

# **“Rethinking Professional Development” - A Workshop**

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**Objectives of this workshop for all of our CIRES employees:**

- To identify and leverage your strengths in order to design a meaningful career plan, with the support of your supervisor.
- To help you recognize professional development opportunities embedded in your current job duties and professional relationships.
- To help you identify valuable resources that can be useful for your professional development.

**Objectives of this workshop for supervisors (or mentors):**

- To help you support each supervisee (or mentee) as they try to identify their professional interests, strengths, and areas of development.
- To help you establish a direct relationship between your employees' everyday duties and the needs of your projects and team.
- To make you aware of resources that will be helpful in supporting your employees' professional development.

## ACTIVITY #1:

In consideration of the current status of your career:

Identify a current professional goal (to become a supervisor; improve your coding skills in a specific language; to become a DEI advocate within your unit; to publish your first paper in a prestigious journal; to become an expert in Excel or Google Sheets).

- 1) What are the strengths that you can leverage to achieve that goal?
- 2) What are potential obstacles?
- 3) How will you conquer obstacles and keep moving forward towards completion?
- 4) How will achieving this goal improve your performance, or help your project or team?
- 5) For the last question, please adopt the perspective of a supervisor. If an employee came to you, shared the information you just provided above, and asked you for advice in tackling their goal:
  - Would you assess their professional objective as realistic, relevant to their work and achievable within a reasonable time frame?
  - Where or how should they start?
  - What would a possible roadmap to successful achievement look like?

## **ACTIVITY #2:**

*If you are currently a supervisor, decide if you want to complete this activity as (a) an employee, or (b) a supervisor. Whatever option you skip now, you can complete as part of your homework.*

### **(a) For employees:**

1. Identify your 2 major responsibilities at work.
2. Tell us how these duties support the bigger project to which you are contributing.
3. How does the work you do contribute to the CIRES mission?
4. Finally, can you please establish a clear relationship between the work that you do and the broader profession? Consider current trends, the predicted evolution of your field and/or work being done by peers in different organizations.

## ACTIVITY #2

### (b) For supervisors:

1. Identify one of your employees. Don't select that employee who is extremely clear on their career path and never seems to need you, but instead pick someone who you know will benefit from your guidance. What are their main responsibilities?
2. Describe their major interests and anything that this employee does very well. Are you capitalizing on their strengths in order to advance your team's goals? Otherwise, how can you better leverage this employee's talents?
3. What would you say is their #1 area of needed development? For example, think about the type of tasks with which they struggle. Does this also correspond to an area of need for your team?
4. What is a short action plan (that you can scribble down right now in 60 seconds), and what are the resources you would recommend for your employee to address this deficiency?

## **CIRES processes directly related to your professional development:**

(a) ASA or Annual Summary of Accomplishments (CIREs professional management tool)

(b) Career Track & promotion

=> How is the ASA relevant to your professional development? If you are a new employee and you want to learn about the ASA process ahead of this summer, when training and the actual process take place, you may want to watch [this presentation](#) by Lucia Harrop.

On June 30 every year, all CIREs employees submit the employee portion of the ASA, which contains 3 major sections:

1. A list of your job duties
2. The narrative summary where you reflect on contributions and setbacks
3. Objectives for the next year

The second CIRES process which also works as a tool for managing performance and pushing your professional development is the **CIRES Career Track & promotion process**. On this note, we would like to take this opportunity to invite all of you to attend our [Career track Information Session](#) on November 6. This training is led by Christine Wiedinmyer with the support of Waleed Abdalati and CIRES HR.

## How is the Career track promotion process relevant to your professional development?

•Associate Scientist III is expected to demonstrate increasing independence and should be able to carry out assigned duties with limited supervision. An Associate Scientist III, for example, is expected to be involved in substantial roles in supporting laboratory and field experiments, data collection and interpretation, development and use of hardware and software, scientific and technical publications, proposal writing, the formulation of education and outreach products for the public, budget preparation, or human resource activities. An Associate Scientist III is eligible for promotion to Senior Associate Scientist after five years of service.

•Senior Associate Scientist is someone who has reached a high level of professional maturity. They should be independent, work with minimal supervision, make significant leadership contributions, and hold positions of responsibility. They may be involved in budgeting, human resource actions, proposal writing, and are expected to make service contributions through participation on committees, mentoring, or outreach. A Senior Associate Scientist is expected, for example, to show significant accomplishment in research or in support of research, which will likely involve substantial roles in supporting laboratory and field experiments, data collection and interpretation, development and use of hardware and software, scientific and technical publications, proposal writing, the formulation of education and outreach products for the public, budget preparation, or human resource activities. A Senior Associate Scientist is expected to retain this position in the CIRES career track until retirement.

## **Everyday performance management and professional development activities:**

- Your day-to-day responsibilities
- Any collaboration with your colleagues
- The feedback you receive during a one-on-one with your supervisor or science advisor
- Your participation in meetings
- Attending team or team-sponsored presentations, events, or conferences
- Sharing the results of your work at a public talk

**And why is it important for us to establish a meaningful relationship between the isolated, every day, components of our job and professional development?**

The Center for Creative Leadership states that:

- 70% of professional development occurs on the job through meaningful duties and stretch assignments. What is a stretch assignment?
- 20% of professional development occurs through our professional relationships: colleagues, supervisors, advisors, mentors, and coaches.
- Only 10% of professional growth occurs through formal learning settings (classroom, specialized certifications, webinars).

### **ACTIVITY #3:**

If you are a supervisor, you can choose to complete this activity either employee or supervisor.

#### **a) For employees:**

1) Identify a challenging project in which you participated and which resulted in new skills or learning. If you can't think of a challenging assignment from your past, visualize a demanding project in which you would like to participate. Why would this assignment be "a stretch"?

2) Think about the people involved in that activity: students and coworkers, your supervisor, external stakeholders or collaborators. If you are thinking about the past... how were those professional relationships valuable to your learning? Who do you want to work with in the future who you think will provide a meaningful professional collaboration? Why them?

3) Finally, thinking back to that stretch assignment or forward to the project to which you wish to be called, was or is there a specific webinar, training certification, or a CU college course that proved essential or that would better prepare you to complete the stretch assignment?

### **ACTIVITY #3:**

#### **b) For supervisors:**

1) Identify a challenging project that could serve as a stretch assignment for one of your employees. Identify the employee, then the project, and finally think about the duties that you would assign to the employee in order to challenge them in a reasonable manner. Why those specific duties?

2) Think about the people involved in the project: students, you in the role of supervisor, other team members, federal partners or external collaborators. Can you plan for a meaningful professional relationship for your employee resulting from this activity?

3) When you consider professional development resources, can you identify a specific training, a CU college course or certification that would prepare your employee for the stretch assignment or perpetuate the newly learned skills?

**Let's go back to the idea of learning through professional relationships, which in our accepted model, accounts for 20% of our growth:**

Consider your professional collaborations. Are you making the most of your relationship with:

- Your CIRES colleagues within your lab and across units (campus/ NOAA/ Admin units)
- Your supervisor, team leader, and federal partners
- Members of your professional networks, interest groups, and other external colleagues
- At CIRES, we have a robust [Mentoring Program](#) in which you can participate in the capacity of mentor, mentee, or both: With a minimal expectation of 8 total hours (1 hour per month), the CIRES Mentoring Program will push you to consider your own professional objectives through readings, sessions with guest trainers, and the professional relationship you build with your mentor or mentee

## Formal opportunities for professional development (10%):

- Professional certifications (Microsoft, Google, other credentialing bodies)
- CU college courses (all of us as employees have 9 credit hours free of charge)
- LinkedIn Learning modules and Coursera courses(My CU Info portal/ Training)
- Seminars or webinars on technical or leadership skills
- Professional development opportunities through CU Boulder's HR [Learning & Development](#) program, which addresses leadership, diversity, career & organizational development.
- CIRES has professional development funds that can support your participation in CU-led non-technical trainings. After obtaining support from your supervisor, please submit your request [here](#).

### **Upcoming CIRES Trainings (CIRES Message Center/ CIRES Weekly Events)**

- Career Track and Promotion, November 6, 2023 (Christine Wiedinmyer).
- Best Practices for Supervisors, January 17, 2024 (CIRES HR).
- Performance Management, February 21, 2024 (Kelly Leandro).
- Crucial Conversations for Mastering Dialogue, March 4-7, 2024 (Lauren Harris).

The full 16-hour training offered in-person (a \$250/per person will be presented to CIRES employees free of charge). Our facilitator, Lauren Harris, is Central CU HR's Assistant Director for Training and Development.

**Your Homework:**

- 1) In the next 2 weeks, find 60 minutes to work on your professional development plan.
- 2) Review your ASA goals and plan out the rest of this cycle through June 30, 2024 keeping in mind that 1/3 of the year has already gone by. Determine if you need to make any adjustment.
- 3) Review CIREs expectations for promotion to your next career track level and write a plan which will ensure you hit the major milestones in a sensible timeline with year-by-year goals.

### **Take-Home Notes for Employee:**

- No one cares more about your own professional development than yourself.
- You are both responsible and accountable for your own professional development.
- Schedule your professional development.
- The professional development efforts that you embark in should improve your skills and increase your marketability in the profession as a whole. Meaning, the culture of your organization should guide your professional development, but it shouldn't limit it.

### **Take-Home Notes for Mentors and Supervisors:**

- The majority of employees are hungry for and interested in supervision, coaching and mentoring.
- You can support your employees' professional development plan but you cannot want that growth more than they do.
- Give each of your employees agency in planning their own career path, but be willing and able to support the road to achievement.

## **Feedback**

*Whether you attended the 10/25/2023 virtual workshop on Professional Development, or you are watching the recording asynchronously, CIRES HR would appreciate your feedback, so that we can continue to improve!*

3 questions = 3 minutes!

(You may need to copy the link into a new window)

[https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dbqqgcpOKWHeLBA](https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dbqqgcpOKWHeLBA)