
Level 7 Diploma in Management Studies

Advanced Professional Development

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How to use this workbook

This workbook has been designed to provide you with the course material necessary to complete the module, Advanced Professional Development by distance learning. At various stages throughout the module you will encounter icons as outlined below which indicate what you are required to do to help you learn.

This **Activity** icon refers to an activity where you are required to undertake a specific task. These could include reading, questioning, writing, research, analysing, evaluating, etc.



This **Activity Feedback** icon is used to provide you with the information required to confirm and reinforce the learning outcomes of the activity.



This **Key Point** icon is included to stress the importance of a particular piece of information.



This icon shows where the **Virtual Campus** could be useful as a medium for discussion on the relevant topic.



It is important that you utilise these icons as together they will provide you with the underpinning knowledge required to understand concepts and theories and apply them to the business and management environment. Try to use your own background knowledge when completing the activities and draw the best ideas and solutions you can from your work experience. If possible, discuss your ideas with other students or your colleagues; this will make learning much more stimulating. Remember, if in doubt, or you need answers to any questions about this workbook or how to study, ask your tutor.

Advanced Professional Development

Introduction

This module is designed to enable learners to take responsibility for their learning and development needs to meet personal, professional and organisational goals and objectives. This will be achieved through analysing current skills, and preparing and implementing personal development plans. This module highlights the importance of seeking feedback from others to improve performance and continuously reviewing learning needs as these skills will equip the learner for future demanding responsibilities and career progression.

Evidence provided to achieve this module will be continuous throughout the qualification, thereby enabling learners to take ownership of their future development needs. Learners will be able to demonstrate they have a regularly updated and realistic personal development plan which fits with their preferred learning style. This module will also enable learners to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of their learning on their chosen career path.

Summary of learning outcomes

To achieve this module a learner must be able to:

1. Explore methods to improve personal and professional skills to meet organisational and own goals and objectives.
2. Carry out a personal skills audit which identifies preferred learning style.
3. Prepare and implement a personal development plan.

Content

Unit 1 Methods to improve personal and professional skills

Unit 2 Personal skills audit

Unit 3 Personal development plan

Unit 1

Improving Personal and Professional Skills

Unit Objectives

The aim of this unit is to present details of a range of different methods that can be used to improve the skills of a manager; both professional and personal.

Professional skills include such areas as counselling, mentoring and coaching. These are then directed to both leadership and management styles and capabilities.

The key concern for personal skills is the need to use time effectively, and the concept of time management is discussed at length.

The unit concludes with a look at the methods that are available for developing management capabilities through Continuing Professional Development programmes.

Professional Skills

Counselling

Counselling has become a popular method of offering advice and helping staff development. Although it is often associated particularly with personal difficulties and conflict in the workplace, it also provides an important source of guidance in business activities. This can include assistance with new projects and ventures, as well as providing general advice.

ACTIVITY

What do you understand by the term business counselling?

Can you give any examples of its use in your experience? Describe how counselling was provided.



Counselling is important in many areas of management: performance appraisal, handling employee grievances, disciplinary procedures, coaching and so on.



KEY POINT

Counselling is the process of helping people to recognise their feelings about problems, to define those problems accurately, find solutions or learn to live with a situation.

A typical counselling session could involve giving advice, encouraging a change in behaviour, helping an employee accept an inevitable situation or assisting someone in taking a final decision.

Counselling should occur in private, and without interruption from telephones, secretaries with messages, etc. The aim is not to impose but rather to induce people independently to learn how to overcome difficulties and take appropriate decisions. There are two approaches:

- **Directive counselling** involves taking the initiative and actually suggesting solutions. The possible consequences of various courses of action are outlined and a range of actions are considered. Here, the counsellor charts a path towards the correct decision.
- **Indirect counselling** assumes that only the counsellee is capable of defining accurately his or her problems and that the most effective way of getting to the heart of a difficulty is to encourage the other party to discuss the issue at length. It presupposes that solutions to problems will not be implemented unless counselees wholeheartedly accept their implications.



ACTIVITY

Does your organisation have an effective counselling policy?

Write a summary of your understanding of its use of counselling.

Coaching and mentoring skills

We shall start this section with a look at what is meant by the terms 'coaching' and 'mentoring', and how they differ.

ACTIVITY



What do you understand by the terms 'coaching' and 'mentoring'?

What experiences of them have you had? Do you feel positive or negative about your experiences?

KEY POINT



The common thread uniting all types of coaching and mentoring is that these services offer a vehicle for analysis, reflection and action that ultimately enables the client to achieve success in one or more areas of their life or work.

Here are two simple definitions to act as starting points for our discussion:

Coaching is...

“a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be a successful a Coach requires a knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place.”

Parsloe, E, *The Manager as Coach and Mentor* (1999)

Mentoring is...

“off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.”

Clutterbuck, D & Megginson, D,
Mentoring Executives and Directors (1999)

Coaching and mentoring are processes that enable both individual and corporate clients to achieve their full potential.

Coaching and mentoring share many similarities so it makes sense to outline the common things coaches and mentors do, whether the services are offered in a paid (professional) or unpaid (philanthropic) role.

- Facilitate the exploration of needs, motivations, desires, skills and thought processes to assist the individual in making real, lasting change.