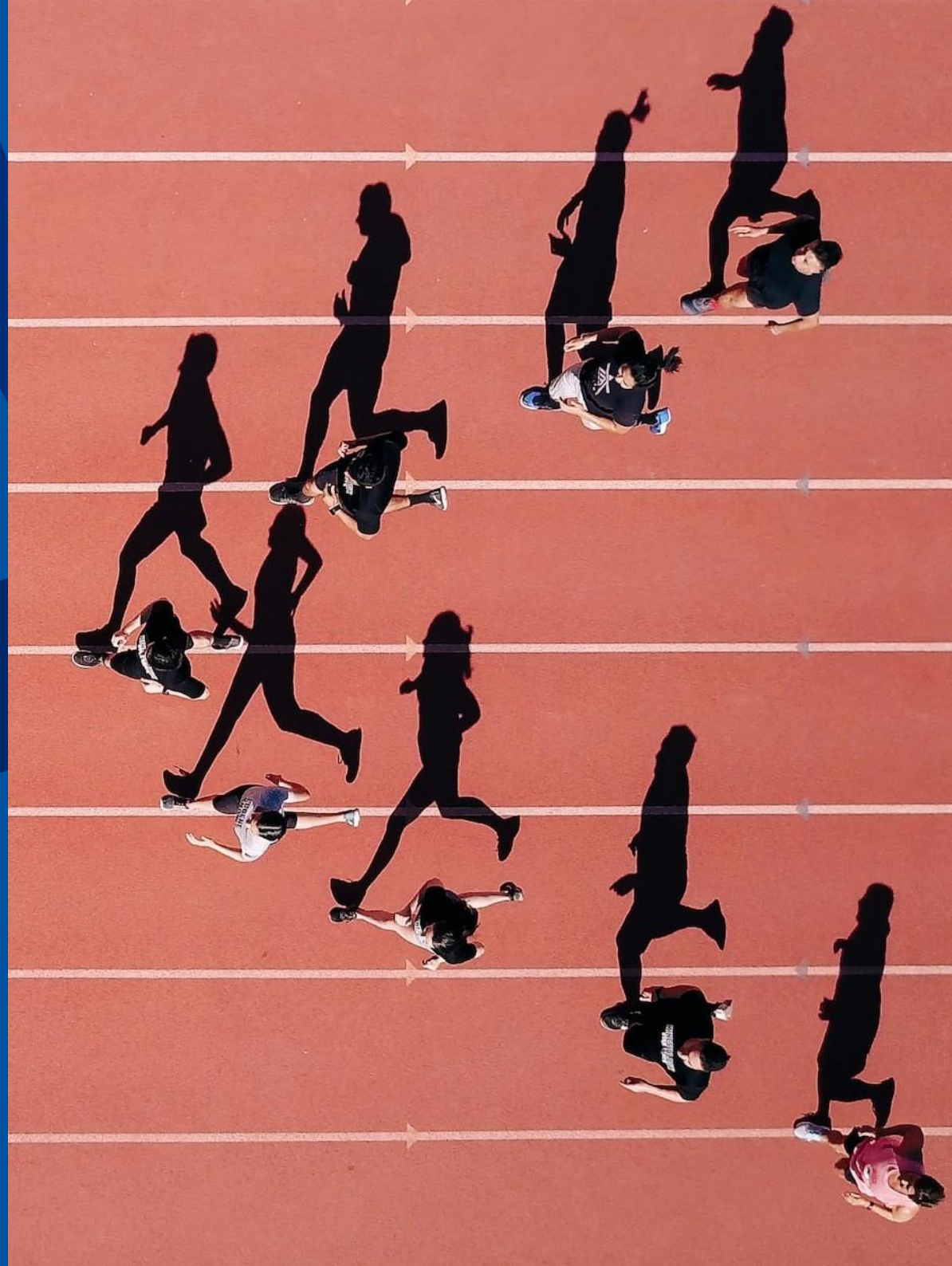# Managing Your Development @ UniSA

A Quick Guide for Professional Staff

University of South Australia | People, Talent & Culture

'The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds,
unlike our bodies, can continue growing as we continue to live'.
Morris Adler

INTRODUCTION

A key part of performance development and management is the ongoing personal and professional development of staff, where goals are negotiated between supervisors and staff to enhance the skills and knowledge required for successful performance in current roles and to facilitate career development. This is the foundation of UniSA's approach to staff development which is concerned with achieving both:

- organisational success, by facilitating the successful achievement of agreed work outcomes, and
- the current and future success of individuals, by maintaining their employability and motivation through interesting and challenging work opportunities.

Staff development at UniSA is also fundamentally concerned with lifelong learning, that is, the individual's lifelong progression in learning and work, where learning embraces both formal and informal development opportunities that continually improve and expand an individual's knowledge and understanding. In this way, our staff will be able to make the most of their role at UniSA and have a rewarding and fulfilling experience at work.

The People, Talent and Culture Unit has developed this *Quick Guide* to assist staff in proactively managing their development. The *Guide* provides guidelines for staff on how to plan for and actively pursue their ongoing development. It makes links to other relevant resources and information available within the University. This *Quick Guide* is complemented by a similar resource for managers, *'Development Conversations Toolkit'.*

I encourage you to read and use this resource and to provide us with any feedback you might have on its usefulness and where it might be improved for future.

Michelle Theeuf
Deputy Director: Organisational Capability

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If you have any comments or suggestions for the improvement of this resource please contact the People and Organisational Development team on 83021487.

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What is my role?	The primary goals of staff development at UniSA are to enable you to achieve your full potential at work and help you optimise both your performance and ongoing employability. The foundation of this is Performance Development and Management, which includes a significant emphasis on performance development; a collaborative process which takes place between you and your supervisor. To understand staff development as part of the broader performance development and management process, you may wish to refer to UniSA's *Development Conversations Toolkit*, if you are not already familiar with this resource. The key role for you in this process is: • to actively make known your personal and career development goals to your supervisor • to research and pursue personal, professional and career development options • to continuously acquire the new knowledge and skills needed to perform effectively in your role, now and into the future. You are encouraged to seek out opportunities to improve and expand on your knowledge, skills and experience. Ultimately, you are responsible for your career and, in order to achieve your full potential, you are encouraged to: • volunteer to undertake new challenges • be open to new ways of working • learn from experiences and share your learning with others • participate in professional learning and development opportunities • maintain networks and talk to different people about their experiences • find a mentor who can help you with your learning • undertake study – formal or informal – related to your areas of interest • demonstrate enthusiasm for lifelong learning • work with your supervisor to achieve your aspirations, including seeking out their feedback and coaching support 'on the job'. Your supervisor should endeavour to support and encourage you and, along with others, will offer you advice. In addition to the advice of your manager, you may wish to consider having a mentor. Mentors provide encouragement; act as sounding boards, challenge, support, and share experiences. While mentoring is usually discussed in terms of the work environment (career mentoring), it can be beneficial for all aspects of personal development (personal mentoring). For ideas on how to find a mentor and establish a mentoring relationship refer to *'Mentoring at UniSA': A Good Practice Guide.* Remember, however that ultimately, you will get the most out of your work and learning experiences if you take responsibility for achieving your aspirations.	▪ [Performance Development and Management Policy](#) ▪ [Performance Development and Management Website](#) ▪ ['Development Conversations' A Good Practice Guide](#) ▪ [Mentoring at UniSA: A Good Practice Guide for Staff](#)
Clarifying capabilities/attributes ▪ Required in current role	Capabilities refer to the knowledge, skills and behaviours that a person possesses and demonstrates.	▪ [Capabilities Matrix – Proforma (see appendix 3)](#)

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	GUIDELINES	FURTHER INFORMATION
▪ In relation to future career interests **Working with capabilities to:** ▪ Identify areas for development ▪ Identify strengths ▪ Benefits	It is useful to identify these in the context of your current role i.e. what capabilities are necessary for me to be able to perform effectively in my role? Thus, your strengths and development areas can be linked directly to the outcomes you need to achieve in your current role. Capabilities are often described within the Position Description for a role – usually as part of the Selection Criteria – so use Position Descriptions (PDs) as the starting point for clarifying capabilities. In addition to PDs, you may find it useful to refer to the core attributes of a UniSA staff member. The core attributes are a mix of knowledge, skills, behaviours and values that are designed to guide academic and professional staff in the development of an enterprising culture and workplace. The core attributes are accompanied by detailed descriptors to assist understanding of how the attribute can be manifested at a particular classification level. With regard to career interests, you may wish to focus on: • achieving growth within your current role • extending your career laterally across (or outside of the organisation), or • increasing your potential for promotional opportunities, either within or outside of the organisation. In considering these possibilities, it is beneficial for you to discuss with your supervisor as part of the performance development and management process what this may mean in terms of: • attributes/capabilities to focus on as an immediate priority • knowledge to gain • experiences to obtain • behaviours to improve. Once your attributes/capabilities in relation to your current role are clear, you and your supervisor can reflect on which capabilities are, for you: • strengths • areas to develop. *Strengths* Strengths refer to a person's innate 'gifts' or 'talents', the capabilities, which, for that particular person, are enduring and 'come naturally'. There are benefits in working with your supervisor to highlight your strengths and ask to use them as much as possible within your day-to-day responsibilities. In this way, you will excel at your work and will gain a high degree of confidence around your attributes/capabilities. Furthermore, if you are proactive in asking to 'showcase' your strengths, perhaps by mentoring others or taking the lead on a project or in a particular piece of work, you will not only promote yourself and your 'talents' to the organisation, but will yourself feel highly motivated and enhance your sense of self-belief in being able to successfully extend yourself. *Areas to develop* These cannot be overlooked, particularly if they lie in a capability area that is core to success at work, such as effective communication. For development to be effective, it is worthwhile being specific about what element of a capability needs improvement and for what reason.	▪ Sample Capabilities Matrix – Program Support Officer (see appendix 4) ▪ Core Attributes ▪ Mentoring at UniSA: A Good Practice Guide for Staff ▪ UniSA Career Development Guide

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	GUIDELINES	FURTHER INFORMATION
	For example, there may simply be a knowledge gap, or your role may be changing and you need to undertake development so that you are ready and able to take on new responsibilities. For most organizations, change is the way they stay responsive, competitive and maintain a capacity to grow. Change can be driven by a range of factors whose origins can be local or global. Increasingly the University is responding to social, economic and technological change that is global in origin. Developing your knowledge of where your organisation and profession are heading and some of the forces that are shaping this will help you better understand your workplace and sharpen your thinking about the development of your capabilities and career. The *Capabilities Matrix Proforma* will help you and your supervisor to build a shared picture of your strengths and areas for development against role capabilities as well as help prioritising needs. The *Sample Capabilities Matrix – Program Support Officer* will show you how this proforma can be used to work through this process.	
Setting development goals ▪ Learning styles ▪ Learning interventions ▪ Prioritisation ▪ Building your Personal Development Plan	Once strengths for consolidation and areas for development have been identified, it is important to set an action plan for progressing your development goals. To optimise successful achievement of development goals and to ensure agreed actions do not become a 'wish list' that is not progressed, it is recommended actions are selected that: • align as far as possible with ways in which you like to learn, • align with learning interventions that target the required development most effectively, and • are prioritised. In this way, it is more likely that the desired progress and learning outcomes will be attained. *Learning Styles* To understand more about preferred learning styles and their implications for learning experiences, refer to the *Learning Styles Questionnaire* (see *Art of Supervision – Page 5*). *Learning Interventions* Learning interventions will vary according to the target development, the required outcomes, and consideration of practicalities such as resources and service delivery within the workplace. They may include off the job training, often to bridge knowledge or skills gaps, as well as learning based in the workplace and participation in the range of development activities offered by the University, such as Work Smart seminars and workshops. Remember that sustained adult learning often occurs most effectively on the job through involvement in project work or specific committees and/or within a structured workplace arrangement such as coaching and mentoring relationships, job rotation, exchanges, secondments or higher duty opportunities. To explore in more depth, the various learning interventions that you may like to pursue, refer to UniSA's Career Development Guide. A wide array of development support and opportunities are provided for staff by the University. A useful starting point is the Induction and Performance and Development Websites. You can also consult your local PTC Contact. *Prioritising*	▪ Induction Website ▪ Performance and Development ▪ PTC Contacts ▪ The Art of Supervision – A Manager's Good Practice Guide ▪ UniSA Career Development Guide

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	GUIDELINES	FURTHER INFORMATION
	Prioritisation of learning goals is important, so explore with your supervisor the immediate focus for development. Often this will be linked to an imminent need to apply new knowledge or skills due to systems or process changes, or for timely preparation so you can successfully take on additional responsibilities due to role changes, or the need for you to improve performance in a particular area or aspect of your role. The *Capabilities Matrix Proforma* will help you and your supervisor to prioritise development needs in relation to capabilities. The *Personal Development Planning Process Proforma* will help you and your supervisor through the steps to build the learning action plan. For guidance, you may also like to refer to a *Sample Personal Development Planning Process Proforma for a Program Support Officer* This shows the role capabilities, a staff member's talents and areas for development as well as their preferred learning style, and how this information was used to develop a tailored action plan focused on immediate needs and future career interests.	 ■ Capabilities Matrix – Proforma (see appendix 3) ■ Personal Development Planning Process Proforma (see appendix 1) ■ Sample Personal Development Planning Process Proforma for a Program Support Officer (see appendix 2)

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	GUIDELINES	FURTHER INFORMATION
Facilitating your career development • Broader life focus • Within current role • In different roles/pathways	We often think about our career only in terms of the work we do. However, in today's world of work, the term 'career' is seen as a continuous process of learning and development gained through holistic life experience and career development involves your whole life, not just the work aspects. Our careers are intertwined with every aspect of our life. Discussion with your supervisor about your career interests forms an integral part of the development process. The *Personal Development Planning Process Proforma* poses a range of questions useful for you to explore in discussions with your supervisor. Having a career doesn't just mean changing jobs or climbing up the career ladder to increased responsibility. It can also mean continuing to grow in your current role, shifting the focus of work into a new area at the same level, developing new skills, expanding current skills, or shifting to a new career path. For some of you, your focus may be on successfully blending life and work, taking a career break to have children or study, or on preparing for retirement. These are also important aspects to discuss with your supervisor so both of you can make the necessary plans. It is recommended that you refer to UniSA's *Career Development Guide* to assist you in proactively planning for your ongoing career development, to help you maintain or gain job opportunities that provide you with a high level of satisfaction. *Remember!* You can enhance your experience at work as well as your career development by: • cultivating a "can do" attitude where you say 'yes' to new challenges and do them well • asking for more responsibility and demonstrating you can manage it effectively • building your professional reputation and networking so that you are known within the University, your profession and the Higher Education sector as an 'effective operator' • ensuring you have the skills and know-how to 'make the next step' • continue to explore new challenges in your existing role, so you are continually learning on the job • taking control by deciding where you want to be and the steps you will take to get there • being realistic. Success won't happen overnight, and you may face setbacks or obstacles, but with focus and optimism you are more likely to succeed and have an overall fulfilling experience.	▪ [Personal Development Planning Process Proforma (see appendix 1)](#) ▪ [UniSA Career Development Guide](#)

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	GUIDELINES	FURTHER INFORMATION
Engaging in the Overall Development Process with your Supervisor ▪ Having a Development Planning Conversation with your Supervisor ▪ Managing Up ▪ Building your Relationship with your Supervisor	To facilitate a rewarding development conversation with your supervisor, keep the following points in mind and reflect on how well you perform in each area: ▪ *Build rapport and trust with your supervisor.* Demonstrate in your language and behaviour that you are committed to the principles of performance development and management and are enthusiastic about your work. Come prepared for your meeting with your supervisor. Ask lots of open-ended questions to elicit their views. Don't be defensive at feedback your supervisor may provide to you but seek to understand their point of view and reflect on it. ▪ *Collaboratively identify and explore strengths and areas for development.* Work with your supervisor through the development planning process. Spend time reflecting before the meeting yourself, using the proformas and information referenced throughout this Guide as you need. Both of you should come to the conversation ready for discussion. ▪ *Show interest/take the initiative.* Actively listen. Probe with questions to understand fully your supervisor's perspective. Ask for feedback, but keep it in proportion. If you feel challenged by the feedback you receive, don't become defensive but continue to probe or take on board for later reflection. ▪ *Agree on a plan and ensure it is documented for both of you.* You need to have a clear plan of action for progressing. This can form the basis of ongoing conversations and review between the two of you. Follow through on the actions you have agreed to take. A vital part of ongoing conversations with your supervisor is the regular informal as well as formal feedback and on the job coaching support they can offer you. Much learning occurs through these two mechanisms as well as you being continually aware of your supervisor's perspective of your role and contribution to the workplace. Obviously, feedback and coaching will be most effective where there is a good working relationship between you and your supervisor, so both of you are encouraged to work on building solid working relationships that are based on trust, respect, and understanding each other. For tips on Managing Up and Building an Effective Working Relationship with your Supervisor, refer to the *Building Personal Power* and *Your Relationship with your Manager* sections of *The Art of Supervision.* The key is acknowledging that supervisors are also staff members with their own strengths and development opportunities, with their own pressures, their own aspirations, and obviously the ability like us all to make mistakes!	▪ Induction Website ▪ Performance and Development ▪ Art of Supervision - Building Personal Power and Your Relationship with your Manager

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	GUIDELINES	FURTHER INFORMATION
Continually learning - Life experience - On the job - Feedback - Coaching	We learn most of what we know and what we can do from experience, both at work and outside of work. Learning is not just about attending courses and workshops. Rather it is about making the most of our experiences in work (paid and unpaid in the home and community) and through our overall experience of life, so that we can experience our lives as fulfilled individuals. To find out more about a range of learning options, you may like to refer to *UniSA's Career Development Guide, UniSA's Performance and Development opportunities*, the *UniSA Careers Hub* or *UniSA's range of Quick Guides and Good Practice Guides.* At work, supervisors are encouraged to help staff learn on the job through coaching, where a supervisor seeks to assist staff by working through job-related problems together. The intention is that the individual staff member learns new skills and know-how. It may involve your supervisor challenging your perspective constructively. Remember, some supervisors will themselves be learning through the coaching process, so see it as a partnership where you will be learning together. The process of coaching is: - based on collaboration, - supervisors asking questions rather than giving advice, - supervisors enabling you to see the problem more clearly, perhaps questioning your assumptions and viewpoint so you can see the situation differently, and - helping you to decide on an appropriate solution. It is not about your supervisor providing you with solutions, but rather them facilitating you to find an appropriate solution and to help you be confident in taking action. Together, through a coaching process, you will hopefully: - understand the issue and current situation, - identify the ideal outcome/solution, - brainstorm options to move from the current situation to the ideal outcome, and - decide on a course of action. In addition to your supervisor, seeking feedback from your mentor or from work colleagues, or people in your life who know you well can be an invaluable source of information. You can seek feedback through recruitment, secondment and promotion processes as well. This feedback can assist you to develop self-knowledge of your strengths and areas for development and for learning about how to tackle a situation differently or to take active steps to doing something differently	- [Art of Supervision](#) - [UniSA Career Development Guide](#) - [UniSA Careers Hub](#) - [Performance and Development](#) - [Quick Guides and Good Practice Guides](#) - [Mentoring at UniSA: A Good Practice Guide for Staff](#)

RESPONSIBILITY AREA	GUIDELINES	FURTHER INFORMATION
Contributing to a Learning Culture ▪ Individual staff contribution ▪ Other useful resources	In conclusion, you can help to build a culture that fosters learning through the behaviour that you role model. For example, you may like to reflect on how effective you are in: ▪ sharing your knowledge, so others can learn from you, ▪ communicating openly about your role and work, so others can draw on your experiences, ▪ giving and receiving feedback constructively amongst your team and with your supervisor, ▪ embracing learning on the job, and ▪ valuing the different talents and perspectives of your supervisor and team members. These actions are the foundation of a learning culture and you can provide leadership in building this sort of culture within your team.	▪ [UniSA Career Development Guide](#) ▪ [UniSA Careers Hub](#)

Current Role

Required Capabilities (knowledge, skills, experience). Consider the PD for the position, and the Skills Matrix Proforma if used.

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Talents against these. Why are these seen as strengths? Give examples. How do you share your Talents to help others with their learning at work?

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Areas to develop against these. Why and in what way? Give examples.

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-
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Preferred Learning Style. Note down the learning experiences from which you benefit most, to maximise setting actions aligned to ways you like to learn.

Capability Area for Development and/or Talents to maximise/share	Learning Methodologies – how? On the job, etc.	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Actions/Strategies – how will this learning be progressed?	By Whom	Target Date – when will it be completed or Milestones	Review/Feedback

Career interests

How would you like to see your career develop in the short term and long term? List a short term goal or two (within next 12 months) and a longer term (you decide the timeframe)

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-
-

What does this mean in terms of areas for development? What does this mean in terms of reinforcing your Talents? What capabilities would you be best to focus on? What experiences do you need to have? What knowledge do you need to gain? How do you reinforce your Talents with practice, knowledge, experience? Reflect on these questions to set a few actions to facilitate achievement of your above-listed short and long term goals.

Focus Development / Strength Area	*Dev Objectives – What do I want to achieve?*	*Learning Methodologies*	*Actions/Strategies*	By Whom	Target Date	Review comments

Agreed: **Manager**   _____   **Date:**   _____

            Staff Member   _____   **Date:**   _____

Current Role - Required Capabilities (knowledge, skills, experience):

- Administration management
- Computing ability
- Communication – written / verbal
- Customer service

- Quality and continuous improvement knowledge
- Interpersonal skills – teamwork, relationship building
- Organisational ability
- Analytical skills – planning, problem solving.

Talents against these. Why are these seen as strengths? Give examples. How do you share your Talents to help others with their learning at work?
- Computing ability, specifically Microsoft Office – been in numerous roles that use this package and really enjoys working with it, trying out new features and finding out how to use it to maximise work efficiency.
- Organisational ability – very focussed on planning tasks, project management approach – previously a project manager.
- Written communication – innate strength, evident in correspondence and written reports.

Areas to develop against these. Why and in what way? Give examples.
- Assertion skills/problem solving skills where conflict with other people is involved – gets nervous, loses confidence. Can mean conflict is not really resolved.
- Quality/continuous improvement knowledge – useful to understand concepts and how they apply to improving admin systems > foster more proactive approach in continuous improvement.
- Formal administration management qualification – not essential, but may be useful for future career advancement?

Preferred Learning Style. Note down the learning experiences from which you benefit most, to maximise setting actions aligned to ways you like to learn.

Doer, but likes to reflect, then take action. Practical. Needs to see how ideas can be put into practice.

Capability Area for Development and/or Talents to maximise/share	Learning Methodologies – how? On the job, etc.	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Actions/Strategies – how will this learning be progressed?	By Whom	Target Date – when will it be completed or Milestones	Review/Feedback
Talent: Computing Ability	On the job	High	Be mentor to XXX in admin team who is still learning how to use Microsoft Office package	Mgr to facilitate	Start ASAP	3 mths time. Need to make sure doesn't take away from daily work too much.
Dev: Assertion Skills	Training workshop / Mentoring	High	Register for internal workshop. If not available, research externally. Manager/staff member to consider who might be a good mentor within UniSA to support ongoing learning in assertion/conflict mgt and set up.	Staff member Mgr/Staff Member	Book within 1 month ASAP after done workshop	Week after done workshop 3 mths' time

Quality/Continuous Improvement	Gain knowledge to apply practically in continuous improvement projects	Workshop, backed up by on the job application	Staff member to research suitable workshop/short course. Mgr to facilitate staff member taking the lead on a continuous improvement project.	Mgr/ Staff Member	By end of the year, do workshop. Start project on the job ASAP after that.	Week after done workshop. 3 mths' time.

Career interests

How would you like to see your career develop in the short term and long term? List a short term goal or two (within next 12 months) and a longer term (you decide the timeframe)

- Do formal training in project management.
- Focus on project management role.

What does this mean in terms of areas for development? What does this mean in terms of reinforcing your Talents? What capabilities is it best to focus on? What experiences do you need to have? What knowledge do you need to gain? How do you reinforce your Talents with practice, knowledge, experience? Reflect on these questions to set a few actions to facilitate achievement of your above-listed short and long term goals.

Focus Development / Strength Area	*Dev Objectives – What do I want to achieve?*	*Learning Methodologies*	*Actions/Strategies*	**By Whom**	**Target Date**	**Review comments**
Project Management	Gain knowledge to apply practically in project management. Will be useful in current role, but also enhance movement to a purer project manager role in the future.	Training/formal study On the job application	Staff member to research suitable training courses/qualifications, then discuss with Manager.	Staff Member	By end of the year have done research.	

Agreed: **Manager**   _____   **Date:**   _____

         Staff Member   _____   **Date:**   _____

CAPABILITIES MATRIX

Consider the required knowledge, skills and other attributes relevant to the current role. Refer to the current position description (PD). Discuss this matrix as part of performance development and management meetings and to agree on personal development needs.

Current Role Required Capabilities	Level of Competence* 1……. 2……. 3….			Strengths / Areas where the staff member can help others learn	Gaps / Potential Areas for Development	Priority at this time (High, Medium, Low)

* 1 = Very capable in this area/a Strength   2 = Capable, room for development, but not urgent
3 = Key focus of learning at this point in time/need to work on as a priority.

This information can be taken and used in the Personal Development Planning Process.

SAMPLE PROGRAM SUPPORT OFFICER CAPABILITIES MATRIX

Consider the required knowledge, skills and other attributes relevant to the current role. Refer to the current position description (PD). Discuss this matrix as part of performance development and management meetings and to agree on personal development needs.

Current Role Required Capabilities	Level of Competence* 1……. 2…….. 3….			Gaps / Potential Areas for Development	Strengths / Areas where can help others learn	Priority at this time (High, Medium, Low)
Administration management skills and experience / qualification	√			Has several years of experience, but no formal qualification. May be useful/an opportunity?		Low? Medium? (discuss – links to career development)
Computing skills, specifically Microsoft Office programs, databases, Web, and information systems	√				Advanced proficiency in all Microsoft Office programs.	
Interpersonal skills, including teamwork and relationship building with internal and external people		√	√	Gets on well with people personally but prefers to work independently. Opportunity: being more assertive in a group situation?		High (assertion skills)
Organisational ability to manage competing priorities	√				Strong project management approach to work.	
Analytical skills appropriate to planning and problem solving		√		Potential to be more comfortable problem solving conflict.	Strong planning skills in terms of task completion.	
Written communication skills, particularly correspondence and report writing	√				Very clear writing style. Good at structuring reports.	
Verbal communication skills			√	Assertion skill development? (see above)		High (as above)
Effective customer service	√					
Knowledge of quality and continuous improvement,		√		Could increase conceptual understanding in these areas, but not high priority.		Low (may link to formal qual)

* 1 = Very capable in this area/a Strength   2 = Capable, but room for development
   3 = Key focus of learning at this point in time/need to work on as a priority.

This information can be taken and used in the Personal Development Planning Process.