# Individual Development Plan

## Do you have a clear plan for your career?

“Alice: Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?  
The Cheshire Cat: That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.  
Alice: I don't much care where.  
The Cheshire Cat: Then it doesn't much matter which way you go.”

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

As you look toward future career opportunities, we encourage you to thoughtfully consider and plan your professional goals and proactively seek out the professional development opportunities you need to achieve those goals. This intentional planning will benefit both you and the University, as you clarify how your professional goals align with the goals of the University.

## How to use this guide

This guide is intended to lead you through self-reflection and planning exercises to help clarify your professional goals and develop a specific plan to help you achieve them. This document can be modified as needed to serve you best.

At each step along the process, you will find a learning pathway in [LinkedIn Learning](https://www.umt.edu/learning-development/linked-in-learning/default.php) that we recommend you watch before responding to the questions.

## Step 1: Identify your professional interests

* Watch the [Plan the Career You Want](https://www.linkedin.com/checkpoint/enterprise/login/69959082?pathWildcard=69959082&application=learning&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Elinkedin%2Ecom%2Flearning%2Fpaths%2Funiversity-of-montana-plan-the-career-you-want%3Fu%3D69959082) learning path and then respond to the below prompts.

What activities or roles in your job have you most enjoyed and found the most interesting? Which have you disliked?

Thinking of your projects in the last year, which have made you proud of your work?

What kind of work energizes you and what kind of work drains you?

What are your most valuable talents and skills?

Where do your strengths and interests and the needs of the University align? Consider UM’s priorities.

## Step 2: State your career goals clearly

* Watch the [Create Your Career Plan](https://www.linkedin.com/checkpoint/enterprise/login/69959082?pathWildcard=69959082&application=learning&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Elinkedin%2Ecom%2Flearning%2Fpaths%2Funiversity-of-montana-establish-a-career-direction-and-goal%3Fu%3D69959082) learning path and then respond to the below prompts.

Reflecting upon the answers you provided under “Step 1” above, spend some time considering what career direction you would like to pursue. Then, list a short-term career goal (to complete within a year) and a longer-term career goal (to complete within 1-5 years). The goals should be specific and measurable.

Short term career goal:

Longer term career goal:

## Step 3: Identify areas to develop in order to achieve your goals

* Watch the [Learn New Skills for Career Growth](https://www.linkedin.com/checkpoint/enterprise/login/69959082?pathWildcard=69959082&application=learning&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Elinkedin%2Ecom%2Flearning%2Fpaths%2Funiversity-of-montana-learn-new-skills-for-career-growth%3Fu%3D69959082) learning path and respond to the below prompts.

What skills/knowledge/experience do you need to gain in order to achieve your professional goals?

What professional development could you complete in order to gain that skill, experience, or knowledge? Consider OOLD programs, LinkedIn Learning courses, formal training/certifications, etc.

What on-the-job growth opportunities could help you develop needed experience or skills? Consider projects, committees, or other new or expanded responsibilities.

What is your timeline for completing this professional development? Be specific.

## Step 4: Identify others who could support you

* Watch the [Finding a mentor and a sponsor](https://www.linkedin.com/checkpoint/enterprise/login/69959082?pathWildcard=69959082&application=learning&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Elinkedin%2Ecom%2Flearning%2Fpaths%2Funiversity-of-montana-finding-a-mentor-and-a-sponsor%3Fu%3D69959082) learning path and then respond to the below prompts.

Brainstorm people that you could approach for help in achieving these goals.

Consider finding a:

* Mentor
* Sponsor
* Accountability partner
* Coach
* Peer mentor
* Professional network

We recommend that you discuss your goals with your supervisor if possible. How can they help you achieve these goals?

* Watch the [Advocating for Yourself](https://www.linkedin.com/checkpoint/enterprise/login/69959082?pathWildcard=69959082&application=learning&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Elinkedin%2Ecom%2Flearning%2Fpaths%2Funiversity-of-montana-advocating-for-yourself%3Fu%3D69959082) learning path.

## Step 5: Create a timeline and check back

Create a timeline to execute the plan and times to check back in on your expected progress and adjust as needed. Put reminders on your calendar.