



Professional Development Planning Workshop Guidelines and Specification for L&D Plan Preparation

Preamble

The purpose of an L&D Plan is to enable the student/manager to progress through a training program in a proper and organised manner. It is the basis for development or enhancement of professional competencies and follows the APIC's Chart of Competencies. It provides a basis for assessing and developing key managerial and leadership competencies. Preparation of the L&D Plan is a major task and cannot be treated lightly as the eventual L&D Plan will be a personalised program of study that a student/manager completes. It will be a base document for both self management as well as the School and employer's review of the student/manager's progress through the program. Preparation of the individual L&D Plan should follow a structured approach as per the methodology taught in the PDP Workshop and embedded in the L&D Planner tool. For the eventual L&D Plan to be accepted by the School it needs to conform to the Guidelines & Specification for L&D Plan Preparation. You need to read the Guidelines in conjunction with the information and advice given in the PDP Workshop. (Note: Every formal graduate student is required to develop a personalised L&D Plan on commencement of his/her studies in the School.)

Size and Format

It is expected that each L&D Plan will be around 30 pages, including attachments. All pages must be clearly numbered. The cover page will have the individual's name, Student ID (SID), date and a table of contents. All pages should be numbered consecutively. A summary of the Plan not exceeding 200 words should appear first. The following Table of Contents should be used:

Table of Contents

Summary

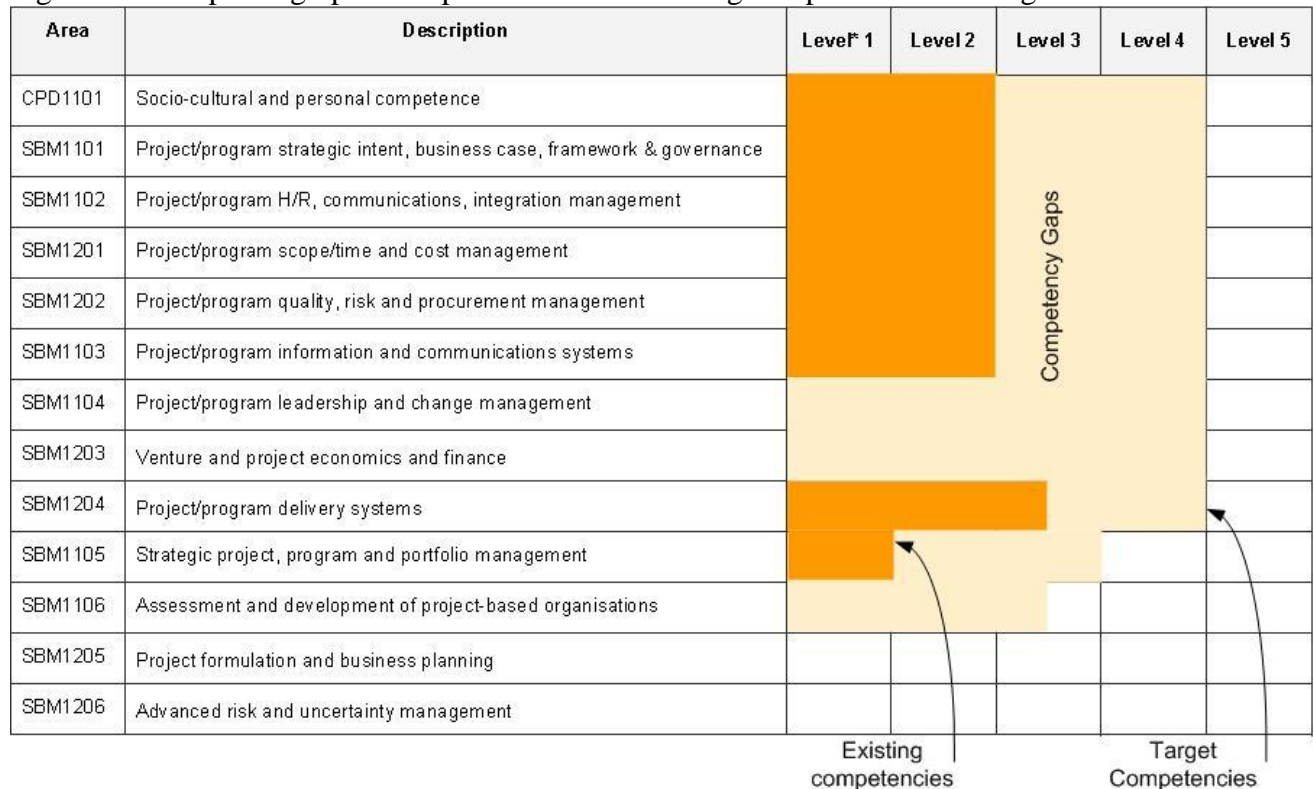
Self Introduction (around 300 words indicating your background, qualifications, experience etc.)

- Section 1: Describe briefly the Big Picture (what is happening in the world, what is going on in your part of the world and your industry/profession in particular)
- Section 2: Megatrends and Challenges (size of investment in your industry worldwide, international competition, privatisation, finance, location, current status, intended improvements, etc.)
- Section 3: Goals: How do you see yourself in this industry/profession and the sort of expectations placed on you; what are the goals of your employer/clients? What are your own career goals, how do these sit next to each other etc?
- Section 4: Ethics and Professional Values (you need to specify in detail what you consider to be appropriate professional values and correct set of ethics to follow in your career, and how you can promote ethics in the future. These must be explicit and it is not acceptable to state general statements such as I will follow XYZ's Code of Professional Conduct. You need to spell out in point form what values you would follow and the set of ethics that will guide your professional conduct.)
- Section 5: Competency Assessment – Socio-cultural and Personal Competence (you need to present your consolidated competency assessment in both graphical and tabular form in this section. See the sample but it is not to be copied across. You need to present

your own self analysis. To support your Socio-cultural and Leadership competencies you need to present a summary of your evidence as per the general sample included as Annexure A to this document.

Summary schedules are generally prepared for each competency area (Socio-cultural and Personal Competence comprise one competency area). You need to assess yourself against your selected competency areas. You must be 100% honest with yourself. If you genuinely believe that you can meet the criteria included in the assessment matrices at the given level you should present the corresponding evidence to prove your case. When someone claims to have a certain competency, he or she may well possess that competency but without providing proof nobody can verify that it is the case. For this reason, it is assumed that he/she does not possess the respective competencies. One major point to note is that documentation is very critical in this instance and in all other professional endeavours.

Figure 1: Example of graphical representation of existing competencies and targets



Leadership, Socio-Cultural Competency Deficiencies:

Describe in general your deficiencies in each competency unit (the entries below are for illustration purposes and you should think and present your own case).

Generic:	I know the basics and know how to achieve project outcomes but do not know the principles and foundations of leadership and socio-cultural competencies in general.
Leadership:	I understand team issues but do not know of any leadership techniques or cannot build and sustain effective teams.
Commitment:	I can recognise and understand poor commitment but cannot apply any tools to manage and improve commitment of team members to the project and client needs.
Attitude:	I feel I have to develop my mental toughness and resilience to face difficult situations and ride successfully over rough patches without loss of confidence and motivation. I have also difficulties in assessing and improving peers and team's attitude.
Self Direction:	I think I am a self-directed professional by nature but I generally lack basic knowledge and competency to assess and improve individual and or team self direction.
Learning:	I lack competency in assessing the natural learning tendencies and styles of self and others, resulting in wasted efforts in trying to communicate effectively with my peers and or superiors. Also, I do not know how to develop teams' learning abilities.
Cultural Empathy:	I understand the political/cultural implications of my actions but cannot provide any fundamental reason of my actions. I generally lack a theoretical foundation for management of cultural influences in the work environment.
Creativity & Innovation:	I realise that project success depends on developing and implementing creative and innovative solutions to meet clients' needs optimally. However, I do not have the competency to create and promote a culture of creativity and innovation; nor do I know how to think creatively personally.

Section 6: Managerial and Technical Competencies (present here the graphical results as well as tabular self analysis for your selected competency areas. MBA candidates need to select 10 areas of which 4 are core areas, 4 are secondary core and the balance of 2 selected from advanced units on offer. Summarise the results of all 10 areas into a single graph of the type shown in Figure 1. Also provide tabular presentation for all 10 areas in the format shown below, i.e. one row per area is sufficient). Note that for each area you would need to present a summary table of the evidence you have to support your current competencies. The actual format of the evidence summary should be similar to that in Annexure A.

Managerial and Technical Competency Deficiencies:

Summarise your deficiencies in each competency area (Note: this is a sample for illustration purposes. You should assess your own case and present the same succinctly).

<p>SBM1101 Strategic Project, Program and Portfolio Management</p>	<p>I lack competency in understanding project strategic intent, business case, life cycle and governance. My knowledge of how a project relates to the business of the client and how it can satisfy stakeholders' needs and requires is limited. I have always worked on one aspect of a project and that during the execution phase. I have not had the opportunity to understand how the work I do (or did in the past) contribute to the business success of the client organisation and consequently it was difficult to know which options to follow to optimise the project outcomes.</p> <p>I lack competency for linking projects/programs/portfolios within an organisation in accordance with its strategic needs and developing an effective project governance arrangement for effective oversight and strategic management of the project. I know that decision making is an important aspect of project governance but do not know how to design an effective decision making process that can expedite project, achieve value and reduce risks.</p> <p>I do not know how to assess the health of a project or program and how to locate poor performing areas, what to ask from contractors and how to convince them of their weaknesses and how to guide them to do better for the project.</p>
<p>SBM1102 Project Human Resources, Communication and Integration Management</p>	<p>I do not possess the requisite competencies to assess the competencies of my staff on my projects or use competency criteria to recruit new staff. I also need to learn how to design training and development schemes to address immediate competency gaps in team members. Overall, I need to learn more about soft competencies and development a cohesive culture, including team building, performance measurement and enhancement and development of pride.</p> <p>I lack competencies required to effectively develop and implement an advanced IT-based communication framework that can save time and expense, expedite project tasks, keep track of project activities and generate useful reports. The current practice is paper based and bureaucratic. I need to lean competency in designing and using online project websites to share information more efficiently and engender effective collaboration.</p> <p>I am becoming increasingly aware of the different factors that can affect the outcome of projects. It seems to me that I need to develop my competency in managing all these factors and influences, while striking an optimum balance between competing requirements and expectations. I need to gain competency to proactively integrate project teams, information sets, stakeholders expectations, regulatory requirements and other demands in real time on large complex projects.</p>
<p>SBM1201 Scope, Time and Cost Management</p>	<p>My scope management competency is limited to project deliverables defined in the respective contracts without a good understanding of the context and business case that give rise to project scope. I feel I need to know how to link scope items to strategic goals of client or life cycle performance of the end deliverables. I lack competency to optimise project scope in terms of the whole of client business needs or balancing of different stakeholders' needs or requirements, as well as real time monitoring and adjustment of the scope to respond to changing needs and business case or stakeholders' expectations.</p> <p>I know how to produce a schedule for a simple project, but do not possess the necessary competency to develop and implement a schedule based on time management strategies, nor do I know how to obtain component schedules, develop integrated master schedule or manage this in real time basis. I need to develop my competencies in integrated scope, time and cost management, which I feel to be vital to project success.</p> <p>As with scope and time management my competency in cost management is very basic and does not go far enough. I need to development my competency in managing cost as part of the business case. I understand that I must learn the relationship of cost to whole of life costs, financial returns, social and environmental costing etc. I realise that cost management does not just relate to bringing projects on line within the cost limit or budget but extends to optimisation of client value and minimisation of life cycle costs.</p>
<p>SBM1202 Quality, Risk and Procurement Management</p>	<p>I have had experience in quality assurance and control related to project process quality control as per ISO9000 Standard. However, it has been focused on technical processes and their inspection, pre-commissioning and acceptance. I need to develop my competency in project quality management which focuses on managerial systems, processes and contractual obligations.</p> <p>My competency in risk management is very limited. I consider this to be a major deficiency as successful risk management lies at the heart of successful project management. I know that risk management is pivotal to success and in delivering large projects successfully. I need to learn quantitative techniques for risk analysis and quantification and for contingency management.</p> <p>I have only had exposure to traditional forms of contracts, whereas innovative performance based contracting is being used internationally with greater success. So I need to improve my knowledge and competencies of different forms of procurement and contracting, such as partnering and alliances. I need to develop my competency in terms of designing and implementing performance-based contracts that relate to the underlying project value and reduction of the inherent risks or threats to the achievement of strategic objectives. I also need to develop a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of the laws of contracts, techniques and processes for dispute resolution and management of conflicts on projects. I also need to improve my competency in management of statutory liabilities, including HSE and industrial relations requirements.</p>
<p>SBM1106 Assessment and Development of Project-based Organisations</p>	<p>I lack competency in design of an organisational structure (including reporting, coordination, role and responsibilities) and assessing organisational capability in terms of strategic management of project/program/portfolios and supporting structures. I believe that organisation learning self improvement is a key to success but do not know what is required to achieve this outcome.</p> <p>I lack the expertise needed to select assess & develop competent professionals for systematic project/program/portfolio management. My competency in professional development of my staff is limited yet I do realise that professionalisation of an organisation is critical to its success. I need to learn how to design a competency-based organisation unit in project-based operations.</p>

Section 7: Competencies Needed – Targets for Development (With reference to Figure 1, you need to define targets for all areas you wish to assess yourself). Note that CPD1101 Socio-cultural and Personal Competence is the focus of the whole program. That is, in all activities and units of study that you engage in during your studies your performance in terms of socio-cultural and leadership competency will be continuously monitored and you are expected to show considerable improvement throughout your course. For example, if a person joins the course with a low socio-cultural and personal competence he or she is expected to practice and develop his/her competence during the entire professional development program. The opportunities to develop may come from teamwork and self management in the program and or from engagement with other activities.

Section 8: Proposed Professional Development Program (list the units that you need to focus on more considering your goals set previously. Based on your current and future target development you can define your scope of professional development. In the example shown in Figure 1 the area hatched is the scope for professional development in summarised form. It is self evident that this scope varies per person.

List of Units of Study

1. SBM1101: Project Management Fundamentals 1
(Project/Program strategic intent, business case, framework and governance)
2. SBM1102: Project Management Fundamentals 2
(Project/Program human resources, teams, communication and integration management)
3. SBM1201: Project Management Fundamentals 3
(Project/Program scope, time and cost management)
4. SBM1202: Project Management Fundamentals 4
(Project/Program quality, risk and procurement management)
5. SBM1103 Project and Program Information and Communication Systems
6. SBM1104 Project/Program Leadership and Change Management
7. SBM1203 Venture/Project Economics and Finance
8. SBM1204 Project/Program Delivery Systems
9. SBM1105 Strategic Project Portfolio and Program Management
10. SBM1106 Assessment and Development of Project-based Organisations
11. SBM1205 Project Formulations and Business Planning
12. SBM1206 Advanced Risk and Uncertainty Management

Section 9: SWOT Analysis and Formulation of Strategies (SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats): You will be responsible for the delivery of your competency development scope. You will be the project manager of your own development and need to approach it in a systemic manner. You must make sure that the scope in any unit of study or the project work that you and your team undertake will have the potential to deliver your missing competencies. Also you need to find out which projects or industry contexts you would need to include in your plan in order to provide adequate opportunity to develop your competencies. Of course you will be able to ask for information from your employer and others to ensure that you plan your development scope carefully and prudently. However, in order to approach this task in a smart manner (just like what you should do in any project planning) it is advisable to conduct a SWOT analysis to summarise your current strengths and weaknesses, and identify opportunities or threats that stand in your way of achieving your goals. Smart planners attempt to capitalise on their existing strengths, find ways of compensating

for their weaknesses, plan to take maximum advantage of the prevailing opportunities and seek ways of minimising exposure to threats. The outcome of this process is a set of strategies that will help you reach your goals, i.e. acquisition of missing competencies in an efficient and cost effective manner.

Section 10: Preferred Plan: A plan is a structured document that contains as a minimum your goals, development scope, strategies and detailed activities, including time and budget. In deriving your budget you need to account for all the investments you will make in your development, including the cost of your time, applying an appropriate charge out rate, as well as other expenses. The main purpose of a plan is to ensure that you progress through your professional development program in an orderly and planned manner and that you manage your time effectively and efficiently. In addition, you should define a series of KPIs for performance monitoring and control during the professional development period to make sure you will be progressing well through your program and if not you can make the necessary adjustments. KPIs include the amount of time spent (in person-hours) vs. that budgeted and the competencies achieved (as per periodic competency assessment results), how well course unit requirements are being met vs. schedule, views of the mentors; how well your team functions etc. An example of an activity is shown below but this is notional. You would need to develop your own detailed plan.

Summarise your plan and develop a schedule of all of your professional activities. (In other words, while you may define each activity as per the sample given below you should summarise them and develop a schedule of all activities.

Note that you need to prepare progress reports regularly based on the plan you develop. Your progress report should be summarised and formatted in a manner that is succinct and professional. This requirement should be reflected fully in your L&D Plan. Use your schedule to demonstrate actual progress vs. plan.

L&D Plan and Final Report

The initial L&D Plan needs to be subjected to both peer assessment and group assessment. It is then completed and submitted by the student to the School. All L&D plans will be reviewed and detailed commentary sent back to the student who needs to revise and re-submit his/her L&D Plan. The student will need to be in close contact with his/her mentor to consult him/her on all aspects of his/her professional development, including how to read and respond to the comments received from the School. After endorsement by the School the L&D Plan will be baselined and used by both the School and student concerned to monitor his/her progress, particularly in terms of acquiring the respective competencies.

Each student is required to prepare a Final Report (FR) at the end of each unit of study upon completion of the project phase of that unit. The FR is a formal document written in conformity with the guidelines and specifications which will be supplied to you by the School. The FR is an individual report. In writing your FR you are required to use your L&D Plan as the baseline, though after completion of each unit you need to update your competency profile and use that as the basis of writing your FR for the next set of units. Thus, you would need to update your L&D Plan at least twice before completion of your study program.



Activity Form

Description:	Applicant to input an appropriate description (20 words maximum)
Mentors:	Academic: _____ Industry: _____
Frequency of communication with mentors:	Applicant to select frequency, i.e. daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, half yearly, annually
Format of communication:	Applicant to select (Email or Face-to-Face)
Average hours Committed/week	Applicant to input a number
Start date:	Applicant to state the date in a specified format
Finish date:	Applicant to state the date in a specified format
Duration:	Applicant to state duration in weeks
Budget:	Applicant to input a figure and select currency unit (\$, €, £, ¥, ..)
Contingency:	Applicant to input a figure and select currency unit (\$, €, £, ¥, ..)
Key performance indicators:	Applicant to state 2 or 3 KPI (text input)
Target competency level*	Applicant to input a number if relevant

* If the activity is a unit of study offered by APIC the applicant can specify his/her selected target competency level pertinent to that unit

Annexure A: Sample Evidence Summary (SBM1101)

Target competencies (area)*	Equivalent training completed#	% Covered	Equivalent competency level	Type of evidence	Describe briefly the nature of training undergone or activities conducted (be prepared to produce actual documentary evidence)
Know planning processes needed for strategic management of projects/programs	Employer Training Scheme, University of xxx	75	Informed	Certificate of Completion	
Define/extract business goals and strategies	Unit x2 ditto	80	Involved	Project xyz engagement	
Develop and or assess project/program business cases	Unit x1, Graduate degree y, University of xxx	50	Aware	Certificate of Attainment	
Align project/program objectives with broader organisational strategies and priorities	Unit x2, ditto	90	Aware		
Define/design project/program governance structure		-	-	-	
Monitor and improve governance performance		-	-	-	
Phase out governance arrangements		40	Aware	Project xyz involvement	
Design and apply systems integration strategies	Professional application demonstrated	> 75	Aware	Project ABC involvement	
Manage change	Professional application demonstrated	>75	Aware	Project UVW involvement	
Maintain and improve project/program health over life	Professional application demonstrated	>75	Aware	Project ABC involvement	