



Making Opportunities & Taking Opportunities: Professional Development Through Full Participation

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What is “Professional Development”

- ☀ Conference Attendance
- ☀ Classes and Workshops
- ☀ Retreats
- ☀ Association Membership
- ☀ Reading Groups
- ☀ Inherently Involves an Outside Source
- ☀ Travel, or Change of Scenery.
- ☀ Nametags and Lanyards
- ☀ Inherent Cost Involved



What Does It Mean to Develop as a Professional?

- ✦ Improve your knowledge, skills or experience within your profession.
- ✦ Develop relationships.
- ✦ Get really good at what you do.
- ✦ Learn from mistakes as well as workshops.
- ✦ Understanding of, gasp, POLITICS...
- ✦ Specialize and Broaden.



Perception vs Reality

- ✦ Diagnosing from where the perceived value of “professional development” comes.
- ✦ Getting away from a singular focus.
- ✦ Who is responsible for your development as a professional?



Myths about “Professional Development”

- ✦ Its something that's owed to you.
- ✦ Your supervisor should act as your mentor.
- ✦ Your degree makes you special.
- ✦ “I was told there were professional development opportunities here and I can't even go to NASPA? Seriously?”



The Realities...

- ✦ Your career is your responsibility.
- ✦ Budget realities may dictate where your department can afford to send you.
- ✦ Effort can easily outrun education.
- ✦ A national conference is not the most effective way to develop as an effective professional, though it certainly offers valuable experience and networking.



Distinguishing Between “Professional Development” and Developing as a Professional

- ✦ Conceptual
- ✦ Done by “Experts” (to You)
- ✦ Expensive
- ✦ Fancy
- ✦ Talk the Talk
- ✦ Process Driven
- ✦ Do-it-Yourself, (for you)
- ✦ At Little or No Cost
- ✦ Basic
- ✦ Walk the Walk



Begin at the Beginning

- ✦ Doing the job you were hired to do...well.
- ✦ Relationship building within your workgroup.
- ✦ Seek to apply innovations to your daily routine.
- ✦ Earn the respect of your colleagues and supervisors via your performance.



Find Opportunities in your Daily Planner

- ✦ Supervision is a great way to develop difficult inter-personal skills.
- ✦ Committee Meetings; an opportunity to rub elbows or build relationships with those outside your department.
- ✦ Computer skills, gain experience building databases, websites etc.



Branching Out...

- ☀ Offer to do more than just your job.
- ☀ Seek opportunities where you can have an impact.
- ☀ Learn the obvious, and not so obvious, boundaries of where you work.
- ☀ Find community resources that can augment or aide your department's mission.
- ☀ Try writing a grant.
- ☀ While you're doing all of this, get a life!



Extra-curricular Activities

- ✦ Where else on campus can you have a positive impact?
- ✦ Is there a regional professional need that you could play a part in filling?
- ✦ Take advantage of publication opportunities in *Soundings*, or at www.reslife.net.



The Do-it-Yourself Approach

- ✦ Inventory your skills, keeping in mind the intangibles.
- ✦ Create a game plan for short term; focus on the coming academic year.
- ✦ Creating benchmarks for yourself.
- ✦ Thinking and planning long-term.

Creating Your Personal Roadmap to Development

Focusing on a skill set...

Community Development	Crisis Intervention	Human Resource
Student Development	Diversity/Social Justice	Professionalism/ Professional Development
Management/ Administrative	Communication/ Conflict Mgmt.	Planning and Goal Setting
Judicial/ Conduct	Student Leadership	Lifelong Learning

Strategic Focus on Development

- ☀️ Prioritize your development needs, based on your goals or current job description

1 not very important	2	3 important	4	5 very important
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- ☀️ Determine what you should focus on based on your current level of skill or comfort

1 little experience	2	3 comfortable	4	5 seasoned
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Development Roadmap/Tool Exercise



Competency / Skill Area: Human Resources	Importance to Next Position (1-5)	Self Review (1-5)		
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Human Resources

The Resident Director position requires a variety of professional interactions as well as effective supervision of student staff members. To this end, the following areas have been identified as important:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate skills as an interviewer through opportunities to serve on search committees and interview teams 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop training plans and prepare context specific presentations for undergraduate staff 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an understanding of developmental supervision by providing staff with the appropriate direction and structure to successfully perform their responsibilities 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide on-going feedback and evaluation for undergraduate and graduate staff 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an understanding of various considerations for supervising staff of color and other underrepresented staff 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate expectations to staff members 				



Tips

- ✦ Stop Sweating the résumé bullets!
- ✦ Think BIG but look for the small opportunities, too.
- ✦ Look for leadership opportunities in peer groups, your synagogue, church, or cycling team.

Sources:

- ★ *Reflective RD Professional Development Tool* from the University of Pittsburgh
- ★ Article: *Professional Development; A Self-Help Guide* by Clive Pursehouse
www.reslife.net
- ★ Thanks to Chris Jaehne