

Steps to Developing a Personal Professional Development Plan

You wouldn't dream of walking into a classroom without any idea what you want to accomplish. Why treat your own learning any differently? A plan with explicit goals provides structure for your learning. Use the following steps and the planning template to develop your personal professional development plan.

Step 1: Find out if your district has a planning format and/or requirements that you should follow

Some states and districts have specific professional development plan requirements. Before you use the planning template or guidelines below, find out what your specific requirements are.

Step 2: Review the components of good professional development

- It addresses individual needs to improve practice, but it balances those needs with the needs of the students, school, and district.
- It focuses on improving student learning as the overall goal of professional development, and it connects the educator's individual goals to demonstrated student needs.
- It reflects school, district, and/or state educational initiatives.
- It includes reflection as a part of the individual's learning and growth.
- It includes documentation of the outcomes of the professional development activities.
- It utilizes the Standards for Staff Development as a guide for developing and implementing personal learning goals.

Step 3: Ask yourself these questions to clarify your goals and begin planning

- What do I want all my students to know or do as a result of my teaching?
- How will I judge the quality of my students' work?
- How does my practice impact student achievement?
- Based on data, what do I know about my students' needs?
- How do my schools' goals and improvement plan impact my goals?
- How can I improve or strengthen my practice?
- How can I work with others to address my goals?
- How will I know I have accomplished my goals?
- What will I do when my students don't demonstrate mastery?
- How can I embed the professional development strategies I choose into my classroom day?

Step 4: Use a template to develop your plan

You will find one possible template on the reverse side of this guide. Others are available online at the references cited below. Before you use one of these templates, find out if your school or district requires something different.

Step 5: Decide on the activities or strategies you will include in your plan to accomplish your goals

As you select activities, bear in mind that your plan should not be built around attending one-hour inservices with little or no follow-up. According to research, your professional development should be: focused on student learning, job-embedded, continuous and on-going, and include evaluation.

In addition, research indicates that working with others will enhance your learning and promote lasting improvement and change in your school.

A few of the many activities or strategies that you might consider:

- Get involved in lesson study
- Examine student work
- Conduct action research
- Find a coach or be a coach
- Do professional reading
- Keep a log or journal
- Get involved with a professional organization
- Learn to use new technology

Step 6: Evaluate your plan

Even if you do not have to submit your plan to a committee or administrator, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do the goals and the plan reflect your needs as well as your students', the building's, and the district's?
- Does your plan reflect new learning and growth, not just time and effort?
- Are your goals clear?
- Have you used data to determine your goals?
- Does your plan reflect how student achievement will be enhanced?
- Do you include collaborative activities in your plan?
- Does your plan include reflection on

the outcomes and appropriate adjustment?

- Have you included methods of assessment?
- Have you identified evidence that you will gather?

Step 7: Reflect early and often

Don't wait until you're finished with the activities included in your plan to reflect on how you are doing. Consider keeping a log or journal, finding another teacher to act as a reflective partner, or participating in an online discussion group.

Step 8: Create a portfolio of your accomplishments

Whether a portfolio is required by your school or not, you will personally benefit from collecting evidence of the activities that you've undertaken. Your portfolio should be organized, clearly connected to your plan, include your best materials, and include a reflective piece that articulates your learning.

Your portfolio could include the following:

- A reflective journal, log, or diary
- Samples of student work
- Data and data analysis
- Samples of lesson plans or other work you have created
- Certificates of attendance
- Published articles
- Power Point presentations
- Videotapes
- Photographs

This planning tool is based on *By Your Own Design*, a web site and CD-ROM developed by the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse for Mathematics and Science Education (ENC) and the National Staff Development Council (NSDC). You will find a wealth of resources, additional planning tools, and all the materials included on the CD-ROM at (www.enc.org/pdguide). To order copies of the CD-ROM, visit the NSDC bookstore at (www.nsdcc.org).

Individual Professional Development Plan

Goal: _____

Objective: (use one sheet per objective) _____

Relevance: _____

Steps/Strategies

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Time Frame for each Step

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Evaluation for each Step

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Documentation for each Step

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____
