

How to Set Learning Goals

The steps involved in formulating a personal learning plan include:

1. **Assessment**
2. **Goal setting**
3. **Objectives or action plan**
4. **Implementation or action**
5. **Evaluation**

Assessment

a) **Assess your current situation**

Reflect on your skills, knowledge and performance in your job. Consider your strengths and weaknesses. Justify your opinion to ensure your analysis is not over critical.

Eg.

- My knowledge of renal disease is limited. Analysis – in my routine practice I am often asked to educate patients with diabetes about renal disease and my lack of knowledge in renal disease and its outcomes provides uncertainty during the consultation.
- My area of expertise is gestational diabetes; I am often used as a resource person in this area. Analysis – I have recognised expertise in this area and would like to maintain and further enhance my skills.
- My poor computer skills limit my efficiency at work. Analysis – the secretary is overworked and there is a two week delay before my letters are typed.

b) **Consider in which direction you would like your career to progress**

- I would like to be a media spokesperson in my area of expertise.
Analysis – although I believe I am a capable spokesperson, I have had no formal training or assessment.
- I would like to become credentialled as a diabetes educator.
Analysis- Career path is potentially limited unless ongoing professional development is monitored.

c) **Identify external factors that may influence your professional goals**

- I am keen to attend the Diabetes in Pregnancy conference this year.
Analysis – Each staff member is only allowed to attend one conference per year which the work place will fund. A choice will need to be made as to which conference will best support the achievement of my professional goals.

Goal Setting

The assessment phase will enable you to determine a number of priority goals. Goals should be general statements of what you want to achieve. Focus on several goals that are attainable in a 12 month period.

- E.g.
- To be able to perform my own word processing faster than my secretary.
 - To successfully complete an accredited diabetes educators course.
 - To achieve and maintain the clinical knowledge and experience in the management of gestational diabetes.

Objectives

Objectives are the action plans by which your goals will be achieved. The criteria of objectives are to be SMART.

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Resources
- Timebound

GOAL	OBJECTIVES = Something to achieve	STRATEGIES = Something to do
To be able to perform my own word processing faster than the secretary	To develop word processing skills To obtain access to a computer	To enrol in local TAFE computing course -Complete in 6 weeks -To book weekly computing time of 3 hours/week on the department computer
To improve my performance in public relation activities	To develop specific skills in public relations	Attend a media training workshop Volunteer to speak at grand rounds Join the public relations team at the hospital and contribute to their activities

Implementation

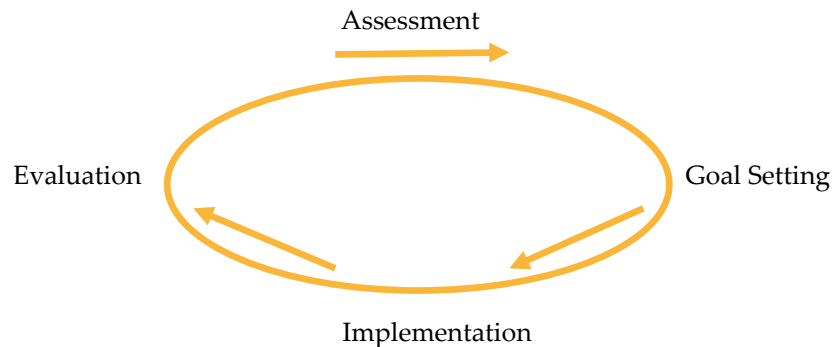
This represents the transition phase of the goals and objectives into action. Goals and objectives should be kept in a visible location to maintain your focus to consistently work towards achieving them. Documentation or recording your progress on the log sheets is valuable and will make evaluation easier.

Strategy = Something to do	Implementation (include dates)
To attend diabetes in pregnancy conference	6/8-7/8 Diabetes in Pregnancy meeting, 8 hours x 2 days. Perth.
Volunteer to speak at grand rounds	10/9 Grand Rounds presentation. 'New advances in Diabetes Management'. 30 minutes.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an important part of the personal learning plan. It measures the outcomes or it can provide an explanation as to why goals were not achieved. This may have been due to your inability to meet all of the objectives, or to circumstances beyond your control. Evaluation can occur individually, as part of the peer review process or with the assistance of a mentor.

Your Personal Learning Plan:



Examples of Learning Goals

- Maintain and enhance knowledge in general diabetes education by attending conferences and workshops, and arranging to shadow a more experienced educator for a few days during 2015.
- Develop new skills and know what constitutes best practice in the management of women with gestational diabetes by participating as mentee with a GDM specialist educator for 6 months, shadowing them for X days and working under their supervision for a period of Y days (X and Y would depend on what you can organise) during 2015.
- Extend my mentoring knowledge and skills by participating as ADEA mentor for a person doing initial credentialling in 2015.
- Establish skills in scientific writing for journal publication by undertaking a scientific writing course and writing up my Diabetes Centre's data on *** in diabetes in journal-format ready to submit by end of 2015.
- Enhance competency in research skills by attending a research skills workshop during 2015 and applying these skills to drafting a proposal for a research/evaluation/QI project in my diabetes workplace.

Learning Goals

- Develop/enhance my ability to write diabetes-relevant research grant applications by reviewing relevant literature, drafting and submitting a diabetes research proposal/grant application during 2015.
- Develop skills in writing for the public, by drafting an article on an aspect of diabetes, getting it reviewed by at least one peer, and a consumer, then submit to a newspaper during 2015.