Planning your development

There are limits to the time and finances available to invest in your development, so it makes sense to choose development activities that give you the highest return on your investment.

Step 1.

Reflect on the skills and knowledge you need to perform to a high standard in your current role, and also what extra skills and knowledge you will need to take the next step in your career.

Reflect on your strengths and development needs in relation to these skills and knowledge.

Step 1 is part of the regular discussions that you have with your supervisor throughout the year about your job, your skills and your development needs, as well as your annual performance appraisal conversation. If you would like some more feedback, ask your supervisor.

Step 2.

Choose between 1 and 3 areas to focus on improving. Any more than this, and it’s hard to achieve significant improvement.

Step 3.

Remember that most of our learning, about 70%, comes from on-the-job activities (such as new projects), 20% comes from other people (such as a mentor or coach) and only 10% comes from formal courses. Consider the range of options available to you (below). Consider which one will give you the most benefit:

- Will you have the opportunity to start using the new information or skills straight away?
- Does it involve practising what you learn and receiving feedback?
- Is it a one-off activity or would you continue to learn over a period of time?

Step 4.

If you haven’t already, talk with your supervisor about what development activity you would like to do and why. Let them know what support you will need from them - perhaps assistance finding a mentor, time off to attend a course, or feedback on your skills.