

6 Reasons to Have Professional Development Goals

When it comes to professional development, it's important to take the time to create personal goals. According to Marilyn Price-Mitchell, Ph.D. in Psychology Today, people who set goals are [33% more likely](#) to achieve them.

Here are six reasons why you need to pursue professional development.

1. Professional Credibility

Professional development builds credibility in your industry. To build this credibility, you need to stay up to date with changes and current events.

One way to do this is to earn a professional certification. This tells the business world that your ability is validated within the business community. Also, most certifications require continuing education to ensure your knowledge and skills stay current.

In addition to certifications, you may choose to take academic courses or attend other training workshops related to your goals. When these courses relate to your profession, you may be able to earn continuing education credits when you complete that course or workshop.

Reading business books is a way to stay informed. Trade and professional publications are also a good choice of reading material.

2. Builds Confidence

When you achieve your goals, it often builds self-confidence. You've learned new skills you can use at work. This makes you more productive, and your work stands out in the right way.

When you keep learning you also build the muscles in your brain that promote learning. When you take time to learn, your ability for learning increases.

This is often a confidence booster when your boss asks you to do something new. Or you can try something you haven't done before.

3. Office MVP

When you use the skills, you gained during development activities, you will do more. Becoming more productive and skilled may make you the office superstar.

This may open the door to promotions and other new opportunities for you in your company. Executives value employees who show the motivation to advance their skills.

4. Competitive Job Seeker

You may someday find yourself looking for a new job. Some people like to change positions every few years. Some will decide they need a change in office environments. Others will lose their jobs due to involuntary reasons.

Whatever the reason, it's likely that one day you will look for a new job. These positions will require skills your previous job didn't need.

By continually building your skills, you become a more attractive candidate to potential employers.

5. Involuntary Job Loss

According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), almost 20 million people lose their jobs to layoffs or other involuntary reasons each year. About 1 in 10 adults will face an involuntary job loss.

Businesses in every industry are affected. Companies will go out of business, downsize, or close altogether. Here are a few developments from within the last year.

- More than [8,000 national retail stores](#) announced they are closing locations. All those employees will be looking for new jobs.
- The IRS is closing an office in the [city of Covington, OH](#). The IRS is working to move everyone possible to new positions when they are qualified. Not everyone will be able to stay in the IRS. City officials are planning for 1,400 people to lose their jobs.
- Last November [General Motors](#) announced the closing of 3 locations. This will affect an estimated 14,700 employees. Like the IRS, General Motors is trying to move qualified people to new positions. But many of the displaced employees will be looking for a new job.

At this point in time, our country has more open jobs than job seekers. However, to compete for those positions, you still need to be competitive. Pursuing professional development activities will increase your attractiveness as a potential hire.

6. Learning to Stay Healthy

The final reason is about more than just your job performance. When you pursue professional development, you challenge your brain. [Dr. Ipsit Vahia](#) states, “You need to exercise it [the brain] with new challenges to keep it healthy.”

It doesn't just have the effect of improving your mental health, it can also help slow cognitive aging. In many cases, this will improve your quality of life now and as you age.

Conclusion

Employers know the value of professional development and often have programs to help. But not all employers can offer programs to support professional development. And, frankly, not all employers believe in the value of providing support for growth.

One of the most important details here is that each person needs to take charge of their own professional development. No one will work harder for you than you will for yourself.

So, what are you waiting for? Go work on your development goals.