A Career Stage Model for Professional Development

The Entry Stage (dependence)

The individual first enters the profession or a new job within the profession. (Apprentice stage)

Characterized by psychological dependency

Central motivators for professional development include:

- attaining the foundation skills required to do the job
- understanding the organization's structure, function, and culture

Motivators for Professional Development:

* Understanding the organization's structure, function, and culture
* Attaining base level technical skills
* Giving relevancy to previous training
* Exercising directed creativity and initiative
* Establishing linkages with volunteers, advisory groups, and community
* Moving from dependency to independency
* Exploring personal/professional dynamics
* Expanding knowledge regarding relevant issues
* Building relationships with professional peers

Developmental Opportunities:

* Orientation training
* "Mentor" relationship with a senior professional
* Periodic follow-up training and administrative support
* Establishment of peer relationships
* Experiences that foster trust, confidence and loyalty to the organisation
* Career counselling
The Colleague Stage (independence)

The colleague stage can be a satisfactory level for many professionals for a number of years.

Growth in expertise or responsibility continues.

Some people never need to move beyond this level, thriving on independent work.

Individuals in the Colleague stage have been accepted as members of the professional community and independently contribute their expertise to solving problems and carrying out programs.

This stage is characterized by rapid growth in professional knowledge, independence, and autonomy.

The Colleague seeks to build at least one area of expertise for which he or she is noted and often shares that expertise.

Often, professionals in the colleague stage seek additional formal training.

Motivators for Professional Development:

* Developing an area of expertise
* Becoming an independent contributor in problem solving
* Developing a professional identity
* Sharing knowledge and information with others
* Gaining membership in the professional community
* Increasing effectiveness and efficiency
* Expanding creativity and innovation
* Moving from independency to interdependency
* Expanding knowledge regarding relevant issues

Developmental Opportunities:

* Opportunities for development of a specialty (graduate school, regional workshops, etc.)
* Increased involvement in committees
* Increased involvement in professional associations
* Opportunities to share information and knowledge
* Writing for newsletters, journals, and other publications
* Developing educational materials
* Career counselling
The Counsellor Stage (supervising others)

Professionals who have reached the Counsellor stage are ready to take on responsibility, either formal or informal, for developing others in the organization.

At the same time, they must not neglect their own personal growth and development.

To accommodate personal development needs counsellor-level professionals often seek to develop additional areas of expertise beyond which they currently possess.

Counsellors often chair committees or take on leadership roles in professional associations.

Rather than being independent contributors they understand the need for an interdependent role and accomplish much of their work through others.

They are extensive boundary-spanners and often have extensive networks both within and outside the organization.

A move to the Counsellor stage does not necessarily imply a change of jobs to a supervisory or managerial position, but those in the counsellor stage must at some point be able to contribute to the growth of others in the system.

Motivators for Professional Development:

* Acquiring broad-based expertise
* Attaining leadership positions in professional circles
* Engaging in organizational problem-solving
* Developing networks with other organizations
* Stimulating thought in others
* Counselling other professionals
* Developing coaching and mentoring relationships
* Initiating job enrichment and redesign
* Facilitating self-renewal and rebirth
* Expanding knowledge regarding relevant issues

Developmental Opportunities:

* Opportunity to serve as a formal or informal mentor
* Opportunities to chair committees and coordinate projects
* Opportunities for self-renewal and additional training
* Greater responsibility in decision-making and problem-solving
* Opportunities to serve in formal training roles
* Job enrichment, job redesign, varied assignments
* Career counselling
* Temporary assignments to special projects
The Advisor Stage (managing and supervising others)

Individuals in the Advisor stage play a key role in shaping the future of the organization by "sponsoring" promising people, programs and ideas.

The sponsor has often developed a distinct competence in several areas of expertise and often has a regional or national reputation.

Sponsors have a thorough understanding of the organization and can be a catalyst for positive change.

They are capable of exercising formal and informal influence in the decision-making process.

Not all professionals reach the Advisor stage. Yet, as with the Counsellor stage, progression to the Advisor stage does not require a permanent or formal move to a titled position, but it does mean having some influence over the policies or procedures of the organization or over the nature of their own job.

**Motivators for Professional Development:**

* Becoming involved in strategic organizational planning  
* Achieving the respect of others in the organization  
* Engaging in innovation and risk-taking  
* Understanding complex relationships  
* Achieving a position of influence  
* Sponsoring individuals, programs, and people  
* Increasing responsibility  
* Expanding knowledge regarding relevant issues

**Developmental Opportunities:**

* Opportunities to utilize expertise and influence  
* Complex and challenging assignments  
* Increased responsibility  
* Involvement in strategic planning  
* Opportunities to represent the organization to internal and external groups  
* Obtaining resources  
* Career counselling  
* Retirement planning
References


Standing Committee on Post Graduate Medical and Dental Education (1998) *Supporting doctors and dentists at work an enquiry into mentoring*. SCOPME, London.