

FSKLRG011

Use routine strategies for work-related learning

Learner Guide



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Unit of Competency

Application

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to identify own learning goals and needs and develop a formal learning plan to participate in a vocational or workplace learning environment.

An individual performing these tasks works independently and uses familiar support resources as needed.

This unit applies to individuals who use, or are preparing to use, learning skills to complete workplace activities. This includes existing workers and individuals preparing for employment through vocational education and training. This unit should be integrated and contextualised with vocational training to support achievement of vocational competency.

This unit is aligned to, but does not fully address, the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) learning core skill indicators .01 and .02 at level 3 in the workplace and employment domain of communication.

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Unit Mapping Information

Supersedes and is equivalent to FSKLRG11 Use routine strategies for work-related learning.

Unit Sector

Learning.

Performance Criteria

Element

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

Performance Criteria

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Prepare for learning | 1.1 Identify work-related learning goals 1.2 Investigate and select a range of formal and informal learning pathways 1.3 Investigate a range of approaches to achieve goals, identifying strengths and limitations of approaches 1.4 Anticipate potential barriers to learning |
| 2. Use strategies for learning | 2.1 Identify and select work-related goal 2.2 Identify a preferred approach to achieving work-related learning goal 2.3 Identify and implement strategies to address barriers to achieving learning goal 2.4 Propose routine learning strategies to achieve learning goal 2.5 Identify and access a range of reliable support resources 2.6 Create and use a formal learning plan to implement strategies |
| 3. Review own learning progress | 3.1 Monitor progress against plan and reflect on actions and outcomes, identifying options for improvement 3.2 Seek feedback on learning progression 3.3 Identify areas for further learning and training |

Foundation Skills

This section describes language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills incorporated in the performance criteria that are required for competent performance.

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

Assessment Requirements

Performance Evidence

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to complete the tasks outlined in the elements, performance criteria and foundation skills of this unit, including evidence of the ability to:

- Develop at least one formal learning plan to support the achievement of identified work-related learning goal and learning pathway
- Check and review progress against plan on at least one occasion.

Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must be able to demonstrate knowledge to complete the tasks outlined in the elements, performance criteria and foundation skills of this unit, including knowledge of:

- Work-related tasks requiring learning
- Common barriers to learning and solutions to address barriers
- Routine strategies to support learning goals
- Own learning goals
- Relevant education and training requirements for selected learning pathway options
- Relevant support resources for personal learning goals and techniques to assess validity of source
- Typical features of a formal learning plan
- Approaches to check and respond to progress of learning plans.

Assessment Conditions

Competency is to be assessed in the workplace, a workplace simulated environment or a vocational training context.

Skills must be demonstrated using routine texts or tasks that reflect those typically found in a workplace.

The following resources are to be made available:

- Own familiar support resources.

Assessors must:

- Satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards, and
- Have sound knowledge of the ACSF and performance features of the ACSF level being assessed, and
- Have demonstrable expertise, knowledge and skills in the vocational contextualisation and assessment of the core skill, learning, and
- Have completed the following or equivalent:
 - TAESS00009 Address Foundation Skills in Vocational Practice Skill Set; or
 - a higher level education qualification, such as:
 - TAE80113 Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice (and its equivalent TAE70111); or
 - Bachelor of Education, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma of Education, or higher. This may include qualifications relating to TESOL, adult education or vocational education.

Links

Companion Volume Implementation Guide is found on VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=f572fe10-a855-4986-9295-3852c771f178>

1. Prepare for learning

- 1.1. Identify work-related learning goals
- 1.2. Investigate and select a range of formal and informal learning pathways
- 1.3. Investigate a range of approaches to achieve goals, identifying strengths and limitations of approaches
- 1.4. Anticipate potential barriers to learning



1.1 – Identify work-related learning goals

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify own work-related goals.

Learning goals

Learning goals help to take you from where you are currently in your career and development to where you want to be, much in the same way that a road map shows how to get from A to B. Without a map on a road journey, it is likely that you will meander, stray off-course and take longer to reach your destination – there is also a danger that you might never actually reach your destination! It is just the same when you are managing your career – without clearly defined learning goals, there is a risk that you miss opportunities that might help you, and you might get side-tracked down little lanes which might be interesting but they don't actually help you to achieve your career ambitions.

Imagine that your ambition was to be a sound engineer in a recording studio. You might have opportunities to learn more about the computer software available, or music production techniques, or the technicalities of maintaining and repairing instruments, etc. The possibilities are endless, as they would be whatever your career ambition was. When it comes to your career, there's more than one way to reach the end-point, but having clarity about what your goals are will help you to remain focused and on track.

Knowing your learning goals will also:

- Help you to achieve your career ambitions
- Help you to get the knowledge, skills and experience that you need to achieve your career ambitions
- Help you to focus and be interested in learning opportunities
- Avoid wasting your time on learning that isn't relevant to you
- Ensure that you don't miss the chance to learn something new.



Sometimes opportunities may come along which are not directly connected with your overall career plans – this is sometimes referred to as being at a 'career crossroads' where you have to make a decision about which way to go. This is when tricky decisions have to be made about the direction that you take.

All of this is much easier if you are very clear about your career plans and the learning that you need to undertake in order to get there. With a clear vision, it really makes it easier to decide which development opportunities to take and which ones to let pass you by. But you can only really make sounds decisions about this if you are clear about where you want to get to.

Learning goals set out what you want to achieve, and they should all point towards your end goal in some way.

They may include things like:

- Completing a qualification
- Job-shadowing an experienced person
- Getting experience in a new area
- Being shown how to complete a task
- Doing some research.



Identifying your learning goals

The first step in identifying your learning goals is knowing what your career goals are. Only you can know this, so it's important to be honest with yourself and your ambitions. With a clear view of your overall career goal, you now need to ask yourself:

- Where are you now?
- Where do you want to get to?

The gap between these two things can be filled by learning and experience. The next step is then to identify specifically what learning and experience you need, in what order and by when, so that you can make progress towards achieving your career goals.

You can identify your learning goals using the following techniques:

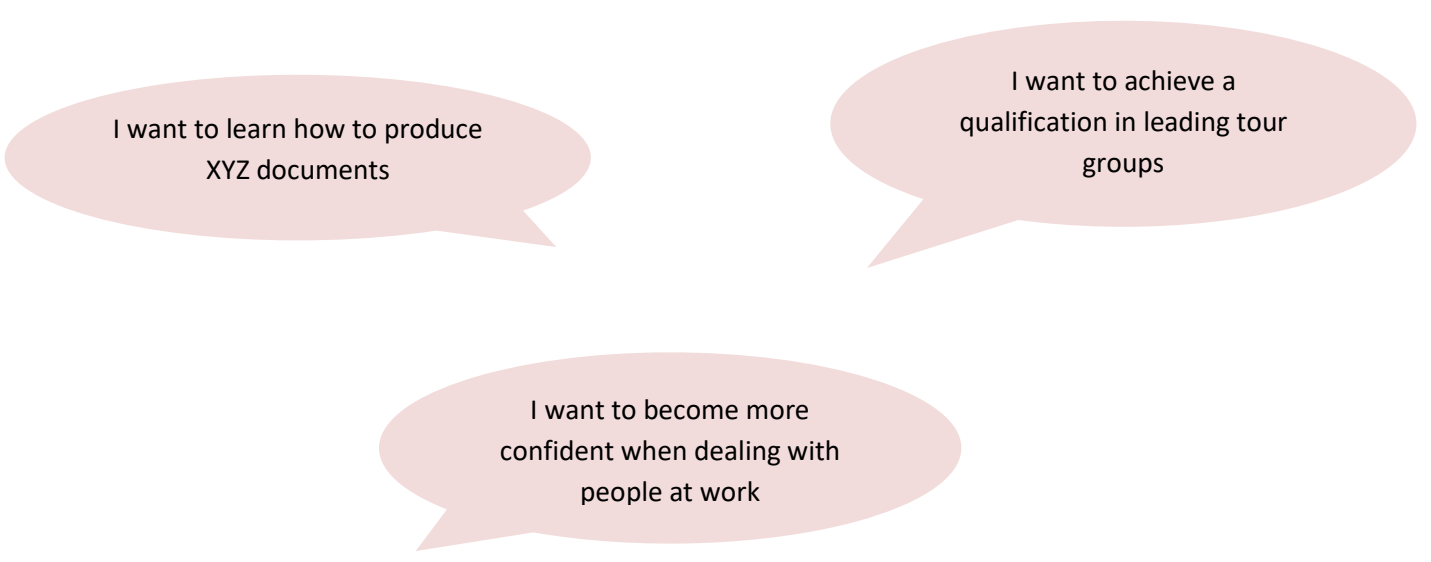
- Look at the requirements for your target career/job role – what knowledge, skills, qualifications and experience are needed?
- Talk to your supervisor or manager at work – what learning do they recommend that you do to achieve your career goal?
- Talk to people already doing the career that you are aiming for – what do they suggest?
- Look at your most recent Personal Development Review (or Performance Appraisal/Assessment) – what does it say about your future development needs?
- Reflect on your current performance – what things do you do well, and what do you need to develop?

Whatever learning opportunities you take part in, it's important that you have a clear learning goal or purpose.

You need to know:

- What you are going to be learning
- Why you are learning it
- How you will use the learning in your work.

A learning goal is a simple statement which sets out what you are hoping to achieve from the learning.

Take a look at the following examples:

I want to learn how to produce
XYZ documents

I want to achieve a
qualification in leading tour
groups

I want to become more
confident when dealing with
people at work

Without a clear goal, there is a risk that you may:

- Lose focus and interest in the learning that is taking place
- Miss the chance to ask useful questions or get useful information/experience
- Waste time taking part in learning that doesn't seem relevant to you
- Miss the chance to learn something new
- Find your work harder to do because you haven't learned the best way to do things.

1.2 – Investigate and select a range of formal and informal learning pathways

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Carry out their own research in order to investigate and select two learning pathways which would be appropriate for a previously identified goal.

Learning pathways

A learning pathway is the route that you take to achieve your career ambitions. It takes into account your learning and development needs and other experiences (including your personal life and engagement with your community).

The particular pathway that you choose will be unique to you. It's possible that two people may have identical career ambitions, but the routes they take to achieve this may be completely different. We all have different priorities, and we each have our own unique set of circumstances – what may suit one person may not necessarily suit another. For example, one person may thrive on using e-learning as a key tool to help them complete the necessary learning for a career goal, but this may switch another person off, preferring to have face-to-face contact with other people. Each learning approach is equally valid – both will help to fulfil the career ambition, but they are different routes for different people. The key is to choose a route which helps you to achieve your career goals and one which also suits you in a number of other ways.

A learning pathway may include a mix of one or more of the following options:

- Australian Apprenticeship (known as apprenticeships or traineeships in some states and territories)
- Volunteering
- Entry-level work
- Further study
- Job advancement, etc.

When deciding on your learning pathway, you need to be absolutely clear about:

- Your career ambitions
- Your learning goals
- Opportunities for work, learning, voluntary work, etc.



Formal learning pathways

Formal learning consists of a structured and organised programme of learning that has been formally approved or recognised and leads to the achievement of a full or part qualification. Many people choose this option at the start of their career, whilst others take this route when they have been in employment for a few years and wish to gain a qualification for what they can already do, or as a means to gaining new skills or change jobs.

It's not uncommon for some people to work for several years in a specific area (e.g. IT) but then change their career direction later in life for a variety of reasons.

Formal learning in Australia is available from a range of sectors:

| Sector | Types of institutions |
|--|--|
| Schools | Preschools, primary schools, and secondary and senior secondary schools and colleges |
| Vocational Education and Training (VET) | Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) — including publicly owned Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes and private colleges, adult and community education centres, and schools |
| Higher education | Universities and other registered higher education institutions |

You can find out about formal learning pathways by asking for advice and information from:

- Registered Training Organisations
- Schools and colleges
- Professional institutes
- Career guidance professionals, etc.

Informal learning pathways

Informal learning is unstructured and consists of what you learn from daily work-related, family or leisure activities. For example, when someone at work shows you how to carry out a new task because an opportunity presented itself at the time, then this is considered to be 'informal learning'. Some people prefer to learn via this method as opposed to taking a formal route. However, the qualification structure enables people to be recognised for the skills and experience that they have gained via informal learning.

You can find out about informal learning pathways by asking for advice and information from:

- Your supervisor/trainer/manager at work (either paid work or voluntary)
- Your colleagues
- Friends and family
- People you know who are in the career you are interested in, etc.

1.3 – Investigate a range of approaches to achieve goals, identifying strengths and limitations of approaches

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Carry out their own research to identify two different approaches which they could adopt to achieve a previously identified goal.

There are many different ways that you could achieve your learning goals, including but not limited to:

- Full-time study
- Part-time study
- Distance education (external study/flexible delivery)
- Studying overseas
- Informal learning opportunities.



Full-time study

On average, full-time students have 20 contact hours per week, but this varies between courses and institutions. Contact hours are the times that the student attends the course whether that's attending lectures, tutorials or other classes. An advantage of full-time study is that the student can devote their full energy and focus on the course, and will be studying alongside like-minded individuals working towards a similar goal – this can help greatly in terms of motivation. Cost can be a disadvantage if the student has to pay for all or part of the tuition fees and living expenses themselves.

Part-time study

Students studying part-time usually take about half the required number of subjects (or units) per year that a full-time student would take. Some courses may be available in the evening to suit work commitments. Part-time study suits people who work in either full or part-time employment, and people who have other commitments such as caring responsibilities. An obvious disadvantage is that it takes longer to achieve the learning goals, and it can be harder to maintain the momentum and motivation over a longer period of time.

Distance education (external study/flexible delivery)

Distance education is a flexible way to study where physical attendance at classes is either not required or kept to a minimum. Independent learning materials and support are provided, and study can be full-time or part-time. This approach to learning is ideal for those who want maximum flexibility – they can study at a time and place that suits them. They can also work at a pace that suits them – if they need to take longer over a particular aspect, they can do so without affecting anyone else, for example. Another main advantage is that distance learning programmes tend not to have the entry requirements that exist for more traditional courses. One of the key disadvantages is that students can feel isolated and lack the contact that they would have in a traditional setting.

Studying overseas

As the world becomes more connected, studying overseas is a great way to join and contribute to global communities and conversations. Students benefit from being exposed to other cultures, languages and education systems, while also enhancing their employability skills. The most obvious disadvantage of this approach is cost unless the student can access grants or have the cost of their study sponsored in some way.

Informal learning opportunities

Informal learning opportunities exist everywhere. An existing employer may be able to offer learning opportunities in a range of ways.

For example:

- Workshops and courses
- E-learning programs
- On-the-job instruction
- Job shadowing
- Secondments
- Taking on new responsibilities
- Promotion, etc.



Other opportunities may exist in the voluntary sector – many people volunteer their time to specific charities and other voluntary sector organisations not just for the feeling of contributing to society as a whole, but also to gain valuable knowledge, skills and experience.

When deciding on your route to achieving your learning goals, it's useful to consider all of your options.

You can do this by following these steps:

- Write a list of all the possible options that you can think of which would help you to achieve your learning goal (e.g. full-time study, part-time study, etc.)
- Research each of your options – find out what learning opportunities are available (e.g. talk to your boss, conduct an internet search, etc.)
- Gather information about your options (e.g. course details for different courses, etc.)
- Review the information about each option and think about the advantages and disadvantages of each
- Decide which options to explore further
- Decide which options to commit to and record these in a learning plan.

1.4 – Anticipate potential barriers to learning

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

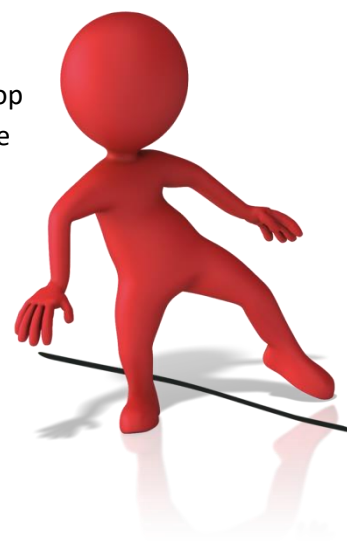
- Identify a range of potential barriers to workplace learning.

Potential barriers to learning

There are many different factors which can impede a person's access to or progress towards achieving their learning goals. The following are typical examples:

Physical disabilities/impairments

Some disabilities and impairments are lifelong factors, and some gradually develop during a person's life. Either way, physical disabilities can pose a real threat to the extent to which an individual can access and make progress with their learning plan. The possible range of physical disabilities is vast from relatively minor sight or hearing loss which can easily be corrected with the use of suitable equipment, to more complex mobility or learning difficulties. Any disability or impairment which is ignored is at risk of preventing the individual from accessing the learning and so it is important that any needs are effectively diagnosed prior to the learning taking place so that the necessary arrangements can be made to support that person.



Learning disabilities

There are also many possible learning difficulties which can prevent an individual from achieving their learning goals. One common and often ignored learning disability is dyslexia which is a complex condition. There are many possible solutions to help a dyslexic person to access the learning, but what suits one person may be of no use to another. Other difficulties include problems with memory, use of numbers, reading and writing, etc.

Health issues

Changes in health and certain life events can have an impact on the way that someone learns. If a student is experiencing bereavement or the break-up of a relationship, for example, this will undoubtedly have an impact on their ability and willingness to learn. A student undergoing a series of medical checks will understandably be distracted from their learning whilst coping with worries about their future health, etc.

Motivation

Being forced to attend training is not always a successful strategy. Learning can only truly take place when the student is a willing participant – no-one can be forced to learn anything. The individual needs to be motivated to learn, and a lack of motivation is a definite barrier to learning.

Anxiety/lack of confidence

Anxiety and feelings of failure also pose a barrier to learning. A feeling that a learning goal is unachievable, or that it is overwhelming can be a real barrier as it may prevent the individual from even trying – in their own mind, they have failed before they even get started and so they may apply little energy and effort.

This has the unfortunate effect of leading to poor progress, and this leads the individual to believe that they will never succeed. The situation becomes a vicious circle. If a student lacks confidence, they will concentrate more on feeling inadequate, etc. and won't give much attention to the actual learning that is available to them. It may affect their ability to contribute to group work in classroom situations, for example.

Time

Adults usually have other commitments in their lives in addition to their learning activities – this may include work (either paid or voluntary), caring responsibilities (e.g. for children or elderly relatives), community responsibilities, etc. A very common learning barrier is having enough time to spend on the learning itself.

Support

Everyone needs support and encouragement when working towards a significant goal, whether that goal is about climbing a mountain or completing a qualification. A lack of support from the people around us can have a negative effect on our levels of motivation. The people who can provide support include immediate friends and family of course, and work colleagues and bosses.

Recognising the barriers that may prevent people from achieving their learning goals is important. You may feel that you don't know what the solution is, but there will be other people involved in your learning who can help you with that, so the important thing is to know when a barrier may exist and take steps to try to remove it or to make it less of an issue.



2. Use strategies for learning

- 2.1.** Identify and select work-related goal
- 2.2.** Identify a preferred approach to achieving work-related learning goal
- 2.3.** Identify and implement strategies to address barriers to achieving learning goal
- 2.4.** Propose routine learning strategies to achieve learning goal
- 2.5.** Identify and access a range of reliable support resources
- 2.6.** Create and use a formal learning plan to implement strategies



2.1 – Identify and select work-related goal

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify three different work-related goals personal to their own ambitions.

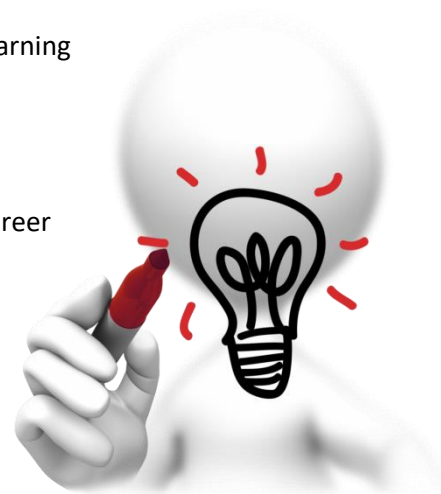
Identifying work-related goals

Identifying work-related goals will be a similar process to identifying learning goals.

Let's recap on this process.

The first step in identifying your learning goals is knowing what your career goals are. Only you can know this, so it's important to be honest with yourself and your ambitions. With a clear view of your overall career goal, you now need to ask yourself:

- Where are you now?
- Where do you want to get to?



The gap between these two things can be filled by learning and experience. The next step is then to identify specifically what learning and experience you need, and in what order, and by when, so that you can make progress towards achieving your career goals.

You can identify your work-related goals using the following techniques:

- Look at the requirements for your target career/job role – what knowledge, skills, qualifications and experience are needed?
- Talk to your supervisor or manager at work – what learning do they recommend that you do to achieve your career goal?
- Talk to people already doing the career that you are aiming for – what do they suggest?
- Look at your most recent Personal Development Review (or Performance Appraisal/Assessment) – what does it say about your future development needs?
- Reflect on your current performance – what things do you do well, and what do you need to develop?

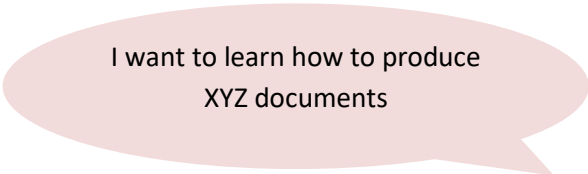
Whatever opportunities you take part in, it's important that you have a clear goal or purpose.

You need to know:

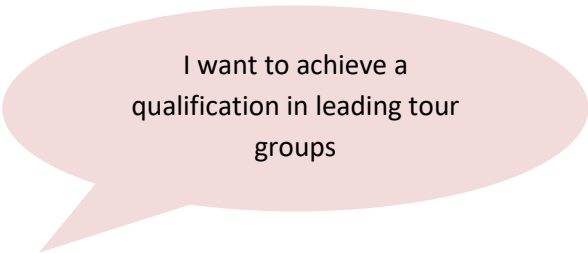
- What you are going to be learning
- Why you are learning it
- How you will use the learning in your work.

A learning goal is a simple statement which sets out what you are hoping to achieve from the learning.

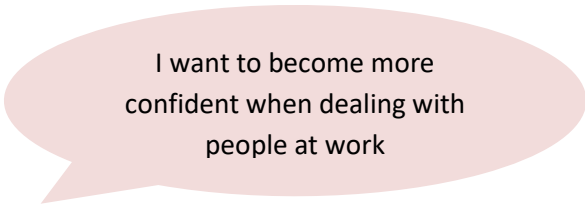
Take a look at the following examples:



I want to learn how to produce
XYZ documents



I want to achieve a
qualification in leading tour
groups



I want to become more
confident when dealing with
people at work

Without a clear goal, there is a risk that you may:

- Lose focus and interest in the learning that is taking place
- Miss the chance to ask useful questions or get useful information/experience
- Waste time taking part in learning that doesn't seem relevant to you
- Miss the chance to learn something new
- Find your work harder to do because you haven't learned the best way to do things.

2.2 – Identify a preferred approach to achieving work-related learning goal

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify and outline an appropriate approach to a chosen work-related goal.

Identifying different approaches

By this stage, you have researched your options about the different approaches to your goal, and gathered some information about each of them. The next step is to decide which option is your preferred route to achieving this.

A simple technique you can use is to look at the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Writing this down is enormously helpful as it enables you to step back and look objectively at the facts as you see them.

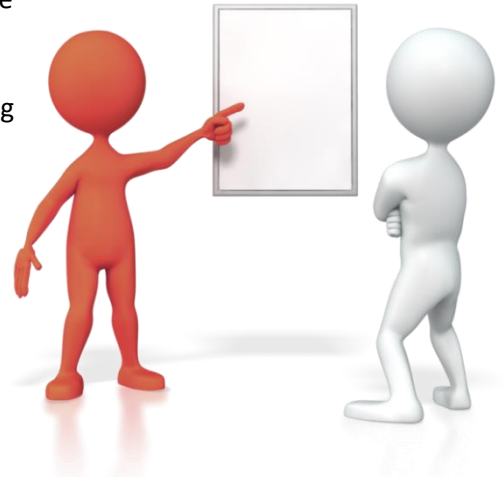
Imagine Clive's learning goal is to complete a qualification in accountancy so that he can gain promotion to a more senior accounts role in his organisation. From an analysis of his options, he might summarise these as follows:

| Options | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Full-time study at college | I could achieve the qualification in one year; I'd make useful contacts with other students | I would have to leave my job for 1 year – no money and no guarantee of getting old job back; I'd have to pay for the course myself |
| 2. Part-time evening classes | I can fit the classes around work; I'd make useful contacts; I'd still be able to work | It would take roughly 3 years to achieve the qualification; I'd have to pay for the course myself |
| 3. Distance learning | Flexibility in terms of where and when I study; I'd still be able to work | I'd have to pay for the course myself; I'm not sure I'd be disciplined and motivated enough – might get bored easily; no or little contact with other people doing the course |
| 4. Informal learning at work | Paid for by my employer; learning takes place during work time; I can still work; I can ask for on-the-job training in key tasks; etc. | No guarantee that I will get to go on the courses I want to – they can sometimes be cancelled; won't lead to the qualification on its own |

From this analysis of Clive's options, it would seem that Option 1 could be ruled out as he can't leave his job and have no earnings for a year. Option 3 looks like he might struggle with if he knows himself that staying motivated could be a problem. Option 2 looks like the preferred option as he could fit that around his work commitments, although it will take longer to achieve his goal. However, he could also complement part-time study with any informal learning opportunities that are available through his employer.

It's a good idea to set out what's important to you when making these choices. The sorts of things to bear in mind include:

- Cost: how much will each option cost? Will you get any help towards the cost of the learning?
- Flexibility: how much flexibility is there? How does this option fit with your other commitments?
- Time and place of learning: will there be travel costs and time that you need to think about? Will it be easy to get to and from the place where you go to learn?
- Length of time to complete the learning: how long do you expect it to take you to complete the learning? Do you prefer a quicker, shorter course, or are you happy with a more long-term approach over a period of years?
- Support available: what support is available while you are learning? Will you get help to overcome learning barriers, for example?



Every individual is unique, and everyone has their own needs and wants, so you may find that there are really important factors which matter to you which aren't in this list. This list is just a starting point to help you to assess your available options and help you choose one which suits you the most. You may add to this list, considering things that are important to you.

2.3 – Identify and implement strategies to address barriers to achieving learning goal

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Suggest two different strategies to address a previously identified barrier.

Addressing the barriers to learning

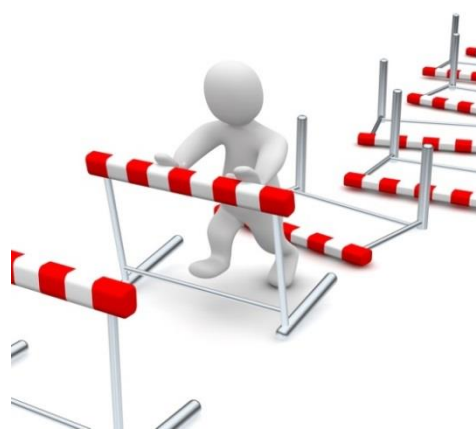
Research shows that adult learners of any age can learn and achieve their learning goals if they get the opportunity, help, and support that they need. This support and assistance should be a student's right and not an optional extra. Most institutions will automatically ask for the help that students need; however if this does not happen, it is important to remember to ask for it. Your programme tutor should help with this if necessary.

Flexibility from those providing the support and assistance is also key, taking into account the student's circumstances.

To counteract feelings of anxiety and lack of confidence, those providing learning opportunities need to be mindful of the need to create a supportive and safe learning environment – people will not learn if they feel anxious or threatened and so the learning institution needs to ensure that all its learners feel relaxed and able to contribute.

In order to help to avoid or remove barriers to your learning, you can take a number of active steps to ensure that you have every chance to succeed:

- Get involved in identifying your own learning needs – have an opinion about what you do and do not need
- Have a say about what direction you want to take and what will work for you – if following a distance learning programme is not for you, you have a right to point this out and help to find a way that will work for you
- Suggest the learning resources that you will need
- Create a learning plan to capture an overview of what you are planning to do, how and when
- Get involved in reviewing progress with your plan and don't be afraid to point out when things are not happening according to your plan
- Think regularly about how you are getting on – what are you achieving? What else have you still to do? What have you been finding difficult?



Here are some suggestions for overcoming specific barriers to learning:

| Barrier | Possible solution |
|---|--|
| Physical disabilities/impairments and/or learning difficulties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Think about what you will need to be able to take part in the learning (e.g. special equipment, ground floor access to buildings, large print copies of materials, sign language interpreter, extra time, printing on coloured paper, etc.) ➤ Make sure that your supervisor (or whoever is making arrangements for the learning) knows what you need and has passed that information on to relevant people (e.g. the trainer if it is someone outside your organisation) |
| Anxiety/lack of confidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remind yourself of the learning goals and what you could achieve ➤ Remind yourself that you are not the only person to ever have felt nervous ➤ Talk to at least one other person at the learning event so that you are not on your own ➤ Go to a learning event with someone that you know ➤ Let the trainer know your worries – they will make sure that they don't make you feel worse ➤ Find an alternative learning activity (e.g. on-line learning, one-to-one instruction at work, etc.) |
| Health issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Talk to your medical practitioners about any steps that you should take whilst undertaking the learning ➤ Talk to your trainer about any particular needs that you have |
| Motivation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Talk to other course participants, friends and family, your trainer/supervisor – let them know that you are feeling demotivated – they will encourage you to succeed ➤ Remind yourself of your overall goal ➤ If your overall goal seems unachievable, focus on achieving the next step ➤ Promise yourself a reward for completing each major step within your programme |
| Time and support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Talk to your work supervisor about when the learning is taking place and any difficulties around that (e.g. the learning event may finish after your shift is due to end) ➤ Look at your other commitments and work out a plan where you can devote some time to your learning ➤ Talk to your trainer to ask for their advice and support |

2.4 – Propose routine learning strategies to achieve learning goal

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Suggest two potential strategies they could implement to help them to achieve a goal.

Strategies to achieve learning goal

Now that you have identified your learning goals, the next step is to think about how you are going to achieve them. A useful approach is to break down the overall goal into smaller steps or chunks. It can seem overwhelming to work towards a large learning goal such as achieving a qualification, so it is helpful to break it down into individual steps or sections.

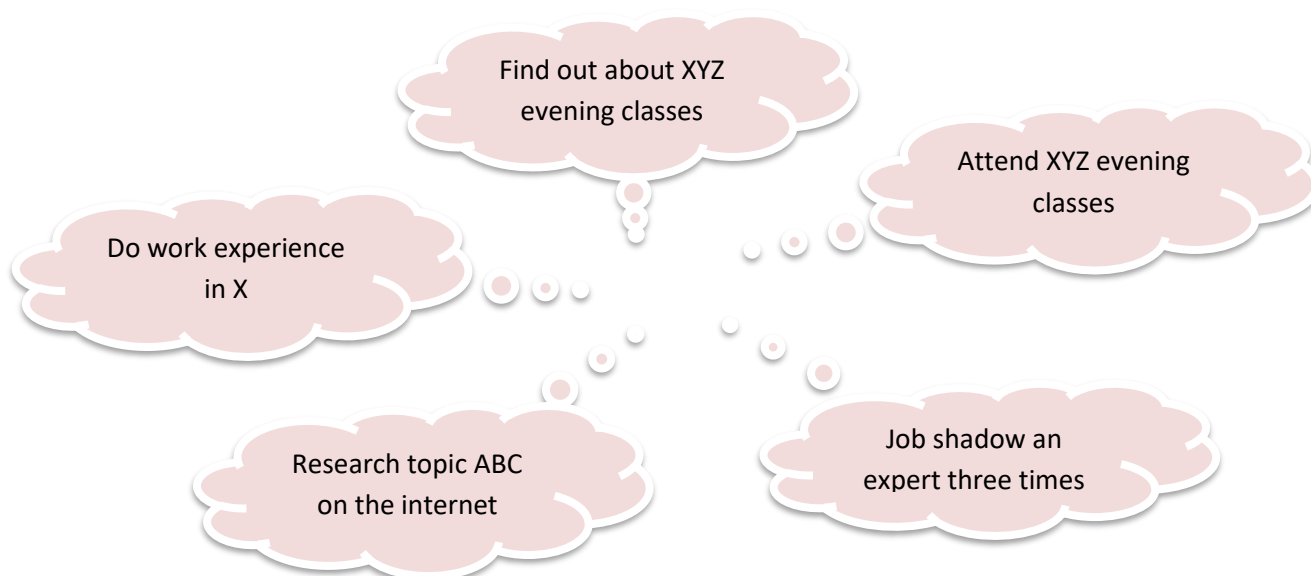
One of the problems with a large goal is that it can take a long time to complete it – there is a real danger that people can lose interest and motivation if they don't see any progress. Breaking the learning goals into smaller achievable steps enables the person to feel a sense of success and progress, both of which are important for keeping motivation and energy levels high.

Another benefit of breaking the learning goal into smaller steps is that this will make it easier to plan what learning activities to do and when. For example, planning the learning required over the period of a year in order to complete a qualification is quite a daunting task, but breaking it down into steps to be achieved each month and even each week enables the learner to work out which activities to do and when within their day-to-day routine.

A useful approach to identifying the initial steps is to write down all of the things that you think are necessary to enable you to achieve your learning goal. For example, imagine that your learning goal is:

To complete qualification x by the end July 20XX.

With this as your learning goal, you might think of the following steps:



2.5 – Identify and access a range of reliable support resources

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify two different support resources which could be used to help achieve work-related goals and determine how each of these could be accessed.

Identifying resources

As the saying goes, no man is an island; to achieve your goals, you will likely need to access support from a number of different resources. Resources can be defined as anything which will help you to reach your goals.

This might include:

- Advice from colleagues
- Support or mentoring from supervisors/managers
- Government publications
- Industry-specific newsletters
- Networking
- Formal/informal training
- Websites.



Identifying reliable resources

When accessing different resources, you will need to practice caution when determining which ones you can completely rely on. There are many different reasons why resources might not be completely reliable, for example, individuals might give you biased information, online resources might be out-dated, or training might not be relevant to your jurisdiction.

Taking caution with resources isn't to say that people are trying to trick you or that information is purposefully misleading, it will just ensure that you obtain the most accurate and relevant support in achieving your goals.

Accessing resources

Once you have identified the resources which would help you to achieve your goals, you will need to take the correct steps to gain access to these. The best way to do this will differ depending on the type of resources required. For example, advice from colleagues can usually be accessed easily, without any formal procedures. Alternatively, formal training will need to be arranged in advance by getting in touch with training providers and following the necessary procedures.

You might also need to be aware of any restrictions to accessing resources. For example, in some cases, government publications might be password protected to restrict unauthorised access.

2.6 – Create and use a formal learning plan to implement strategies

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Create a learning plan outlining the steps they would take to achieve previously identified goals.

Creating a learning plan

Once your goals have been identified, and your preferred approach and strategies have been chosen, it will be beneficial to transfer these ideas into a logical sequence. This will allow you to better visualise your next steps and how these can be implemented to reach success. A good way to organise your ideas is to draw up a learning plan. A learning plan is just as it sounds; it is a document which outlines a plan for how you will reach your goals.

In practice, your proposed plan for learning might look like this:

| Learning goals | Learning activities (or initial steps) | Personnel required | Resources/materials | Completion date |
|--|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| To complete qualification X by end July 20XX | 1. Find out about XYZ evening classes | Self | College websites, course brochures | End Sept 20XY |
| | 2. Research topic ABC on the internet | Self | Internet access | End Sept 20XY |
| | 3. Attend XYZ evening classes | Self | Time | July 20XX |
| | 4. Do work experience in X | Supervisor | People, time off work | April 20XX |
| | 5. Job shadow an expert three times | Supervisor College tutor | People, time off work | End July 20XX |

You may have your own learning plan documents in place at your work, and these would be a useful place to record your ideas. Alternatively, if you don't have any formal paperwork, you could create your own plan based on the above example. Either way, it will be helpful for you to put your thoughts down in writing so that you can keep track of what you are supposed to be doing and monitor your progress towards completing your plan.

To put your plan into practice, you should look at each learning step and plan exactly what you are going to do and when you are going to do it. This might involve making a note on a To-Do List or in a reminder on your phone or computer. If, for example, you are planning to telephone three colleges to find out about their programme of evening classes, then prompting yourself with reminders will help avoid a situation where you revisit your plan 3 months later and realise that you have forgotten something important.

It's important that learning plans are specific to you and your goals. Whilst it will be beneficial to work with others and compare notes, you must ensure that you focus on your own goals and the best way for you to achieve these.

3. Review own learning progress

- 3.1.** Monitor progress against plan and reflect on actions and outcomes, identifying options for improvement
- 3.2.** Seek feedback on learning progression
- 3.3.** Identify areas for further learning and training



3.1 – Monitor progress against plan and reflect on actions and outcomes, identifying options for improvement

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Identify a range of different ways in which progress can be monitored.

Monitoring your progress

Monitoring your progress against your learning plan is important for a number of reasons:

- It helps you to see what you have achieved and what is still to be done – this is important for your motivation
- It helps to keep you focused and on track
- It enables you to make any changes to your plan, if necessary
- It helps you to update other people (e.g. your supervisor/trainer) about your progress and any difficulties that you may be having, etc.



It is useful to follow these steps when monitoring your progress:

- Look at your original plan and tick or cross off any items that you have completed, showing the date you achieved them
- Check if there are any new items to add that have come to light since you first created the plan
- Check if your target dates are still realistic – if not, amend these
- Ask yourself: is there anything missing or inaccurate about this plan? If so, now is the time to update it
- If you have saved an electronic copy of your learning plan, mark on it the date that you revised it – this helps you to keep track of which version of your plan is the current one, etc.

If your learning goals are long-term, it is essential to have a written learning plan which you update on a regular basis. It is very easy to forget things that we intended to do, particularly when we lead busy lives full of other commitments. Monitoring your plan on a regular basis avoids the need for you to carry all of this information in your head – you can review your plan on a regular basis (once a month or so) to bring it up to date and make sure that it is still helping you to achieve your learning goals.

Identifying areas for improvement

Reaching goals is not always a linear process, there will be inevitable ebbs and flows in your progress; prior commitments might prevent you from carrying out planned activities, resources might not be available when you need them, or you may just find things to be more difficult than expected.

Whilst certain issues cannot always be prevented, monitoring your progress against your learning plan will allow you to determine if you are working towards your goals as intended, and put corrective measures in place if not. It's important to respond quickly when progress may be lagging; it will be easier to address issues in the early stages and get back on track than to try to catch up when you realise you are way behind your intended goals at a later point.

The key to identifying areas for improvement is to be honest with yourself. These goals are personal to you, and you will be the best person to judge your progress.

You might ask yourself questions such as:

- Am I where I wanted to be at this stage of the plan?
- Do I have the time and resources to improve my progress?
- Which aspect of the goal is most important right now?



Asking yourself simple questions such as these will allow you to determine where and what type of improvement might be necessary to keep you on track.

Don't worry if you find that improvement is necessary, as mentioned previously, it's better to address this earlier than later, and generally speaking, it will only take small, simple steps to put you back on track.

For example:

- Dedicating more time to your learning plan
- Amending steps which you are finding difficult
- Implementing intermittent steps to bridge the gaps where necessary.

3.2 – Seek feedback on learning progression

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Present different people who they are able to gain feedback from within their own role/learning
- Identify tips for obtaining feedback.

The importance of feedback



The Johari Window above shows the range of information (feelings, experience, views, attitudes, skills, intentions, motivation, etc.) about a person from four different angles. It was devised by American psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955. It highlights the fact that we have ‘blind spots’ – those things that others can see that we cannot see for ourselves. This underlines the importance of receiving feedback in order for us to develop and improve.

(Changing Minds, The Johari Window, http://changingminds.org/disciplines/communication/models/johari_window.htm Accessed 12.02.2020)

In relation to this model, we can see that feedback reduces the blind spots and that new experiences expand the unknown area. When developing knowledge and skill in an activity, students need feedback to enable them to improve their performance.

In a work example, imagine that Helen has been serving customers in a restaurant and taking their payment using a hand-held machine. Although Helen thinks she is following the correct procedures, it is not until a supervisor observes her taking a customer’s payment that she notices that Helen does not chat to the customer or thank them for their payment. Helen has been processing the payment correctly on the machine but was forgetting to interact with the customer while she did so. A private conversation between Helen and the supervisor later is an ideal opportunity for the supervisor to point out what Helen was doing well and the things she remembers to do in future.

This way, Helen's 'blind spot' reduces and her performance will improve as a result. This underlines the importance that feedback plays in our development and performance.

Seeking feedback

You may be able to seek feedback from a variety of people:

- Trainers and tutors
- Your supervisor
- Your work colleagues
- Other course participants, if appropriate.

Sometimes people will offer their feedback without you having to ask for it. However, it is very common for people to only give feedback about things that need to improve – people are sometimes not so forthcoming when it comes to offering feedback about good performance.

Some tips for obtaining feedback:

- Get into the habit of asking others for feedback – the more you do it, the more natural it will feel
- Use a progress review against your learning plan as a natural excuse to ask for feedback
- If people are reluctant to give you feedback, start with saying something about what you think yourself – this gives them a starting point – they will either agree and say why, or they may have a different view which is useful for you to hear
- Be careful about how you respond to feedback – if you react angrily or defensively, the person may avoid giving you feedback in future. A simple 'Thank you – I'll have a think about what you said' is a gracious way of responding to feedback that you may not feel is fair or relevant
- Do give consideration to all feedback that you receive – feedback is usually given with the intention to help improve performance.



3.3 – Identify areas for further learning and training

By the end of this chapter, the learner should be able to:

- Reflect on the learning progress which they have made so far and identify things that they want to achieve in the future.

Identifying areas for further action

When you are updating your learning plan, you should be looking to assess the progress which you have made, i.e. achievements which can now be ticked off or removed from the plan, and the progress which you still want to make, i.e. things that have not yet been achieved or achievements which you want to add to the plan. When doing this, you are looking in two directions:

To the past where you ask yourself:

- What have I achieved?
- What has worked well/not so well?
- Have any planned actions not yet been completed? Why is this?

To the future where you ask yourself:

- What is still left to do?
- Is my plan still relevant?
- Do I need to revise my plan?
- Are there any new learning needs?



Continuous improvement

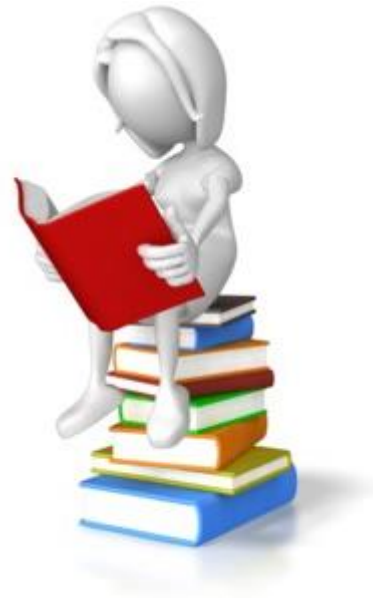
You may find that new areas for further learning and training crop up during the lifetime of your plan.

This can happen for a number of reasons:

- Changes in procedures, course guidance and/or legislation
- It may be necessary to specialise in a particular area
- It may be necessary to gain broader knowledge or experience of a particular area
- You may find an area of particular interest and want to find out more
- You may find an area particularly difficult and need to spend more time on it
- As you progress through your learning, you find out more about what you don't know, etc.

By monitoring your learning plan on a regular basis, this helps you to keep track of anything that changes or comes to light that has an impact on your overall plan. You could be partway through achieving your target qualification, for example, and you may come across a subject that you find really interesting and wish to explore in more detail. Your regular updates give you a perfect opportunity to capture these new things as they occur and to plan what action you are going to take in the light of this new information.

Learning is a continual process – your learning plan is a simple yet effective tool to make sure that you achieve your goals and make use of all the unexpected opportunities that arise along the way, as well as quickly address and problems that might affect your progress.



Summative Assessments

At the end of your Learner Workbook, you will find the Summative Assessments.

This includes:

- Skills Activity
- Knowledge Activity
- Performance Activity.

This holistically assesses your understanding and application of the skills, knowledge and performance requirements for this unit. Once this is completed, you will have finished this unit and be ready to move onto the next one – well done!

References

These suggested references are for further reading and do not necessarily represent the contents of this unit.

Websites

The Johari Window - http://changingminds.org/disciplines/communication/models/johari_window.htm

All references accessed on and correct as of 12.02.2020, unless otherwise stated.