

Exposure Activities

Exposure is learning by **observation, through rich feedback, and connections with others** to produce fresh personal insights and broadened perspectives on your current role and developmental horizons.

Work with your manager or a mentor to identify what new skills/behaviours/knowledge you'd like to learn, and what the best way to learn them would be. For example, if you need to learn how to give presentations and you've never done one before, it's a great idea to watch people who are good at it to learn some best practices. It might take some research on your part and help from your manager to identify the right opportunity, but the learning outcomes are worth the investment!

The exposure activity you identify should give you time to observe or receive feedback in the area you want to learn.

Experience Opportunity	Description	Competencies/Skills
Find a Buddy	<p>If you are looking to improve a skill, it can be really helpful to have a “buddy” who can show you the ropes. Buddies can support your development in a variety of areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning a new desktop software or internal system is easier with a buddy who can show you the tips and tricks they have learned through time. • Helping you work with new departments – they know the people and processes and can help your partnership by sharing lessons learned or by inviting you to watch them in action as they interact. • A buddy can help you “show up” better in meetings, or other interactions by giving you honest feedback on where you might improve your approach. 	<p>Almost any activity you want to learn can benefit from having a buddy, to watch at first, and then by them giving feedback as you progress. They can help build competencies in innumerable ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration skills • Self-leadership abilities • Innovation & Excellence skills • Build Diversity, Inclusion and Equity skills • Professional skills such as negotiations, conflict management, and presentations, etc.

**Experience
Opportunity****Description****Competencies/Skills**

Experiencing a “day-in-the-life-of” another employee is an excellent way to learn from someone more experienced in action, and even evaluate potential future career moves.

Job Shadowing is like having a buddy, but it is a more comprehensive experience lending itself to learning entire processes/procedures, specific tasks, or even roles that you may be taking on in the future.

Some examples include:

- someone who has tasks the same as you will be taking over, such as processing items in a system, or preparing files/back up for someone else to process
- someone who deals with very difficult situations on a frequent basis to gain exposure to handling those or similar types of situations
- someone who is in a role that you think would be a good fit for you in the future.

Job shadowing can help your development by increasing:

- Collaboration skills
- Self-leadership through continuous learning
- Professional skills such as influencing, negotiations, delegating, and time management.
- Providing insight into your career direction

**Job/Role
Shadowing**

Experience Opportunity

Description

Competencies/Skills

Informational Interviews

Actively seek out opportunities to meet people from other areas of the university, with a view to setting up informational interviews.

Informational interviews are a critical element of any kind of career development/planning, as they provide you with the opportunity to understand what other roles are “out there” and what the roles entail.

Informational interviews are learning experiences where you ask people working in specific areas how they deal with specific issues, processes or people.

- You could find out what it is like to be a people leader from someone with extensive experience in a leadership role and leave with some pearls of wisdom that only a seasoned people leader could share.
- You could interview with someone who has particularly difficult parts of their job (e.g. dealing with complaints) to learn how they handle the stress of the role.

You could identify roles that you think might be interesting as a next career move and find out what it’s really like from people already in the role.

There are multiple competencies you can develop with this type of assignment:

- People Leadership skills
- Self-Leadership skills
- Professional skills such as influencing, negotiations, conflict management, presentations, difficult conversations, etc.
- Learn more about roles you might be interested in as future career move.

Experience Opportunity

Description

Competencies/Skills

While not always easy, seeking feedback is an excellent mechanism for development. Asking others their opinion of your performance can present you with information which is hard to reconcile with your self-image. However, **given and taken constructively**, you learn and improve from this invaluable feedback.

You can ask for feedback on any number of things:

- Your performance in general – are there any areas they see as opportunities for you?
- Specific elements of your performance – perhaps you want feedback just on a presentation you gave.
- How you come across in various situations, such as meetings, 1:1 – how do others view you? As collaborative, hardworking, etc.?

The key to giving feedback is to not be personal – e.g., “You were really bad in that meeting”. It should be **task-or process specific**: when you gave your presentation, you consistently read from the PowerPoint, which wasn’t effective because it made it hard to hear you and engage with you.

You can build almost all our institutional competencies and professional skills, depending on the type of feedback you ask for:

- Collaboration skills
- Stewardship skills
- Innovation & Excellence
- Self-Leadership
- People Leadership
- Strategic Leadership
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Professional skills such as influencing, negotiations, conflict management, presentations, strategic planning, etc.

Seek
Feedback

**Experience
Opportunity****Description****Competencies/Skills****Mentor**

Having a mentor is an excellent way of increasing your learning through both observation and feedback. Mentor partnerships can take many forms, from a formal program, such as the Rose Patten Mentoring programme, through to informal, such as a finding a situational mentor for input on a specific occurrence or task.

If there is someone from your past who was particularly inspiring, or you admired his/her way of leading people, dealing with conflict etc., you may want to reach out and develop an informal mentor/mentee relationship. If they had a big impact on you, then there is something about them that really resonates with you, and it would likely be a great relationship.

You could build almost all of our institutional competencies and professional skills, depending on how you choose to work with your mentor:

- Collaboration skills
- Stewardship skills
- Innovation & Excellence
- Self-Leadership
- People Leadership
- Strategic Leadership
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Professional skills such as negotiations, presentations, strategic planning, etc.