

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN Workbook



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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN WORKBOOK

You have probably come to Club100 because you care about your career and you're prepared to work at building a happy, satisfying and successful life.

Part of this involves thinking about what "satisfaction" means to you: after all, each of us gets fulfillment and happiness from different things. That's why you need to think about this for yourself, rather than following someone else's pre-prepared plan.

Another part of this involves making sure that you have the skills needed to take advantage of opportunities when they arise (as they will, if you work hard and think about what you're doing).

That's why it's important to take a systematic approach to developing your skills, so they're ready when you need them. Creating a Personal Development Plan is the starting point for this.

This workbook guides you through the process of creating your own Personal Development Plan. Within it, you'll find a step-by-step process, supported by skills you need for a satisfying and successful career. Popular tools like SWOT and PEST Analysis, and techniques like setting SMART goals, are all part of it.

When you use these to think about your own development, you will come away with a thoughtful and well-considered roadmap that you can use to reach your career goals.

There are seven basic steps that you should follow to prepare your Personal Development Plan. We've split these into three sections:

1. Understanding Yourself.
2. Defining Your Career Objectives.
3. Creating Your Personal Development Plan.

Each section builds on the previous one, so I encourage you to work through them in order. Enjoy using this workbook!



1 WHY A PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

Are you fully in control of your career? Do you have a clear and inspiring vision of what you want to achieve in the future? And, are you actively taking steps to pursue the career of your dreams?

If your answer is “no,” then you risk being disappointed. If you put your career into the hands of others – your organization, your boss, your partner, or even your parents – you risk not going where you want to go, and not doing what you want to do. **After all, if you are not working to realize your own dreams, you’re most likely working to achieve someone else’s.**

All too often, this abdication of responsibility for your career happens without you even realizing it. For example: Jim had been in his current position for three years, and his job was comfortable. He knew what was expected of him, his boss was great, and his teammates were his friends. Life was good.

Another six months passed and Jim started to watch the clock. The 5.30 p.m. countdown became a daily ritual, and, by Wednesday each week, Jim was in Friday mode. He wanted more excitement and challenge: the status quo wasn’t cutting it any more, and he needed something to change!

Surely he’d been with the organization long enough to deserve a promotion of some kind? Maybe a job reassignment? Or a change of office, at least? Unfortunately, Jim hadn’t figured out that his boss and his company weren’t responsible for his career satisfaction. No one had let him in on the secret that if you do the same thing today as you did yesterday, the results are likely to be no different tomorrow.

You have to be proactive, take charge and change the way you think about your career. When you take control, you will realize that the only way you’ll achieve what you want, personally or professionally, is to think about where you want to go, put in place a plan to get there, and then start moving. Personal Development Planning is a structured way of doing just that.

- First, you understand yourself and you set meaningful goals.
- Next, you define these goals in terms of what you want to achieve and the steps you need to take to get there.
- Finally, you identify gaps in your skills and experience, and you create an action plan to fill them, so that you can move towards your end goal.

Let’s start the process right now!

UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF:

Discover Who You Are and What You Want

Personal Development Planning is all about creating a long-term goal for your career, and then thinking about how you'll achieve it.

However, before you can know what you want to do in the long term, you need to reflect on your current situation. What are you good at? Where do you need to improve? What opportunities are available? And, are there factors beyond your control that could have an impact on your goals?

To answer these questions, we've adapted two classic business tools, **SWOT Analysis and PEST Analysis**, so you can apply them to your personal situation. By using them, you can gain a solid understanding of where you are now, and you can think about where you want to go.

Personal SWOT Analysis

In business, SWOT Analysis uncovers the Strengths and Weakness of an organization, and identifies the Opportunities and Threats that it faces. Just as this is important for organizations, it's also useful when you apply it to your own situation. By knowing your strengths, you can focus your efforts on the things that you're good at. And, by understanding your weaknesses, you know what to avoid, what to improve, and where you need to get help.

Taken together, your strengths and opportunities help you identify potential long-term career goals. Your weaknesses, and the threats you face, are the things that need to be managed, mitigated or planned for, to ensure that your goals remain achievable.

To conduct a Personal SWOT Analysis, you ask yourself a series of questions about your current situation, and you fill in a four-quadrant grid, like the one found on page 8. We explain these quadrants below.

Strengths

Here, your goal is to uncover what sets you apart from other people. What qualities do you have that make you stand out?

When thinking about your strengths, don't limit yourself to your professional skills. Explore all of your experiences, and the opportunities that you've had to grow and develop. This includes your education, aptitudes, personality factors, and interests.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What are you really good at?
- What skills do others recognize in you, and what do you get rewarded for?
- What do you do better than most people you work with?
- What are you most proud of?
- What experiences, resources or connections do you have access to that others don't?

Remember to ask your friends and colleagues to list your strengths as well. We can tend to be self-effacing, and we often downplay our own abilities, so this is a great way to get more ideas. When you learn where others think you excel, it can be a real boost to your self-esteem!



Action:

Using the bullet points above, fill out the Strengths section of the grid on page 8.

Weaknesses

Here, you think about the things that you're not so good at, or the areas where you can improve your performance. When you list your weaknesses, you can reduce or manage them, so that they don't stop you achieving your goals.

Don't "beat yourself up" about your weaknesses: we all have them. The trick is to recognize them and manage them appropriately. Also, don't be too self-critical. If you're fair and forgiving about other people's weaknesses, make sure you forgive your own, too.

To complete the Weaknesses section of your Personal SWOT Analysis, use the following questions as a guide:

- What skills do you struggle to master?
- What do you do only because you have to, in order to satisfy job requirements?
- Are there one or two aspects of your personality that hold you back?
- What do other people most often identify as your weakness?
- Where are you vulnerable?
- Where do you lack experience, resources or connections, where others have them?

Unlike the Strengths section, don't feel compelled to list every weakness you can think of. Limit yourself to the ones that can have an impact on your career.



Action:

Complete the Weaknesses section on page 8.

Opportunities

Now that you've reflected on your strengths and weaknesses, **you need to focus on understanding the opportunities that are open to you.** Ask yourself:

- In what ways can you take advantage of your strengths?
- What opportunities are open to people who do these things well?
- What would you love to do that you're good at?
- How can you minimize your weaknesses? If these no longer held you back, what could you do?
- Where do you see the most potential growth for yourself: within your current company, in a different organization, in another industry, or in a separate career entirely?
- What trends are having an impact on your current career, or on the one that you're thinking about pursuing?



Action:

Complete the Opportunities section of the grid on the next page.

Threats

Finally, reflect on the things that could derail your success.

Although threats often can't be directly controlled, they can be planned for. That's why it's so important to identify as many of them as possible. The more you know about them, the less likely you are to be "blindsided" by something unexpected.

You might feel that thinking about threats will cause you undue worry and stress. However, you will likely experience more anxiety if you don't consider them, especially when they start becoming more significant.

Remember, a threat loses much of its impact when it's managed and prepared for. Ask

yourself the following questions to uncover potential threats:

- Are there any general threats that you need to think about?
- If you don't address your weaknesses, what problems could they cause?
- What setbacks might you face?
- What obstacles have other people overcome when they're trying to get to where you want to go?



Action:

Fill out the Threats section on the next page..

Tip:



Here, we're assuming that you're already in the "right" career, and that you're thinking about your development within it. If you're still exploring different options, consider visiting a local career counselor who specializes in your situation (a good starting point for this is to search for "career counselor" or "career counsellor.") Even then, use your SWOT Analysis to inform your choice, and use our next tool, PEST Analysis, to review it. You can then use the rest of this document to plan your development.

PERSONAL SWOT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET:

Print off as many copies of this as you need for your personal use.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Opportunities:

Threats:

PERSONAL PEST ANALYSIS

Personal SWOT Analysis looks at the factors within you – and the ones close to you – that can influence your success. By contrast, PEST Analysis digs deeper into the “big picture” external factors that will either help or hinder your career success. Using it makes the difference between choosing an exciting career that’s aligned with the forces of change in the world, and struggling for survival in a dying industry.

PEST is an acronym for the Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, and Technological environments in which you function. To complete a Personal PEST Analysis, you first identify the external factors that can influence your career. Then, you analyze each of these to identify the opportunities and threats that they present.

Political Factors

Here, you consider the influence that the government and its policies may have on the opportunities you’re looking at.

Consider these questions:

- What new laws or regulations are likely to affect these?
- Are you aware of any policies or schemes that will boost or support any of these?
- Will any of these policies affect your ability to work in a specific area, make a certain amount of money, or be reasonably secure?
- Is there a change in government, or a change in policy, expected?
- What opportunities and threats do these changes or events represent?



Action:

Use the bullet points above to complete the Political Factors section of the Personal PEST Analysis on page 12. Then identify the potential opportunities and threats that these present.

Economic Factors

Next, you look at economic factors that may influence your decision to pursue a particular goal.

Think about the following:

- What are the average compensation levels in the careers or industries that you're interested in?
- Are wages expected to rise, fall or stay the same?
- Can you meet your economic needs based on the expected remuneration?
- What is the current and forecast rate of employment or unemployment in these sectors?
- What is the long-term demand for people in these careers?
- What opportunities and threats do these changes or circumstances present?

Action:



Use the bullet points on the previous page to complete the Economic Factors section of the Personal PEST Analysis on the next page. Then identify the opportunities and threats that these present.

Socio-Cultural Factors

These are the societal trends that influence how attractive a particular opportunity may or may not be.

Things to consider include:

- What demographic trends will have an impact on these opportunities?
- Are the educational requirements for them expected to change?
- Are there lifestyle trends and changes that will have an impact on the desirability of these careers?
- Are there familial expectations you have to consider when making a career decision?
How will these affect your ability to be successful?
- What opportunities and threats do these situations represent?

Action:



Use the bullet points above to complete the Socio-Cultural Factors section of the Personal PEST Analysis on page 12. Then, identify the opportunities and threats that these present.

Technological Factors

Finally, you need to look at the technological factors that affect your career decisions. Technology moves forward quickly, and you don't want to get left behind because you failed to consider its potential impact. More than this, **you can expect great new opportunities if you can get good experience of a valuable new technology.**

Ask yourself these questions:

- What technological trends affect the careers you're considering?
- Are there aspects of these jobs that are likely to be automated or digitized in the next few years?
- What technologies are emerging to do this, and how can you get experience of using them?
- How is technology influencing the type of work you do, or the way you complete your tasks?
- What opportunities and threats do these situations present?



Action:

Use the bullet points above to complete the Technological Factors section of the Personal PEST Analysis on page 12. Then, identify the opportunities and threats that these present.

PERSONAL PEST ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Print off as many copies of this as you need for your personal use.

<p>Political Factors:</p> <p>Opportunities:</p> <p>Threats:</p>	<p>Economic Factors:</p> <p>Opportunities:</p> <p>Threats:</p>
<p>Socio-Cultural Factors:</p> <p>Opportunities:</p> <p>Threats:</p>	<p>Technological Factors:</p> <p>Opportunities:</p> <p>Threats:</p>

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Opportunity Analysis

In your SWOT Analysis, you identified a range of opportunities. Now that you've completed your PEST Analysis, you should see that some of these are particularly exciting, and that some just aren't worth pursuing.

Next, you need to explore the best of these opportunities in more detail, and identify the ones that you want to focus on. This can involve talking to people who already do these jobs to find out what they're really like, reading reports on the leading industries and companies, and confirming that your strengths really do suit these career paths.

When you do this, you make sure that the way forward you choose presents the best opportunities, and has the smallest obstacles to overcome.



Action:

Pick your top opportunities, and list them in the first column of the Opportunity Analysis worksheet on the next page.

Then, look over your strengths and weaknesses (as well as the trends that you identified in your PEST Analysis), and mark down the supporting and opposing factors for each opportunity. You should also include your personal interests in here. After all, you want to pursue a development plan that you are excited about!

Then, narrow these options down until you have just one or two preferred opportunities that you can really commit to. (The more you pare things down at this stage, the more effort you can devote to your best choice.)

OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Print off as many copies of this as you need for your personal use.

Identified Opportunity	Supporting Factors (Strengths, PEST Trends and Events, Personal Interests)	Opposing Factors (Weaknesses, PEST Trends and Events)

3. DEFINING YOUR CAREER OBJECTIVES

Now that you're clear about your own strengths and weaknesses, and about the opportunities that are available to you, you're equipped to start thinking about where you want to go.

You start the process by creating a Career Mission Statement that sets out your long-term aspirations. You then break this down into a set of Major Career

Goals that will help you achieve those aspirations.

Career Mission Statement

Just as all effective organizations create a statement of their intended purpose, you must also define the basic direction of your career. This is a fundamental starting point for your Personal Development Plan.

Take some time to decide what you want to do.

Consider these questions:

- What do you intend to accomplish?
- Why is this important to you?
- What values are at the core of your decision?
- Does this make you feel that you're making a significant contribution to other people?
- What deep emotional value or meaning does this have for you?
- How do you want others to perceive you?

When you write your Career Mission Statement, remember that this is your long-term vision for yourself. Typically, this will give you a five- to 10-year perspective (it's hard to know what your life will look like further into the future than this).

A Career Mission Statement is very personal, which means that there's no formula for writing one.

For example, one person might choose a very specific mission such as, "To be a Finance Director by the time I'm 45." Another could be less specific: "To make a real difference, and to improve the quality of care for the elders in my town."

It's important to spend some time drafting your Career Mission Statement until it's punchy and motivating, and it states where you want to go.



Action:

Draft your Career Mission Statement in the box below, and rewrite it until you're completely happy. You'll record it on your Personal Development Plan later.

Career Mission Statement

With your Career Mission Statement as your guide, you now break your long-term objective down into manageable pieces. To do this, you set **Major Career Goals**. These are important steps toward accomplishing your mission, and you'll use them to ensure that your Personal Development Plan is on track.

For instance, your Career Mission Statement may indicate that you want to be a Finance Director by the time you're 45. If that's five years away, you must ask yourself what major steps you need to take within this time to get to that position. For example, you may need to complete a management accounting qualifications, or gain experience in another division.

To identify your Major Career Goals, ask yourself whether you need to do the following:

- Upgrade your education or qualifications?
- Gain a promotion from your current position?
- Get experience in a particular department?
- Move to a different organization or industry?
- Master a particular skill, or set of skills?

If appropriate, you may also want to include your current manager or a mentor in the discussion.

You will need assistance, information and possibly training along the way. So, enlist the help of a professional body in the area, or ask for advice from experienced individuals (for example, people who are already doing the job you want).

A Note on Goal Setting

Use the SMART mnemonic to set precise, motivating goals.

SMART stands for:

- **Specific** – make sure that your goal focuses on one particular outcome.
- **Measurable** – there must be a definable end point, so you know exactly when the goal has been accomplished.
- **Achievable** – you must be reasonably able to accomplish your goal, otherwise it will frustrate you and undermine your self-confidence.
- **Relevant** – goals must relate to what you're ultimately trying to achieve.
- **Time bound** – there has to be a time requirement, otherwise you may never push yourself to accomplish your goal.



Action:

Think about the Career Mission Statement you wrote earlier, and draft three to six SMART goals that you'll need to achieve to fulfill it. Aim to make these compelling and dynamic. Write them on the next page (you'll record the final version of them in your Personal Development Plan in the next section). Leave the Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed sections blank for now – we'll come back to this later.

MAJOR CAREER GOALS

SMART Goal:	
Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed	
SMART Goal:	
Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed	
SMART Goal:	
Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed	

SMART Goal:	
Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed	
SMART Goal:	
Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed	
SMART Goal:	
Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed	

Well done, you're making great progress!

You've now got everything in place to start drafting your Personal Development Plan.

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4. CREATING YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

You're now ready to put everything into a measurable, actionable format that will keep you on track as you progress along your chosen career path.

By the end of this section, you'll have a Personal Development Plan that you'll be able to refer to regularly to make solid progress towards your career goal.

Career Mission Statement

Just as all effective organizations create a statement of their intended purpose, you must also define the basic direction of your career. This is a fundamental starting point for your Personal Development Plan.



Action:

Print off the Personal Development Plan worksheet on page 21, or type directly in the PDF. Write down your name, current position and today's date (the last two items will help you remember how far you've come as you progress). Next, add the Career Mission Statement and the Major Career Goals that you defined earlier. (Remember to include target dates for your goals.)

Conducting a Skills Audit

So far, you've defined where you want to go, and you've identified the major steps you need to take to get there. Now, you'll take a critical look at your current situation, and you'll pinpoint any skills and knowledge gaps that you need to fill.

You can then set specific development goals to address these weaknesses and put yourself on course to achieve your long-term objectives. Your Personal Development Plan includes a Skills Audit section that you can use to assess the skills and strengths you currently possess, compared with those that you need.



Action:

Look at your Major Career Goals on pages 14-15, and complete the Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed sections. To do this, start by reviewing the weaknesses and threats that you identified in your SWOT and PEST analyses. Do you need to develop or improve any skills to counter or manage these?
Next, think about the people who control access to the achievement of

your goals. What will they be looking for in a good candidate? (You might hope that people will “take a chance” on you without some of these skills or qualifications, but the reality is that they probably will not. After all, the consequences of hiring the wrong person to a job can be huge.) If appropriate, ask these people what they want, or spend time researching the skills that you’ll need (look at the requirements listed in job descriptions or advertisements, talk to your HR department, and search for relevant courses).

Tip:



When you’re evaluating the skills that you’ll need, remember to include important general career skills, such as team management and communication, as well as others that are directly related to your company or profession. “Soft skills” are important, and they become increasingly important the further you go in your career.

Action:



From the Skills, Qualifications and Experience Needed sections on pages 14-15, identify the most important skills. Write these down in the Skills Audit section of the Personal Development Plan on page 21. (You’ll find space for 16 skills – try to list fewer than this!)

Next, you need to identify gaps between the skills you have and those that you need. Rank your current ability using the following scale, and record this in your Personal Development Plan:

- A** I demonstrate high levels of competence in this skill.
- B** I have this skill/competency, but some improvements could be made. I
- C** need to improve this skill/competency.
- D** I need to put in considerable work to develop this skill/competency. I
- E** have almost no experience with this competency.

Revisit these skill rankings every six months (make a diary entry to do this now). This will help you maintain focus and stay on target.

Create an Action Plan

You're finally ready to put together your Action Plan (page 22). This contains short-term Development Goals and Action Steps that you can start working on right away to achieve your Major Career Goals; and it focuses on any skills gaps that you identified in your Skills Audit.



Action:

Choose the planning period that best fits your circumstances, and add this to your Action Plan. Typically, your planning period will be the next six to 12 months.



Action:

For each Major Career Goal, think about what you need to achieve within your planning period. Next, carefully evaluate each of the skill gaps you identified in your Skills Audit, and consider how you intend to close it. Add these Development Goals to your Action Plan.



Action:

For each Development Goal, think about the specific actions you will take to accomplish it. For example, if you need to complete a course, you might have to write a business case for your boss or HR department, to outline why the organization should pay for it.

Depending on the nature of the goal, there may be actions that depend on other people's involvement, such as your manager or teammates. Factors to consider include:

- What training or education do you need?
- What experience do you need?
- How will you get that training and/or experience? (For example, job share, on-the-job training, courses, e-learning, or experience through voluntary work.)
- What kind of support do you need?
- What will others do to help you? (Mentor, coach, evaluate.)

Write down your Action Steps on page 22, and include the date by which you intend to accomplish them.



Action:

Use the Obstacles and Solutions column to list any difficulties that you foresee. Think about how you'll overcome these, and, if necessary, add more goals. As you start working on your Development Goals, add the challenges that you've had to overcome, and write down your planned and actual solutions. You can use this information as you plan and prepare future Development Goals.



Action:

Make a plan for evaluating your progress, and add it to your Action Plan. What criteria will you use to determine whether you have succeeded, and when and how will you measure this?

Finally, commit yourself to your plan, and sign it off. By doing this, you have already taken the first critical step toward making your vision a reality.

From Paper to Practice

Well done, you now have something that very few people have – a well-thought-through Personal Development Plan.

Next, you need to take the self-organizational steps necessary to bringing this plan to life.



Action:

Add the Development Goals and Action Steps you have identified to your To-Do List or Action Program, and prioritize at least one of them. Review the threats section of your SWOT and PEST analyses, and see if you need to take any actions to mitigate any of these. Add these to your To-Do List.

Schedule six-monthly reviews of your Personal Development Plan in your diary. As you make progress, you'll discover new skills that you need to learn and your perspectives will change. By updating your Personal Development Plan regularly, you'll keep it relevant.

Only you have the power to take your Personal Development Plan to the next stage: execution. Planning your goals is the first, very important step. Now you have to commit to working on your plan every day.

- Keep your Career Mission Statement at the forefront of your mind, and perhaps at the top of your To-Do List. (Perhaps pin it to the wall by your desk?)
- Take an action that will move you towards your Development Goals each working day.
- Let other people who you trust know what you are doing, and why. Use them as your personal support network.
- Don't forget to reward yourself along the way. Sure, it's nice when others recognize your accomplishments, but you can do this yourself, too.
- Remember that your Personal Development Plan is as dynamic as you are. As circumstances change, you may need to adjust it. Make changes along the way, and keep it current and to-date. up-

