to develop your competencies—i.e. records of trainings attended, self directed study activities, attendance at conferences and professional meetings, etc. You might include the outline of the agenda or schedule for an event, any certificates of attendance, your personal reactions to the event or activity and other evidence that you applied what you learned.

## **Evidence of Professional Achievement**

The Portfolio, or other recording systems should also be used to collect evidences of the achievements you have had in using your skills and competencies. Evidences of achievement may include such items as certificates of achievement, letters attesting to your performance/involvement/achievement, workshop programs noting your role, teaching and informational materials that you have prepared, descriptions (flyers/promotions) of programs you have presented, critiques of your teaching ability by peers or participants, participation on committees and in partnerships, program evaluation summaries, etc. These evidences are especially important for promotion, award recognition and career fulfillment.