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CAREER ASSIGNMENT PROGRAM

preparing for tomorrow

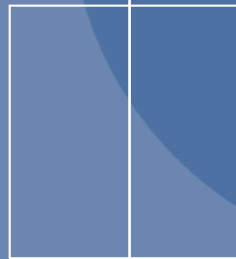


leadership

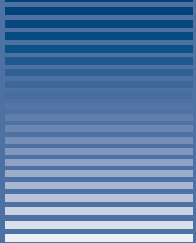


learning

renewal



COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE GUIDE



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction i

Part 1: Formulating a Self-Directed Competency Development Plan

Step 1. Identify Areas Needing Improvement 1

- 1.1: Gather Information on Your Strengths and Weaknesses 1
- 1.2: Summarize the Information you Gather 3
- Sample Learning Plan: Step 1 — Identifying Areas Needing Improvement.* 5

Step 2. Create an Action Plan 8

Step 3. Create a System to Monitor Your Progress on an On-Going Basis 9

- Keys to Success. 10
- Sample Learning Plan: Steps 2,3 — Taking Action and Monitoring Progress.* 12

Part 2: Developmental Recommendations and Resources

Intellectual Competencies 19

- Cognitive Capacity 19
- Creativity. 22

Future Building Competencies 25

- Visioning 25

Management Competencies 28

- Action Management 28
- Organizational Awareness 32
- Teamwork 35
- Partnering 38

Relationship Competencies 41

- Interpersonal Relations 41
- Communication. 45

Personal Competencies 50

- Stamina/Stress Resistance 50
- Ethics and Values 55
- Personality. 59
- Behavioural Flexibility 63
- Self-Confidence. 67

INTRODUCTION

Giving priority to their own continuous learning and development is a hallmark of successful executives. Regardless of their overall level of competence in a given area of development, successful executives continually strive to expose themselves to new information, acquire new skills and benefit from new experiences.

It is hoped that this document will serve as a valuable resource in support of a planned and self-directed effort to develop your competencies. It is not intended to serve as an overall plan for executive or personal development. Participants of development programs such as the Career Assignment Program will formulate a more global learning plan in consultation with a Learning Advisor. This document may be used as a tool to assist with that process.

• **How to use the information in this document**

- *The first section, "Formulating a Self-Directed Competency Development Plan", focuses on the process of creating and using a learning program to improve a competency (i.e., how to develop a learning plan).*
- *The next section, "Developmental Recommendations and Resources", contains ideas, suggestions and resources for specific Director-level competencies from the Profile of Public Service Leadership Competencies. The purpose of the content in Part 2 is to help focus and stimulate your thinking, and to point you toward other sources of information, as you prepare a plan to develop specific competencies.*
- *This booklet is not intended to be read from front to back, cover to cover. Rather, it is best to refer to it selectively as a starting point toward an overall plan to address your developmental needs. It is recommended that you focus on the sections of Part 2, Developmental Recommendations and Resources, that correspond to the competencies that you wish to develop.*
- *This document is intended to serve as a starting point in a self-directed competency development plan. There are many other resources available to Public Servants interested in pursuing a development plan. The Human Resources branch of your own department may be able to assist you in developing a learning plan. The Public Service Commission's Executive Counselling Services are available to assist Public Service executives in various aspects of their personal and career development (these services may, in some departments, also be available to participants in the Career Assignment Program). Finally, the Learning Resource network (<http://learnnet.gc.ca/>) and the Leadership Network (<http://lareleve.leadership.gc.ca/>) internet sites list many useful resources both within and outside of the Public Service that individuals may wish to explore as they look for ideas and information to assist them with their learning plan.*
- **A note about terminology.** *The suggestions in Part 2 of this document typically refer to either "Directors" or "executives". The purpose of this resource guide is to assist those seeking to develop themselves to the Director level, as defined in the Profile of Public Service Leadership Competencies. The use of the more generic term "executive" reflects the fact that many of the behaviours described are not unique to the Director level. Regardless of the term used, the ideas presented in Part 2 are intended to reflect the kinds of behaviours that should be developed in those seeking to enter the executive cadre.*

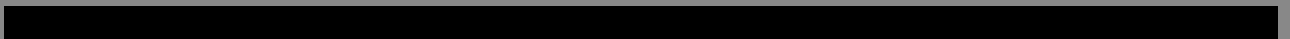
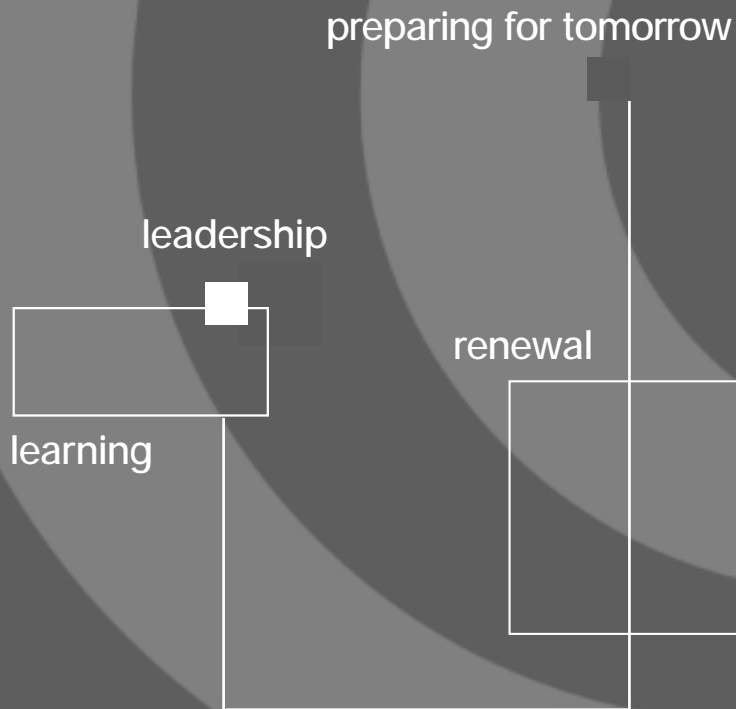
The authors would like to acknowledge the leadership, initiative and ideas provided by the Career Assignment Program in support of the creation of this document. The flexibility and collaborative spirit of CAP officials has allowed for the creation of a tool that can benefit, not only CAP participants, but all those interested in developing their leadership competencies.



CAP

PART 1

Formulating a Self-Directed Competency Development Plan



FORMULATING A SELF-DIRECTED COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

People frequently make “New Years’ resolutions” that they do not keep. They have an idea about something they wish to change, they feel committed to changing it, and they may even have a specific plan in their mind about how they hope to go about changing it. Typically, as the weeks and months pass, existing commitments eat away at their time, other priorities arise, and the good intentions fade into unfulfilled plans.

It is unlikely that any successful competency development plan was ever formulated without initial good intentions. However, as with any action plan, to have a reasonable chance of being successful, a development plan must be formalized and written down in such a way that the objectives, and the steps to be taken to reach those objectives, are clearly defined. Objectives should be realistic. Time for learning activities should be scheduled in advance and rigorously adhered to. To the extent that it is possible, measures of progress should be identified at the outset, and should be monitored at predetermined intervals.

The key to the success of the learning plan is to develop clearly identified objectives that are realistic given the energy and the time you are willing and able to devote to your development plan. Typically, it is best to concentrate your efforts on a small number of specific areas.

The following are a few guidelines to consider when you are thinking about, and preparing your plan for development.

- **Step 1: Identify areas needing improvement**

- **1.1 Gather information on your strengths and weaknesses**

Use all available sources of information, including any competency-related results and related information that have been provided to you as a result of your participation in an assessment process (whether for staffing or developmental purposes), feedback from others, and frank, honest self-reflection.

Assessment tools/Formal assessment results

Formal assessment results from competitive selection and personal development processes that you have participated in can be a rich source of information on your strengths and weaknesses. Combined with direct feedback from people who see you act in different contexts and from different perspectives, this information has the potential to provide a solid foundation for a self-directed plan to develop your weaker competencies. For example, candidates in the Career Assignment Program competitive selection process can benefit from a rich source of assessment information. The CAP assessment process includes a range of

assessment tools that are commonly used in staffing senior-level positions. Successful candidates can benefit further from a 360-degree feedback assessment process, designed specifically to help identify an individual’s strengths and developmental needs. The following section will refer to the CAP tools to illustrate how the information that is derived from such structured assessment tools can be very useful in identifying learning needs. Other potential, and equally useful, information sources include: assessment results from other corporate developmental programs (for example, the Management Trainee Program or the Accelerated Economist Development Program); similar development programs run by various Public Service departments; and 360-degree feedback services that are available to all Public Service organizations (*see Suggested Resources*). However, any assessment data has the potential to reveal very important information about your areas of strength and developmental needs.

When examining the results of such assessments:

- Summarize your results in a tabular or graphical format. Particularly where your feedback includes results from different assessment tools, this will help you to identify trends or commonly identified strengths or weaknesses. See “Sample Learning Plan—Step 1” as an example of how this might be done.
- Consider both competency-specific and overall scores. For example, the CAP assessment process provides an overall score on each of the competency clusters (e.g., Intellectual Competencies, Relationship Competencies), as well as individual competency scores.
- Compare the relative strength of your competency or competency cluster scores for each of the components of the assessment process (in CAP, for example, from the Simulations, the Reference Checks, and the Board Interview). This comparison will provide you with insights into which competencies you exhibited strength consistently across situations and perspectives, and which require further effort to express them well in a variety of settings and contexts.
- Keep in mind that the principal purpose of leadership development is to strive toward the achievement of a working ability at higher organizational levels than your current working level. Some kinds of assessment results, such as simulations and interviews based on situational or “what if” questions, are designed to assess how you would do if you assumed a position with responsibilities higher than (or fundamentally different from) your current working level. For example, in the CAP selection process, the Executive Simulations results reflect an assessment of the ability to perform in an EX-01 role or context. This score does not describe an individual’s level of competence in their present level of work, but rather demonstrates how well their competence in a simulated EX-01 role compares to that of an entry-level executive. In essence, weaker scores on these assessment results reflect the gaps that need to be closed for the individual to be prepared to take on duties at that higher level.
- Remember that part of personal development is the ability and willingness to tolerate ambiguity and the desire to seek out new challenges and opportunities. Equally important as the size of the gaps you will need to close is your ability to learn from experience. Your ability to modify your behaviour, your drive to accomplish goals and your willingness to seek out and embrace new ideas, perspectives and experiences all contribute to your ability to learn on the job. In the CAP selection process, characteristics like these are captured in the potential ratings from the Reference Checks. Lower scores on these ratings may indicate that you need to learn to embrace challenges and seek out new opportunities to deal with complex or ambiguous information.
- Pay special attention to the comments that are provided with any profile ratings you receive. These comments will provide you with valuable feedback about your performance at both your current and desired levels (for CAP, the Manager and Director levels, respectively), as well as your potential for development. That is, they will help you to understand why you received the ratings you received and give you specific information about your areas of strength and where you need to improve. This information should be taken into account as you begin the road to development.

Direct feedback from others

Direct feedback from your co-workers.

Involving your co-workers in the process can provide a number of positive benefits. First, they can provide a more objective perspective on your strengths and weaknesses. Second, by involving your co-workers, you will bring attention to your developmental efforts, and your improvement is more likely to be noticed. Finally, seeking their feedback may make them more willing to reciprocate and will foster an environment with greater communication and more emphasis on continuous learning and development.

Feedback gathered from outside of your work environment. Feedback that you have received in the past outside of work (for example, within your family, at school or with friends) may also provide a valuable source of corroborating information to take into consideration when identifying your strengths and developmental needs.

Honest, thoughtful self-reflection

Reflect on yourself and on the information that you have gathered. There is no source that can provide more valuable information on your own behaviours, strengths, and weaknesses than you. It is important that you strive to be honest and as objective as possible in assessing yourself. It is also important that you receive and acknowledge feedback from other sources openly and non-defensively. Reflect upon the results of your assessments and the feedback that you receive from others. In some cases, you may feel that what others have rated as a weakness is not a weakness. If so, then you need to reflect upon why they perceive it as a weakness. Similarly, what you perceive as one of your learning needs may not be perceived that way by others. In this situation, you may want to consider why you perceive that area as a weakness, and reflect on whether your learning plan could be more fruitfully targeted in other directions.

• **1.2 Summarize the information you gather**

Integrate and “distill” the information.

Making a concerted effort to gather feedback on your weaknesses from such a potentially diverse array of sources certainly has the potential to be a rather “humbling” experience. It is important to recognize that not every behaviour or competency identified by a given individual or assessment tool as a weakness will necessarily be a weakness. You will need to “distill” the vast amount of information you have at your disposal to identify a small number of competencies (two or three at most) upon which you can focus your efforts.

Keep in mind that the feedback you receive from individuals will depend on a variety of organizational and interpersonal issues, as well as their personal beliefs about what constitutes effective versus ineffective behaviour. Those beliefs may vary enormously from individual to individual. Feedback from individuals is best used as a way of confirming information received via the assessment tools or other individuals. You may wish to give more weight to information provided by respected superiors and/or other individuals whose values and beliefs you perceive to be closely aligned with your own and with those of the Public Service of Canada.

Also keep in mind that the feedback you receive from different assessment instruments is best interpreted in a “wholistic” way; the key to the validity of an assessment approach such as that used for Career Assignment Program is its multi-faceted nature. The value of the different individual tools is the fact that each assesses different aspects of the competencies and does so from a different perspective; however, no one tool provides a complete picture of you or your competencies.

Pinpoint specific behaviours to work on. A given competency is really a mosaic of different behaviours that manifest themselves in your work performance in a number of different ways. For example, “Communication” reflects, among other things, your ability to speak clearly and compellingly, your ability to listen effectively, and your use of communication as a management tool to enhance operational efficiency. It is unlikely that you are weak on all the behaviours relevant to a given competency. Once you have decided that a given competency could benefit from development, look closer to find which aspects of the competency constitute the weakness. Any feedback reports that you receive (for CAP, these include the Executive Simulations Report, the Reference Checks and the final integration report—particularly the “Strengths, needs, and developmental recommendations” section) and comments from referees may help you pinpoint the weak areas in specific competencies. Feedback that you receive from individuals (as discussed above) is another important source of that kind of information. You may also find it useful to refer to Part 2 of this document (“Developmental Recommendations and Resources”) and review the suggested developmental activities that correspond to the competencies you wish to develop.

Identify your strengths. It is important to remember that you have strengths in some competency areas, and not just needs for development. Identify your strengths and keep them in mind as you create your development plan. When you are choosing which developmental actions to take in order to address your weaker competencies, you can use your strengths to compensate for your developmental needs. For example, if you have strong Teamwork skills, but are weaker in Action Management, you may be able to compensate for the latter by fostering a cohesive and collaborative management team that minimizes your need for hands on direction. You may also be able to capitalize on your strengths by creating developmental situations in which your strength emerges, but that also force you to exercise your developmental needs. Exposing yourself to such situations will enable you to feel challenged on the one hand, yet also comfortable on the other.

SAMPLE LEARNING PLAN - STEP 1: IDENTIFYING AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

Name: Annie Buddie
Home Organization: Department X
Learning Advisor or Mentor: Hermann Torr
Date of Start of Plan: February 29, 2000

Consistency of strengths and needs for development across assessment measures:

Competency Cluster	Specific Competencies	Interview	Reference Check	Executive Simulations	360° Feedback
Intellectual	Cognitive Capacity				
	Creativity				
Future Building	Visioning		✓		
Management	Action Management	✓		✓	✓
	Organizational Awareness		✓		
	Teamwork				
	Partnering			✓	✓
Relationship	Interpersonal Relations				
	Communication	✓		✓	✓
Personal	Stamina/ Stress Resistance				
	Ethics & Values				
	Personality				
	Behavioural Flexibility				
	Self-confidence	✓			

My own perspective about my needs for development

I have never been very comfortable delivering important messages in formal situations, especially to my peers and subordinates. Perhaps that is why I try too hard to get to the point and don't provide enough context. Also, regarding Partnering, I do think that I could benefit from a bit more of a private sector perspective on some problems (after 18 years in the PS) — might put me in a better position to identify future partnering opportunities. Finally, I understand why Action Management has been identified as requiring development, as I often find that my priorities and plans go awry part-way through.

SAMPLE LEARNING PLAN - STEP 1: CONT'D

FEEDBACK FROM OTHERS

- Supervisor:** Mohammed says that I frequently fail to get my message through in team meetings (even though I can be convincing in one-on-one situations). I need to try to be more "dynamic" when I speak in formal contexts. Says I need to "lighten up" a bit in meetings.
- Mentor/Learning advisor:** Suggests that I broaden my horizons and seek the point of view of partners in the private sector – thinks I could benefit from their perspective in my work on the reorganization of the data network division.
- Colleague(s):** François thinks I should be more pro-active and methodological when I take over complex projects (says I have a fire-fighting approach). Diane says that my staff are sometimes in the dark (they complain) – I should explain myself better when meeting with them, and listen more carefully to them in formal/informal occasions.
- Direct reports:** Several members of my staff have had difficulty following my instructions. They have told me that the objectives I am attempting to communicate are sometimes unclear and difficult to interpret.
- Others outside of work:** Monique, at the Heart Foundation (where I volunteer as a member of the local board of directors), says I need to elaborate more when I'm proposing ideas, and that I need to give more context and make fewer assumptions about what others know. My husband Greg thinks my speeches are a "bit boring".

SAMPLE LEARNING PLAN - STEP 1: CONT'D

Strongest competency clusters & identified strengths

- Cluster 1 Name:** Intellectual
 - Specific strengths within that cluster:**
 - 1) Cognitive Capacity
 - 2) Creativity
 - Cluster 2 Name:** Personal
 - Specific strengths within that cluster:**
 - 1) Behavioural Flexibility
 - 2) Personality
-

Lowest-rated competency clusters & identified needs for development

- Cluster 1 Name:** Management
 - Specific needs for development within that cluster:**
 - 1) Action Management
 - 2) Partnering
 - Cluster 2 Name:** Relationship
 - Specific needs for development within that cluster:**
 - 1) Communication
 - 2) N/A
-

Summary (key areas to develop)

- Competency 1:** Action Management
 - Competency 2:** Partnering
 - Competency 3:** Communication
-

How can I capitalize on my strengths to develop these areas?

My strength in Cognitive Capacity means that I am high in analytical ability and the capacity to integrate information. I am also strong in Creativity – this could be used to my advantage – finding alternative ways to accomplish objectives interests me. I also find that I am open to new experiences, people, and novel contexts (Behavioural Flexibility), and that I have a high degree of drive and commitment in my pursuit of the goals of the sector. This drive will help push me to develop in an area which I find difficult: communicating goals to others and operationalizing them.

• **Step 2: Create an action plan**

Identifying one's areas of weakness both accurately and precisely is the first, and arguably most critical, step toward developing those areas. The next step is to create and document an action plan. For each competency, list specific behavioural objectives and create a written plan outlining all the activities you intend to use toward meeting those objectives. These activities may be as simple as reading a book on Self Confidence or arranging a monthly brainstorming session. Alternatively they might be as involved as taking a week-long course on Teamwork, seeking a developmental assignment in a different functional role, or pursuing an MBA.

Identify learning activities. List the actions you intend to take toward developing your weaker competencies. Some of the activities will be actual behaviours that you want to make an effort to practice on the job (e.g. “speak more slowly”). Other activities will involve pursuing additional resources with the intention of gathering further information to support your developmental efforts.

Refer to the “Developmental Recommendations and Resources” section of this document and, in particular, the suggestions that correspond to the competencies you recognize as your weakest. Keep in mind that the way in which some competencies are expressed varies by the organizational level and context in which an executive is working. For example, some aspects of delegating work may be less relevant to a Director in a policy development function, whereas certain aspects of visioning may be less relevant to an entry level line manager in operations. Accordingly, some suggestions for development may be too “low level” or too “high level” for you. Narrow down the suggestions to the ones that are relevant to you and which you feel you could benefit from. It is very unlikely that all of the suggestions will apply to you, even for your weaker competencies. Conversely, it is possible that there are areas that you need to develop which have not been addressed in those suggestions, in which case you will need to look to other resources.

When you are deciding which learning activities to pursue, keep in mind that these activities should be concrete and measurable. Often, the overall target of your learning will be abstract and seemingly insurmountable (e.g., “I will improve my communication ability”). To maintain your focus, and to work deliberately toward your goal, create a series of steps that you can follow easily and that, by completing them, will show you how close you are to accomplishing that goal. In short, breaking down your learning tasks into stages can help the seemingly impossible become possible.

Also consider asking those around you to help you with your development. When you are deciding what learning activities are appropriate for you, think about who can help you monitor your progress (i.e., peers, subordinates, superiors, a trusted colleague) and enlist the help of that person or group. By asking for their help before you begin, you can ensure that these individuals are willing to help you if you feel overwhelmed or be able to provide feedback as you are monitoring your progress in the future.

Consider seeking the input of a learning advisor or executive counsellor to get suggestions on specific ways you can change deeply ingrained behaviours that you wish to change on the job. Your mentor, a peer learning partner or a trusted colleague may also have valuable suggestions that have worked for him or her in the past.

Seek a variety of resources such as books, videos, workshops, and the internet for more perspectives on how to develop specific competencies (or aspects of competencies). Some of the available resources have been listed in the “Suggested Resources” sections.

Consider your preferred style of learning when incorporating varied resources into your learning program. Some people retain information best when it is presented in a multimedia format such as a videotape. Others learn best by reading a variety of different sources. Still others will gain most from the more structured environment provided by a workshop, seminar or course. One way that you can identify your preferred learning style is to read the section on Preferred Learning Styles and to complete the accompanying exercise in the 360° Feedback Professional Development Plan Workbook that is produced by the Personnel Psychology Centre.

Seek a developmental assignment. In addition to providing the basic experience and exposure that is required for career advancement, “on-the-job” learning is the single most effective means of developing your weaker competencies. There are a number of common characteristics of job experiences that facilitate leadership development. A developmental assignment should involve different kinds of tasks and different people than those with whom you are accustomed to working, should have clearly defined time frames, and clear measures of success and failure. Above all, it is probably the element of challenge that defines a truly developmental experience. Assignments where the individual must learn in order to succeed, and where benefits of success and costs of failure are clearly defined, are the ones from which people learn the most.

For a sophisticated discussion on the importance of job experience in leadership development, and the different kinds of learning that occur in different kinds of assignments, consider reading *The Lessons of Experience*, by McCall, Lombardo and Morrison (Lexington Books, 1988).

- **Step 3: Create a system to monitor your progress on an on-going basis**

Prioritize targets. You may want to prioritize your targets, so that those you view as easiest to achieve and/or with the greatest payoff are implemented first. For example, “hold weekly communications meetings” may be easier to implement than “speak more eloquently” and may pay greater dividends.

Establish timelines. Identify a date by which you intend to achieve each behavioural objective you have targeted. View these targets as individual steps toward achieving the larger goal of developing an overall competency. More substantial targets may be more realistically approached by setting less ambitious interim targets, with their own timelines, to be achieved in a stepwise fashion. Some targets may have relatively short time spans, some may take longer, and some may require monitoring on an ongoing, or long-term, basis. Also remember that the achievement of your targets will take time. Not every competency can be developed at the same rate, nor will a given learning need develop at the same speed for everyone. Taking some time to think about your priorities and your own comfort level will allow you to set timelines that are appropriate for you.

Schedule time in advance to assess your progress. Specify a series of regular occasions (e.g., weekly or biweekly) to think about and record your ongoing progress. Schedule time for these self-assessments at the outset. It is critical that you take the time to assess whether you have reached your goals when you had planned to achieve them. In other words, once your target dates have come and gone, have you developed in any way? You may want to use a simple rating scale (e.g., 1 through 10) to assess your progress in addition to recording more specific observations in point form. You may also want to include feedback from others (see below). Regardless of precisely how you go about it, regularly monitoring and recording your progress will draw more attention to the tangible, though subtle, improvements that you experience throughout your development program, and this will serve as a reward and motivator. The process of ongoing self-monitoring also encourages the early identification of those areas which will require more effort and/or time to develop than originally planned. This will allow you to modify your development plan pro-actively, rather than simply experiencing the de-motivating frustration of failing to meet rigid target dates.

To illustrate, Annie Buddie (whose sample development plan has been included and who has found that she needs to improve her communication ability), has created her learning plan for communication and has established realistic activities and target dates. After an interval of 3 months, Annie reasons that it would be wise to see how much her communication ability has improved after having taken a communication course, read a book, and analyzed her communication style by recording her conversations with others. She has tried to put her new-found self-knowledge to good use, but does not know if she has made any strides in the right direction. She decides that she will write down four questions about specific aspects of her communication style that she felt were in need of development three months before. She then distributes these questions to her colleagues and Hermann Torr asking for their honest perspective about her improvement. From this information, she can evaluate whether she has attained her goal (a noticeable improvement in communicating), and whether her current development plan is producing changes that are being noticed by other stakeholders.

Seek out and benefit from a mentor. It is important that your mentor be somebody from whom you feel you can learn, with whom you can identify and with whom you have a relatively comfortable working relationship. You should feel comfortable seeking advice or airing concerns with your mentor. You should share your learning plan with your mentor, use him or her as a source of frank and honest feedback, and seek his or her help in both achieving, and monitoring, your targets.

Find one or more learning partner(s) with whom you can provide mutual support, reinforcement, motivation and feedback. In identifying learning partners, considerations similar to those described above for a potential mentor would apply.

• **Keys to success**

Assess yourself honestly. Another key to your success is the extent to which you are objective and honest in appraising your own strengths and weaknesses and targeting areas for improvement. Seeking further input from others is helpful, but it is important that you acknowledge and take responsibility for the areas that you could improve.

Capitalize on your strengths. While identifying and developing your weaker competencies is important, it is also important that you identify and give attention to your areas of strength, and look for ways to increase your opportunities to exploit those strengths. This will improve your overall effectiveness by making your strengths more prominent in your overall repertoire of skills and behaviours, and also by allowing you to compensate for your weaker areas while you develop them. It is important, however, that you do not allow yourself to continually fall back on your strengths to the exclusion of developing weaker areas.

Set reasonable targets. The extent to which your learning plan targets reasonable or “doable” interim targets rather than lofty, over-optimistic long-term goals, is crucial to the success of your developmental efforts. Doing so will make both your targets and your progress toward achieving those targets more immediate and tangible than focussing solely on longer-term goals. Recognizing the achievement associated with meeting those interim targets can serve as a source of reinforcement and motivation.

Make a commitment. Developing and benefiting from any competency requires commitment and effort. For example, “creative people” do not necessarily spontaneously generate innovative solutions and trend-setting ideas. Many creative people view creativity as a skill that can be developed and exploited, embrace a set of methodologies or techniques that facilitate their creative process, and actively exert the effort required to employ those methodologies. The extent to which you are committed to devoting the necessary energy, time and resources into learning is what, more than anything else, will determine the success or failure of your personal development program.

Recognize that change is possible. Related to commitment is the recognition at the outset that change is both desirable and achievable. Cynicism or pessimism about a development plan will invariably become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is a defining characteristic of humans that they undergo continuous transformation throughout their entire lifespan. Change is inevitable; a learning plan simply ensures that the changes you undergo are targeted in a positive, constructive direction.

Be positive. While it is important to be honest in assessing your weaknesses, it is equally important that you maintain a positive attitude toward yourself, and your opportunities for success in your personal development efforts.

SAMPLE LEARNING PLAN - STEPS 2, 3: TAKING ACTION AND MONITORING PROGRESS

Step 1 (continued) Specific Developmental Needs	Step 2 Concrete Learning Activities	Step 3 Progress/target dates
<p>Partnering</p> <p>Improve my understanding of the implications of partnering</p> <p>Establish partnerships with other firms or entities</p>	<p>1. Read the report of the sub-committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers on Globalization called "Canada 2005: Globalization: Challenges and Possibilities"</p> <p>Ask Jocelyne to make me a copy of the report</p> <p>2. Ask Lucy Tziu from the Strategic Policy directorate about established policies and protocols that govern public and private-sector partnerships</p> <p>1. Seek out and collaborate with a non-governmental committee that deals with issues important to the Public Sector (e.g., National Action Committee on the Status of Women)</p> <p>Gather information and make a list of possible committees to contact</p> <p>Contact representatives of each committee to discuss purpose of each, pick one to work with</p> <p>2. Join a professional association that is relevant to the work that is done in my sector to exchange information and to keep abreast of current issues and technologies.</p> <p>Contact Professional Engineers Society of Canada (the association of my choice), send for membership</p> <p>Attend next Professional Engineers Society of Canada conference</p>	<p>In the next 3 weeks (by 21/03)</p> <p>Today or tomorrow (01/03–02/03)</p> <p>Get hard copies of these publications by the end of March (31/03)</p> <p>Read policies before the summer (by June 15)</p> <p>List 5 possible committees (by 01/04)</p> <p>Make choice by 01/05, and attend first scheduled meeting after that date</p> <p>Ask peers and colleagues about the professional associations of which they are members (in the next week)</p> <p>Send for membership, and subscribe to their monthly newsletter and journal (by 15/03)</p> <p>Attend conference in summer (28/07–31/07)</p>

**SAMPLE LEARNING PLAN - STEPS 2, 3: TAKING ACTION
AND MONITORING PROGRESS**

Step 1 (continued) Specific Developmental Needs	Step 2 Concrete Learning Activities	Step 3 Progress/target dates
<p>Action Management</p> <p>Improve my resource management</p> <p>Improve my ability to make action plans</p>	<p>1. Prepare a detailed description of anticipated resource needs for the next 12 months</p> <p>Compare my analysis with last year's to see where I made errors last time</p> <p>Ask my superior what she thinks of my planning abilities</p> <p>1. Reserve some time to do the following:</p> <p>a) identify and develop an overall goal and strategy</p> <p>b) clarify and improve my knowledge of the sector</p> <p>Attend the informal Public Service Learning Events offered by CCMD with themes that target planning and learning for executives at all Federal government levels</p>	<p>Begin preparation this week (01/03)</p> <p>As soon as my analysis is complete</p> <p>Before our next meeting in May</p> <p>On a continuing basis</p> <p>The first four Thursdays of every month, from 8:30am to 9:45am</p>

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Launch a 360-degree feedback process in your organization. The Personnel Psychology Centre of the Public Service Commission of Canada offers a full range of 360-degree feedback products and services. They are based on the 14 competencies in the Profile of Public Service Leadership Competencies (the corporate leadership competency profile of the Public Service of Canada, and the same competencies upon which Part 2 of this document is based). Launching a 360-degree feedback exercise will help you in your own development efforts, and will also demonstrate leadership and commitment to the developmental needs of your staff. These services are available to Public Service organizations on a cost recovery basis. Additional information is available at http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/ppc/360_feedback_e.htm.

Read books such as the following (many of these books can be located through the Learning Resource Network at <http://resapp.gc.ca>):

- “Competency-based assessment techniques” by Shirley Fletcher (Kogan Page, 2002);
- “Closing the circle: Participants view of a 360 degree feedback programme” by Christopher Mabey (*Human Resource Management Journal*, Volume 11 Number 1 January 2001);
- “Leadership and organizational climate: the cloud chamber effect” by Robert Stringer (Prentice Hall, 2002);
- “Focus on leadership: servant-leadership for the twenty-first century” edited by Larry C. Spears and Michele Lawrence (Wiley, 2002);
- “The 21st century executive: innovative practices for building leadership at the top” edited by Rob Silzer, foreword by Eduardo Salas (Jossey-Bass, 2002);
- “The Encyclopedia of Leadership: A Practical Guide to Popular Leadership Theories and Techniques” by Murray Hiebert & Bruce Klatt (McGraw-Hill 2000);
- “The Leader’s Edge: Six Creative Competencies for Navigating Complex Challenges” by Charles J. Palus, David M. Horth (John Wiley & Sons 2002);
- “Suggestions de développement et ressources à l’usage des managers d’aujourd’hui” by Corporation internationale Personnel Decisions, 1997;

- “Successful Manager’s Handbook: Development Suggestions for Today’s Managers” by Davis, Skube, Hellervik, Gebelein, and Sheard (Personnel Decisions International Corporation, 1996);
- “For Your Improvement: A Development and Coaching Guide for Learners, Supervisors, Managers, Mentors, and Feedback Givers” by M. Lombardo and R. Eichinger (Lominger Limited, 1996);
- “The Lessons of Experience: How Successful Executives Develop on the Job” by McCall, M.W., Lombardo, M.M. and Morrison A.M. (Lexington Books, 1988);
- “The Directory for Building Competencies” by D. Kravetz (Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data, 1995);
- “Guide sur l’apprentissage continu” by L. Déry (Treasury Board of Canada, 1996). See Learning Resource Network at <http://resapp.gc.ca/eng/index.htm>;
- “The Adult Learner: Strategies for Success” by R. Steinbach (CRISP Publications, 1993)—learning activities guide;
- “Learning in an Organizational Setting: The Public Service Context” by B. Dodge (Canadian Centre for Management Development, 1991). See Learning Resource Network at <http://resapp.gc.ca/eng/index.htm>;
- “Utiliser les techniques actives en formation: Exercices et documents” by J. Eiteington (Les éditions de l’organisation, 1990);
- “L’apprenant adulte, vers un nouvel art de la formation” by M. Knowles (Les éditions de l’organisation, 1990);
- “Self-directed Learning Readiness Scale: Learning Preference Assessment Set” by L. Guglielmo & P. Guglielmo (Organizational Learning Resources, 1991).

Visit a web site, such as either of the following. These two web sites, in particular, are excellent sources of information and resources to facilitate self-development within the context of the Public Service of Canada.

- The Learning Resource Network, at <http://resapp.gc.ca>. “The Learning Resource Network was created as a single window on learning for the federal public service of Canada. Its goal is to help users to find relevant resources and services, to establish and maintain contact

with public servants, organizations and communities interested in learning.”

- The Leadership Network web site, at <http://leadership.gc.ca>. The mandate of The Leadership Network is “to promote, develop and support networks of leaders throughout the Public Service of Canada, and to assist them in the ongoing challenge of *La Relève*”.

Take a course such as:

- “Creating a Career in Today’s Public Service” (see <http://learnnet.gc.ca/eng/lrncentr/online/career/index.html>);
- “Continuous Learning. An Investment in You” (<http://learnnet.gc.ca/eng/index.htm>);

Use various tools for your own development such as:

- “On-line self-assessment tool and personal learning/development plan” (see: <http://learnnet.gc.ca/eng/comcentr/manage/profile/intro-e.htm>);
- “Leadership and Learning Guide (see http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/ldr/lrngu_e.html)
- “My Personal Learning Plan” (see <http://leadership.gc.ca>)
- “Personal Learning Plan” (see: <http://leadership.gc.ca>)
- “SpaceColonyH”(English only) “SpaceColonyH is a non-violent psychologically-based, problem-solving leadership game set in space. It incorporates the insights of Hippocrates and it challenges you with making all day-to-day social and operational decisions. You are being sent to SpaceColonyH as the Temporary Executive Director and if you decide correctly, you will be voted as SpaceColonyH’s Permanent Executive Director”—see <http://www.spacecolony.com>;
- “Test Your Leading and Influencing Skills” (see: <http://www.aimmconsult.com/SamplePBA.html>);
- “RCMP Employee’s Handbook— Developing Your Learning Strategy” — available from RCMP <http://www.rcmp-learning.org/docs/e-book.htm>;
- “RCMP Supervisor’s Handbook — Helping Employees Develop a Learning Strategy” — available from RCMP http://www.rcmp-learning.org/docs/s_book.htm;

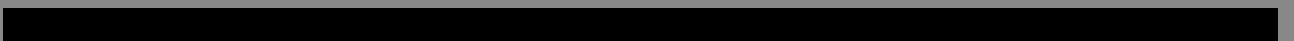
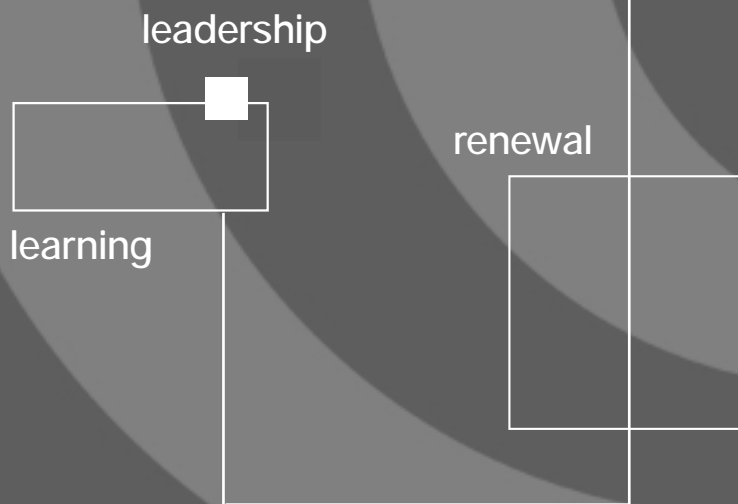


CAP

PART 2

Developmental Recommendations and Resources

preparing for tomorrow



COGNITIVE CAPACITY

Public Service Directors must be able to analyze and understand the complexities associated with planning and organizing multiple operations. Their role requires them to simultaneously monitor many problems and developments, ranging from day-to-day problems to broader issues. Directors must be able to quickly come to terms with complex problems, focusing attention on the most critical elements, and considering both broader organizational and policy issues as well as more immediate operational considerations. Directors must blend an in-depth analysis with operational expertise to provide practical advice to senior management.

Directors will encounter difficulties if they allow themselves to become mired in the details of operations or policy, instead of stepping back and looking at the larger picture. Some Directors may not acknowledge the greater complexity or risk associated with the decisions they make, giving insufficient consideration to the relevant issues before choosing their course of action. Others may become paralyzed by over-analysis if they have difficulty making decisions in the face of uncertainty. Finally, executives will limit their ability to deal with complex, new information if they do not continually expose themselves to a broad range of experiences, perspectives and ideas.

- **Analyzing issues**

Don't rush important decisions. Unless circumstances make it impossible, generate a number of different solutions before making a decision, rather than going with the first one that comes to mind. Develop the discipline to properly evaluate a decision, and resist the urge to act quickly for short term gain.

Gather information before making important decisions. Speak to others involved in the issues, research and read as necessary and feasible to allow you to grasp both the immediate and broader implications of your decisions.

Evaluate different outcomes. Examine the likely outcomes of different potential solutions. Consider how the alternatives you face would affect each of the key stakeholders; employees, clients, other divisions within your organization, etc. Think about the different alternatives from the perspective of your organization's mandate. Examine the pros and cons of each alternative, and use that information to help establish the course of action with the greatest payoff.

- **Dealing with multiple problems simultaneously**

Deal with simple problems quickly. Effective executives must know how to deal with a variety of problems, from simple ones to much more complex issues, but should be spending the majority of their time on the latter. Find and master a routine that will allow you to deal with

the simple day-to-day problems quickly and effectively; this will limit the issues you need to keep track of to a manageable number. If you find yourself unable to make simple decisions without delay, consult decision-making experts for techniques that can help you replace delaying tactics with more decisive behaviour. Executives who are effective problem-solvers use tactics such as delegating simple problems to their staff and using "rules of thumb" that they have developed over the years to deal with simple problems quickly and effectively without going into in-depth analysis. They develop a repertoire of responses or solutions to deal with familiar problematic situations.

Attempt to solve multiple problems with a single solution. One way of dealing with an overload of multiple problems is to look for one solution that can address more than one problem. Another possibility is to use a specific problem as a vehicle for raising the basic issue that the problem represents. It is important to constantly look for linkages amongst problems instead of treating them individually. When you are faced with multiple problems, look for commonalities that will let you come up with a single generic solution.

Beware of over-analysis. Do not allow yourself to be “paralyzed” by indecision or over-analysis when you are unsure about a decision. You will quickly reach a point of diminishing returns in analyzing a decision. Set clear timelines for making the decision, then consider the information available to you, generate and evaluate a number of different options, and make your decision.

• **Managing complexity**

Acknowledge the complexity, ambiguity and risk of senior-level decision-making.

Recognize that executives must go beyond handling simple, well-structured, and predefined problems and develop their skills to handle dynamic complexity. As an executive, the decisions you make will have broader implications and will be influenced by more factors than those encountered at lower organizational levels. You will necessarily have to accept that decisions will frequently carry greater risk and that you may have less control over the factors that influence outcomes.

Break problems down into their components.

You may find that one large problem can be solved by addressing smaller issues in a stepwise manner. This will allow for ongoing monitoring of your approach, and allow you to modify it as necessary.

Do not shy away from complexity.

Approach your quest for understanding with an open mind; don't let the inherent complexity of information be a factor in your decision as to whether or not it is relevant.

Seek input from those close to complex issues.

Do not attempt to approach complex issues single-handedly. For example, managers who have been working directly with specific issues will have had the opportunity to form a perspective that you can benefit from, and may have key information at their fingertips.

Seek simple solutions. Never exclude the possibility that there may be simple solutions to complex problems.

Seek workable solutions. Try to project how solutions will work when implemented, looking at how different areas and different people would be affected.

Ask “what-if” questions. When you are dealing with complex issues, regularly ask yourself “what-if” questions and visualize the different possible outcomes of the situations you face or the actions you are considering.

Take a step back. Moving into an executive-level position requires that you look at issues from a broader, corporate perspective and step away from operational details associated with specific projects or product lines.

Examine the context. Be aware that issues do not occur in a vacuum; interpret issues in their context, paying due attention to their implications and relationships with other issues. It is always beneficial to look beyond immediate dimensions of existing problems and attempt to identify the ways in which seemingly separate issues are connected to one another.

Learn from others. Ask respected colleagues about their own approaches to complex issues and decisions. Learning different people's approaches will broaden your own repertoire of strategies and allow you to be more flexible in your approach to problems.

• **Broadening your base of knowledge and experiences**

Expose yourself to new information and new ways of approaching problems. To increase your confidence in your thinking skills and your comfort level in dealing with conceptual ideas, expose yourself to a broad range of abstract and philosophical issues. For example, take advantage of opportunities to discuss these types of ideas with individuals who you feel have good conceptual thinking skills. Executives who are effective problem solvers are constantly maintaining and sharpening their conceptual thinking skills by such activities as tackling complex problems, challenging “obvious truths”, and looking at problems from a number of angles and trying to come up with unique solutions.

Challenge yourself. Whenever possible, read books outside your field of expertise, attend academic lectures or management seminars and tackle “brain teasers” (e.g., chess, crossword puzzles, word problems, etc). These seemingly irrelevant activities will help you to maintain conceptual thinking skills that you can apply to problems that arise in your job.

Strive to be curious, flexible, future-oriented, positive, open to new ideas and well-rounded in terms of knowledge and experience: these are the characteristics typically associated with good strategic thinkers.

• **Related competencies**

Stronger **Action Management** skills will minimize the need to deal with multiple issues simultaneously. This should allow the individual to focus his or her Cognitive Capacity pro-actively on new challenges, rather than on unresolved issues.

Creativity and Behavioural Flexibility. An open mind and a willingness to seek new approaches, ideas and solutions can complement “raw” thinking skills. These competencies can help to simplify complex problem-solving and decision-making by opening up the range of potential solutions.

• **Learning on the job**

Seek an assignment in a policy development function, or on a project or cross-functional team where you will be responsible for dealing with highly complex issues.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- “Competitive strategy and leadership: a guide to superior performance” by William G. Forgang (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001);
- “Managing from clarity: identifying, aligning, and leveraging strategic resources” by James L. Ritchie-Dunham and Hal T. Rabbino (Wiley, 2001);
- “Essential Challenges of Strategic Management” by William B. Rouse (Wiley, 2001);
- “Using Your Executive Coach” by E. Wayne Hart and Karen Kirkland (Centre for creative Leadership, 2002);

- “Comprendre et gérer les risques majeurs” by Hélène Denis (1998);
- “Le modèle de l'apprentissage actif: Innovation et partenariat” by Rainer Anderson (1996);
- “Solving Problem Solving: A Potent Force for Effective Management” by R. Flood (Wiley, 1995);
- “Crisis Management ...Within a Political Environment” by Stonehaven Productions (Government of Canada, 1995);
- “The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook” by Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Senge and Smith (Doubleday, 1994);
- “The Ideal Problem Solver: A Guide for Improving Thinking, Learning and Creativity” by John Bransford (W.H. Freeman, 1993);
- “Step-by-Step Problem Solving: A Practical Guide to Ensure Problems Get (and Stay) Solved” by R. Chang and K. Kelly (Richard Chang Associates, 1993) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. MI37) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “The Unbounded Mind” by Ian I. Mitroff (H.A. Linstone, 1991);
- “Outils de développement cognitif” by Evelyne Deret et al., (Harmattan, 1991);
- “Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid” by D.R. Hofstadter (Vintage Books, 1989);
- “Stratégie, structure, décision, identité : Politique générale d'entreprise” by Strategor (InterEditions, 1988);
- “The Strategy Process” by James Quinn, Henry Mintzberg and Robert James (Prentice Hall, 1988);
- “Six Thinking Hats” by Edward de Bono (Penguin, 1985);
- “Problem Solving for Managers” by W. Roth (Praeger, 1985);

Take a course, such as:

- “Developing the Strategic Leader: Thinking, Acting, Influencing” offered by the Center for Creative Leadership. (See <http://www.ccl.org/programs/dsl/index.html>).
- “Leading People Through Transitions” offered by the Center for Creative Leadership. (See <http://www.ccl.org/programs/lptt/index.html>).

Take a philosophy course.

CREATIVITY

As the primary link between senior management and the working level in the Public Service, Directors play a key role in fostering creativity within their organization and translating innovative ideas to more senior levels for approval and implementation. Directors can have an enormous impact on the “collective creativity” within their division by fostering a culture that values and promotes creativity within their division, by allocating time and resources in support of innovative initiatives, and by setting an example with their own approaches to program delivery and policy development. For example, when presented with innovative solutions, Directors evaluate their viability without being bound by traditional or “time-honoured” practices. Directors realize the importance of a continuous learning environment to organizational creativity, and work to ensure that learning and development are ongoing priorities within their division.

Directors will be less effective if they are overly committed to seeking traditional solutions within the boundaries of the “box” that is defined by the existing Public Service bureaucracy, or if they tend to shun novel or innovative ideas. In addition, the creativity of both the Director and their division will suffer if they fail to engage in and promote an ongoing process of learning and development, or if they do not foster a culture where the cutting edge is valued. Finally, Directors will limit their ability to go beyond the preexisting parameters of problems, and may take a very narrow view of problems if they do not continually expose themselves to a broad range of experiences, perspectives and ideas.

- **Fostering creativity in yourself and your staff**

Recognize the need for creative solutions.

Long-standing, seemingly intractable problems are the ones in most need of completely new approaches. When you recognize these kinds of problems, attempt to use creative problem-solving techniques such as brainstorming to address them. Force yourself to go beyond variations on the kinds of solutions that have been used unsuccessfully in the past.

Foster creativity in your organization. Foster an environment in your organization that: (1) encourages creativity in its employees; (2) values cutting edge solutions and calculated risk-taking; (3) provides opportunities for employees to engage in continuous learning; and (4) rewards its employees for taking advantage of learning opportunities.

Seek out and retain creative employees.

Getting the “wild ducks” in your organization to fly in formation can pose its own set of challenges. However, effectively managing these employees also has its own rewards, one of which can be a boost in the collective creativity of the entire organization. (See “How to manage wild ducks”, by Beverly Geber, in the May 30, 1990 issue of *Training*).

Encourage constructive criticism. Encourage employees to challenge each others’ ideas and solutions in a positive and constructive manner.

Suspend critical thinking. Suspend critical thinking in the early stages of creative problem-solving. Use a creative group problem-solving technique such as brainstorming more often in situations where you are seeking an innovative solution to a problem. In the first phase of a brainstorming session, you should give emphasis to the quantity of ideas generated, rather than their quality or practicality. This will encourage participants to broaden their outlook on the problem, and to eliminate the inhibitions that may constrain them under more conventional circumstances. Once you have listed as many ideas as can be generated, the group can begin to address the question of which ones could actually be implemented, and which of those possibilities offers the best solution.

Maintain a positive mind set. View problems as challenges to be engaged, not a hinderance to be endured.

Beware of over-using your creativity. While it is important to recognize the value of creativity and to foster it in yourself and your organization, it is also important to find a balance between pursuing new ideas and approaches and implementing the ones you have already generated. It is possible to reach a point of diminishing returns when exploring avenues that will have a marginal impact or that go outside the boundaries of the vision or core organizational values.

Schedule time to be creative. Don't expect that innovative solutions will come automatically; allocate resources to them, including your own time. If you don't feel you can make the time, visit a website such as the John F. Kennedy School of Government's "Innovation in American Government" web site (see Suggested Resources) to get a sense of the impact that outstanding creative solutions can have.

- **Changing the way you view and think about problems**

Make a deliberate effort. Acknowledge that creativity is an active process that can be fostered in a deliberate manner. Many creative people don't spontaneously generate innovative solutions and trend-setting ideas. They recognize that creativity is a skill to be developed and exploited, they embrace methods or techniques that facilitate their creative process, and they actively exert the effort required to employ those methods when solving problems.

Challenge your first impressions. Ask for feedback from others on situations where you are overly opinionated or rigid in your thinking. Question your "first impressions", snap decisions and "knee-jerk" reactions. Actively attempt to view problems from the perspectives of different stakeholders (e.g. partners, clients, suppliers), particularly at the early stages of problem-solving.

Identify problems that are amenable to creative solutions. Creative problem solving is most effectively used to deal with problems that are ambiguous and difficult to anticipate, rather than problems that are more well defined and predictable.

Look for pre-existing solutions. Acknowledge that being creative does not necessarily require identifying solutions that did not exist before. Drawing upon pre-existing solutions is a legitimate means of problem solving, provided that it goes beyond simply "reinventing the wheel" and that you do not limit yourself to a narrow domain in your search for relevant ideas. When drawing upon existing information, identify the elements that are relevant to your needs and build upon them.

"Think outside the box". Do not seek solutions exclusively from within the pre-existing parameters of a problem. Challenge ingrained assumptions, "common sense" solutions and "obvious truths".

Ask more questions. If you do not understand why things are the way they are, ask people. If nobody can explain the reason why the status quo is as it is, it may be time to look into changing it.

Change your scenery. Oftentimes, simply being in a different environment will allow you to shed pre-existing mindsets that interfere with the creative process.

Actively engage in a process of continuous learning. Take every opportunity to read both within and beyond your normal field of expertise. At every available opportunity, attend academic seminars, professional workshops and continuing education courses. Broadening your realm of professional and intellectual experience will provide you with a greater repertoire of ideas and perspectives upon which you may draw when attempting to generate creative solutions.

• **Related competencies**

While there are many aspects of Creativity that can be developed and actively nurtured, there will always be some individuals who are more able than others to generate new ideas and present unique perspectives on issues. Use your **Action Management** and **Teamwork** skills to benefit most from these individuals.

Aspects of **Behavioural Flexibility** such as the ability to learn from others and a tendency to be open-minded and seek out alternate approaches are closely related to Creativity. Behavioural Flexibility can be used to complement strong Creativity, or to leverage your efforts to develop it.

• **Learning on the job**

Seek an assignment in a new organization with a sketchy mandate and plenty of room for innovations.

Work in a voluntary organization that must find creative ways to survive.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books about history, philosophy, the arts, culture, science etc. Continually strive to broaden your horizons!

Read books such as:

- *"Smart things to know about innovation and creativity"* by Dennis Sherwood (Capstone, 2001);
- *"Leading for Innovation and Organizing for Results"* edited by Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, Iain Somerville (Jossey-Bass, 2001);
- *"Positive Turbulence: Developing Climates for Creativity, Innovation, & Renewal"* by S. Grysiewicz (Jossey-Bass, 1999);
- *"Mener ses interventions autrement: à la découverte d'un processus pour y parvenir"* by Michel Boisvert (Human Resources, Government of Québec, 1999);
- *"The Inventive Organisation: Hope and Daring at Work"* by Jill Janov (Jossey-Bass, 1994);
- *"Serious Creativity: Using the Power of Lateral Thinking to Create New Ideas"* by Edward De Bono (Harper Collins, 1993);

- *"Breaking Through: Creative Problem Solving Using Six Successful Strategies"* by T. Logsdon (Addison-Wesley, 1993);
- *"Generating Creativity and Innovation in Large Bureaucracies"* by Robert L. Kuhn (Quorum Books, 1993);
- *"The Creative Manager: Finding Inner vision and Wisdom in Uncertain Times"* by P. Russell (Jossey-Bass, 1992);
- *"Managing Creativity"* by John C. Kao (Prentice Hall, 1991);
- *"Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging Adults to Explore Alternative Ways of Thinking"* by S. Brookfield (Jossey-Bass, 1991);
- *"A Whack on the Side of the Head"* by Roger von Oech (Warner Books, 1990);
- *"Adaptors and Innovators"* by Michael Kirton (Routledge, 1989);
- *"The Creative Manager"* by P. Russell (Unwin, 1989);
- *"Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid"* by D.R. Hofstadter (Vintage Books, 1989);
- *"Six Thinking Hats"* by Edward de Bono (Penguin, 1985);
- *"The Creative Edge: How to Foster Innovation Where You Work"* by William C. Miller (Addison-Wesley, 1987);
- *"Le leadership"* by James J. Cribbin (Les Éditions de l'homme, 1986).

Visit an Internet site, such as the John F. Kennedy School of Government's "Innovations in American Government" site at: (<http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/innovations/index.html>) Read the document "10 Lessons from Innovations" at (<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/~innovat/10less.html>) by Alan Altshuler.

Take a course such as:

- "Creating Team Innovation", "Leading Creatively" or "Targeted Innovation", offered by the Center for Creative Leadership (see <http://www.ccl.org>);
- "Comment innover dans votre organisation", offered by École nationale d'administration publique (see <http://enap.quebec.ca>).

VISIONING

A vision is a statement of a realistic and credible future state that is desired. A vision will have value to an organization to the extent that (1) the future state envisioned is desirable and clearly and compellingly elucidated, (2) the path to be taken to reach that state is well defined and realistic, and (3) the vision conforms to the core values upon which the organization is based.

People are more productive when they have a clear idea of what is expected of them, both in the immediate future and the long term. A well articulated organizational vision should help to foster a sense of purpose in employees, encourage the achievement of goals, and provide a context within which employees can make sound decisions regarding the priorities of various issues. In the Public Service of Canada, it is the responsibility of Directors to work with their management team and staff to implement the vision of their organization, and to communicate that vision in a manner that gains the interest and enthusiasm of their staff. Inherent in this responsibility is the requirement that senior executives model a commitment to the organizational vision. This is accomplished by ensuring that the activities of the organization are consistent with the vision, and by identifying new ways to further the vision within their organization. It is the responsibility of all senior managers to articulate the relationship between the policies and programs they implement and the organizational vision that they champion with their words.

Executives with a developmental need in Visioning may feel uncomfortable promoting their organization's vision, or may have difficulty inspiring others to pursue the vision. They may, for example, have difficulty relating a complex organizational strategy in terms simple and clear enough to allow others to understand, embrace and develop enthusiasm for it. Directors play a vital role in translating the vision of the organization into concrete action at the working level; as such, a Director who isn't constantly striving to relate the organization's vision to the work of his or her own division will miss opportunities to align or re-align work to respond to changes in organizational direction. In many cases, executives may simply fail to appreciate the importance of their role as champions of their organization's vision. In the extreme, an executive may openly express cynicism toward an articulated organizational vision.

- **Understanding and embracing the vision of the organization**

Embrace the vision. Make a commitment to understand the vision of the Public Service and your organization. Define the mandate of your division in terms of the broader vision of your organization, and promote the vision of your organization both within your organization and externally.

Model a commitment to the vision. Speak enthusiastically about your organization's vision. Put forward projects and programs that will facilitate its attainment, and explain your decisions, and those of your organization in terms of how they will contribute to achieving the vision.

Review your division's mandate. Ensure that your division's mandate is consistent with the vision of your organization. If it isn't, how might it be redefined to better reflect the vision and current direction of your organization?

Participate in organization-wide visioning exercises. Take opportunities to sit on organization-wide committees, or participate in activities that are related to defining or implementing the vision. These could include committees charged with establishing core values, defining or re-defining the vision, or reviewing work processes to ensure alignment with the vision.

- **Using the vision as a framework for management activities**

Use the vision as a framework for action. When setting targets and expectations for your division or the individual units that comprise it, the vision of the organization should serve as your primary framework or "compass". When there has been a shift in the direction of your organization as a whole, consider launching a review of your division's activities to establish the extent to which they need to be re-aligned. Involve your management team and staff to the extent possible.

Examine alignment. Periodically examine the degree to which your organization's programs and policies are aligned with the organization's vision and that of the Public Service of Canada in general.

Look for opportunities to further the vision. Even when your division's activities are in general alignment with that of the organization, there may be opportunities to better serve the vision by re-aligning resources, shifting priorities or exploring entirely new avenues (within the boundaries of your mandate). Ask for input from management and staff. Engage employees through brainstorming exercises. Use a retreat as a means to focus your staff's energies on future directions without the distractions of day-to-day responsibilities.

Seek input from your clients. The people you serve should be front and centre in the definition of your organization's mandate and your division's medium and long-term goals. Ask them where they would like to see you, and the services you provide, in the medium and long-term future.

- **Communicating and promoting commitment to the vision**

Remember that actions speak louder than words. While it is important to communicate the vision through the spoken and written word, you will likely have a greater impact by modelling the kinds of visioning behaviours you are encouraging in others. When delegating activities or relating decisions, incorporate the language of your organization's vision into your own language so that others can see the link between the vision and your actions.

Promote ownership of the vision. Actively promote wide ownership of your organization's vision. Take steps to build enthusiasm for the vision both within your team and with peers and clients. As a starting point, you may wish to ensure that your employees have a copy of the mission statement and mandate of your organization.

Communicate the vision in compelling terms. In order to gain the commitment of employees and other key stakeholders, it is crucial that you present a vision in such a way that they will embrace it as a truly desirable future state which they want to achieve. It is

necessary, therefore, that they understand why it is a desirable goal, and that they believe that it is attainable. Only then are they likely to freely and enthusiastically contribute their energy to working towards the vision's attainment.

Discuss the vision with staff. Promote and engage in group discussion, brainstorming and roundtable processes to help develop and maintain commitment to the vision of your organization. Engage subordinates in such processes as a means of promoting focus on, commitment to, and understanding of, the vision toward which they should be working.

Communicate the vision to new staff. Similarly, consider providing information sessions for new employees to ensure that they are aligned with the direction of the organization from the very beginning. It is important that new employees at all levels are able to place their activities in the context of organizational priorities.

Encourage staff to think about their work in terms of the vision. Encourage your employees at all levels to speak about how their work contributes to the attainment of the organization's vision in concrete terms — or how it could be made to do so.

Embrace and promote the value of change. The realization of a vision requires, at the most basic level, a desire to bring about change. Encourage the expression of new ideas that will facilitate the attainment of your division's goals and the vision of your organization as a whole.

- **Related competencies**

Aspects of Visioning that require the ability to think strategically and foresee obstacles and opportunities, are related to both **Cognitive Capacity** and **Action Management**.

Visioning, particularly at the Director level, requires one to embrace and promote core organizational values; this is related to the **Ethics and Values** competency.

• Learning on the job

Seek a “fix-it” assignment where the mandate and mission of the organization are under review and require redefinition or realignment with the broader organizational or Public Service vision.

Participate in an organization-wide visioning exercise.

• SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Subscribe to “Leadership Strategies” newsletter. Information and a sample issue available at <http://www.briefings.com/ls/index.html>

Read the report of the Deputy Ministers’ Task Force, “A Planning Tool for Thinking About the Future of the Public Service” (1996) (available at CCMD web site at <http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca>).

Read books such as:

- “Understanding organizational evolution: its impact on management and performance” by Douglas Scott Fletcher and Ian M. Taplin (Quorum Books, 2002);
- “Managing from clarity: identifying, aligning, and leveraging strategic resources” by James L. Ritchie-Dunham and Hal T. Rabbino (Wiley, 2001);
- “Essential Challenges of Strategic Management” by William B. Rouse (Wiley, 2001);
- “Leadership and Spirit: Breathing New Vitality and Energy into Individuals and Organizations” by R. Moxley (Addison-Wesley, 1999);
- “Gung Ho! Turn On the People in Any Organization” by Blanchard and Bowles (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “La conquête du travail” by W. Bridges (Village Mondial, 1995);
- “Managing for the Future” by Alf Chattell (St. Martin’s Press, 1995);

- “Competing for the Future: Breakthrough Strategies for Seizing Control of Your Industry and Creating the Markets of Tomorrow” by Hamel and Prahalad (Harvard Business School Press, 1995);
- “Visionary Leadership” by Burt Nanus (Jossey-Bass, 1992);
- “Vision in Action: How to Integrate Your Company’s Strategic Goals into Day-to-Day Management Decisions” by Tregoe, Zimmerman, Smith and Tobia (Simon and Shuster, 1990);
- “The Transformational Leader” by Tichy and Devanna (John Wiley and Sons, 1990);
- “The Charismatic Leader: Behind the Mystique of Exceptional Leadership” by Jay A. Conger (Jossey-Bass, 1989);
- “The Strategist CEO: How Visionary Executives Build Organizations” by M. Robert (Quorum, 1988);
- “The Operations Manager: Leadership in Action” (Public Service Commission, 1987);
- “Strategic Management Skills” by Power, Gannon, McGinnis and Schweiger (Addison-Wesley, 1986);
- “Diriger: les secrets des meilleurs leaders” by Bennis and Nanus (InterÉditions, 1985).

Watch a video such as:

- “The Power of Vision” by Joel Barker (Charthouse International Learning Corporation, 1990);
- “Préparer un changement” by Claude Ouellet (Le groupe CFC).

Take a course such as:

- “Developing the Strategic Leader: Thinking, Acting, Influencing” offered by the Center for Creative Leadership (see <http://www.ccl.org>);
- “Le gestionnaire visionnaire: le leader de demain” offered by l’École nationale d’administration publique;
- “Coaching for Breakthroughs and Commitment” offered by CCMD (see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/programs/coaching/index_e.html).
- On-line courses: “Communicating a Shared Vision” and “A Model for Leadership from Within” offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)

ACTION MANAGEMENT

The achievement of expected results through the successful and timely delivery of policies, products or services is the ultimate yardstick of performance for Public Service organizations. Directors contribute to this objective by orchestrating the work of their division to provide structure and momentum to its key activities. A Director requires strong Action Management skills to be able to (1) assign and monitor resources to individual projects or product lines, (2) integrate the activities of multiple units and (3) implement and oversee change as necessary to respond to shifts in organizational priorities or direction. Directors fulfil this ambitious role through the effective management of monetary, physical and human resources. Given their scope of responsibility, they must be particularly adept at maximizing the human potential of their division. This requires strong delegation skills and a willingness to trust their managers with responsibility and accountability. It also requires Directors to be attuned to both current and projected human resource needs and to be able to respond quickly when they change.

Directors will demonstrate less effective action management skills if they miss opportunities to take action or fail to deliver expected results in a timely manner. There are many possible causes of inaction or a failure to deliver; they can include inadequate or inappropriate allocation of resources, procrastination, over-analysis or excessive perfectionism. On the other hand, while most Directors appreciate the importance of having a sound rationale for the actions they and their organizations take, some may consider only one side of the issue when making a decision, or may take actions without preparing alternatives such as back-up plans that may be implemented if circumstances change or new information becomes available. Another common tendency of less experienced executives is to become overly involved in the hands-on functioning of their division. This can lead to an excessive workload for the Director and disempowerment of employees. It may also make it difficult for the Director to see the larger picture and guide the overall direction of the division.

- **Orchestrating the work of the division**

Step back from the details. While it is certainly not unusual for a Director to have hands-on involvement with specific projects, it is important to be selective about doing so. In general, you should be more focussed on integrating the activities within your division than on managing work. It is simply not possible for a Director to have direct and ongoing involvement in all of the work within his or her division. The end result of such over-involvement will be an inability to see the larger picture, a disempowered staff, and the spectre of burnout.

Think in terms of systems. Rather than managing in terms of individual projects or activities, try to incorporate systems thinking into your management regime. Map out the relationships between different units and activities in your division. Study the ways they relate to each other, both in theory and in practice. Ask yourself how you can improve the match between the theory and the practice. With the involvement of your management team, explore alternative ways in which the parts of your organization might relate to each other to optimize efficiency or effectiveness.

Align your actions with the vision. Action Management should take place within the context of a well-defined strategy that is aligned with the vision of the organization. Ensure that you have a clear understanding of your organizational strategies, and be sure to set aside time for establishing specific goals and objectives within the context of those strategies. Generate a list of major goals and objectives you would like to accomplish in the next year and identify the intermediate objectives you will have to meet in order to attain the major goals.

Involve your management team. Before developing action plans, your management team should have a good understanding of their strategic context. Take every opportunity to discuss the organization's longer term strategies and more immediate goals with your management team.

Scan the environment. Look both for potential obstacles as well as opportunities. Develop plans to exploit the opportunities, and avoid or minimize the obstacles.

Delegate. Rely on your management team and staff to do the work. Trust them to be accountable for their areas of responsibility, and recognize that you should be concerned primarily with providing the overall structure.

Know when to get involved. Recognize that there are times when you will need to get more involved in the planning or operations of activities within your division. High profile or problematic projects, for example, may require your direct involvement. As appropriate, do not hesitate to use your authority, your connections, or your persuasive skills to provide the needed momentum to overcome obstacles.

Foster collaboration. There is probably nothing that will make your job as Director easier than having an organization that embraces teamwork and functions interdependently. Two pre-requisites to a collaborative organization are a positive, respectful working climate, and a well-understood common vision that everyone understands and believes in. If you can establish these two conditions, you may find that your division practically runs itself!

• **Managing tasks, time and people: delegation, planning and prioritizing**

Delegate responsibility, not tasks. When assigning areas of responsibility, focus on the results you expect, not the way you expect them to be achieved. Be clear about both the responsibility you are conveying, as well as the authority and accountability that go with it. Openly acknowledge that others are the experts in their respective areas of responsibility, and that your success as Director of your division depends on their expertise.

Delineate directions before communicating them. When you are delegating responsibility, try writing a clear statement of the purpose and objective(s) of your instructions. Include important timelines, and make clear whether or not you are expecting interim progress reports.

Follow up. Discuss your directions with staff to make sure that they understand them and to address any additional needs for information that arise. If your staff are frequently coming to you to seek clarification after you have assigned responsibilities to them, or if you often have staff submitting finished products that are not what you wanted, you may need to improve the quality of the directions you provide.

Set up cross-functional teams. For projects that require a broader range of accountability or expertise, establish cross-functional teams. If the team is composed of individuals with the right blend of skills, expertise and accountability, it will function effectively, and allow you to limit your own direct involvement to your preferred level. It will also have the added benefit of helping to foster teamwork and build a sense of interdependence into your division’s mindset.

Plan pro-actively. Attempt, whenever possible, to integrate preventative remedies into your plans. This requires first identifying sources of risk, and then modifying your plans to include contingencies to respond to these risks. In the early stages of planning, identify all major tasks and critical decision points, and examine these elements individually for sources of risk. Categorize foreseeable problems as high or low risk, and target high risk areas by introducing contingency plans or buffer mechanisms. The latter might be as simple as maintaining more direct involvement and closer monitoring of high-risk components of a plan, or may involve the allocation of greater resources or more time to circumvent or offset the potential impact of more serious risks.

Be decisive. An essential component of effective action management is decisiveness. Remember that many difficult decisions must be made in the face of incomplete or ambiguous information. If you tend to avoid or delay making important decisions, set specific deadlines by which individual decisions should be made, and commit yourself to honouring them. Make a habit of dealing with minor decisions immediately. Avoid simply “uploading” problem issues to your superiors; present them with alternatives and recommendations, rather than problems to be solved.

“Choose your battles carefully”. You and your organization cannot do everything. Set priorities, and identify the courses of action that will have the greatest probability of success while providing the largest payoff for your organization. Evaluate potential courses of action against the mission of your organization and its vision for the future. Give high priority to issues that either further the realization of, or serve as potential roadblocks to, the direction in which you wish to take your organization.

• **Related competencies**

Visioning should provide the principle framework within which Action Management takes place. Not only should a Director’s actions be guided by the vision of the organization, but those actions will be more successfully implemented if the Director is able to inspire commitment to that mandate throughout the division’s staff.

Teamwork. Directors achieve most objectives through the collective efforts of many individuals. As such, a Director’s ability to accomplish objectives will depend on the extent to which he or she establishes an integrated, interdependent organization, and cultivates a spirit of collaboration among the individuals that comprise it.

Competencies like **Organizational Awareness, Interpersonal Relations** and **Communication** will all influence a Director’s ability to gain support for, and thus successfully implement, the initiatives of his or her division.

• **Learning on the job**

Seek an assignment in a line or regional operations function.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- "Roundtable Report: A Foundation for Developing Risk Management Learning Strategies in the Public Service" Chaired by Ian Shugart (CCMD, 2001) (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/publica/publi_e.html#ev)
- "Réaliser un changement" by Claude Ouellet and André Pellerin (Le groupe CFP, 1996);
- "Management Techniques for the Public Sector — Pulpit and Practice" by Christopher Pollitt (CCMD, 1995);
- "Crisis Management ... Within a Political Environment" produced by the Government of Canada (Stonehaven Inc., 1995);
- "The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning" by Henry Mintzberg (The Free Press, 1994);
- "Structured On-the-Job Training: Unleashing Employee Expertise in the Workplace" by Jacobs and Jones (Berrett-Koeler, 1994) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. OI25) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- "Powerful Planning with Simple Techniques" by St. Lawrence and Stinnett (1994) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. HR82) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- "Implementing Strategic Processes: Change, Learning and Cooperation" by Peter Lorange (Blackwell Business, 1993);
- "Career Survival: Strategic Job and Role Planning" by E. Schein (Pfeiffer and Company, 1993);
- "Sachez faire face aux changements qui vous touchent personnellement" by Cynthia Scott and Dennis Jaffe (Les Presses du Management, 1992);
- "Vision in Action: How to Integrate Your Company's Strategic Goals into Day-to-Day Management Decisions" by Tregoe, Zimmerman, Smith and Tobia (Simon and Shuster, 1990);
- "The Transformational Leader" by Tichy and Devanna (John Wiley and Sons, 1990);
- "L'action stratégique: Le management transformateur" by Roland Calori (Les Éditions d'Organisation, 1989);

- "The Practical Strategist: Business and Corporate Strategy for the 1990s" by R. Allio (Ballinger, 1988);
- "Making Strategy Work: How Senior Managers Produce Results" by Richard G. Hamermesh (Wiley, 1986);
- "La Délégation : Une secret d'une excellente gestion" by Auren Uris (Alexander Hamilton Institute, 1985);
- "Préparer un changement" by Claude Ouellet (Le groupe CFC).

Take a course such as:

- "Risk Management in the Public Service: An Overview" (see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/calendar_e.html)
- On-line courses: "Leadership Development: Delegation" and "Leadership Development: Goal Setting" offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)
- "Leading Transitions" offered by CCMD (see <http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca>);
- "Comment innover dans votre organisation" offered by École nationale d'administration publique (see <http://enap.quebec.ca>);
- "Gestion de projets: principes, démarche méthodes et techniques" offered by l'École nationale d'administration.

Watch a video such as:

- "Managing Knowledge: The Challenge of the XXI Century" by Drucker, Bennis, Negroponete, et al. (Groupe Innovation, 1996).

Subscribe to "Leadership Strategies" newsletter. Information and a sample issue available at <http://www.briefings.com/ls/index.html>

ORGANIZATIONAL AWARENESS

To be effective as an executive in the Public Service requires a sound understanding of the structure and decision-making process of both one's own organization and the larger Public Service environment. Directors require strong organizational awareness to be able to effectively position their own Division to best serve its mandate and achieve longer term objectives. The Director's role in overseeing the direction of a division requires a knowledge of key players and informal decision-making systems, and an ability to anticipate and influence the reactions of stakeholders to key initiatives. This, in turn, requires an ability to build, maintain and benefit from a network of relationships both within and beyond one's own organization.

There are a number of reasons why an executive may display a weakness in organizational awareness. One cause would be a lack of a clear understanding of the structure and decision-making process within one's own organization and/or the Public Service. However, some executives may have a very good understanding of the structure of their organization but fail to get their initiatives through because they do not nurture formal and informal working relationships or fail to consider the needs of key stakeholders. Still others have difficulty identifying and convincing key stakeholders to buy into their initiatives and thus tend to operate in isolation.

• **Acquiring organizational knowledge**

Scan the environment. As a Public Service executive you should be constantly scanning the environment both within and outside your organization:

- *Ensure that you keep up to date on everything there is to know about your organization by reading annual reports, relevant publications such as newsletters and available documents that outline strategic plans, organizational goals and philosophies.*
- *Ensure you are familiar with what other organizations (particularly partner organizations) are planning and doing that could affect your organization. Read their newsletters, visit their web sites and follow major developments through the news media.*
- *Make an ongoing effort be aware of the viewpoints of commentators on public policy in the news media, periodicals and professional journals.*
- *Establish a network of individuals who are in the know about current issues within the organization to keep you informed about how and when to launch your initiatives.*

• **Developing organizational relationships**

Recognize the importance of all your associates. Recognize that as an executive you are dependent on your clients, superiors, subordinates and other key people in your organization. Because you need their cooperation and help, you must develop influence with all of these individuals.

Establish a network. Establish a network of individuals both within and outside your organization who are, or are likely to become, key stakeholders. You can do this by making an effort to join organization-wide activities both at work (e.g., committees, task forces) and outside normal work hours (e.g., professional associations, social events) in order to meet more people who may be useful contacts.

Follow up with contacts. Once you have made an initial acquaintance with someone who may be a useful contact, make a point of following up with him or her to strengthen and maintain the contact. This could involve offering your assistance, seeking input or inviting the contact to a function. When appropriate, make a point of publicly supporting the initiatives of your contacts.

Find and benefit from a mentor. Seek out someone who holds your respect and who has demonstrated a sound understanding of the politics, personalities and informal networks associated with your organization.

- **Positioning your division within the larger organization**

Understand others' perspectives. To be most successful in anticipating and influencing the reactions of others to your initiatives, it is important to try to see issues and problems from their perspective. Beware the risks of making assumptions, and remind yourself that there is no better way to get inside someone's head than to ask them questions and listen openly to their answers.

Recognize the importance of timing. Be aware that timing is crucial to both the planning and the announcing of initiatives. Just as "the right message at the wrong time is the wrong message", the right initiative at the wrong time is the wrong initiative. For example, it is frequently a mistake to announce or launch a major action at a time when there is a larger initiative that will supersede it in terms of visibility and momentum. One means of managing this concern is to tie your own initiative to the larger one.

Develop a range of influencing styles. Different situations may be better served by different influencing styles. For example, whereas some situations may be well served through the use of direct authority, others may be better suited to a "transactional" influencing style that emphasizes shared interests.

Engage stakeholders in your initiatives. Make sure that you not only involve key stakeholders in your initiatives, but make them feel that they are a central part of the undertakings. Their involvement should be solicited early in the development of an initiative.

Build support for initiatives informally. Try to avoid presenting new ideas for the first time in formal settings. Building support behind the scenes will not only increase the chances of success when the initiative is first presented formally, but will reduce the likelihood that the announcement will cause embarrassment or that the initiative will be at cross-purposes with other initiatives within your organization or partner organizations.

Link your proposal to broader organizational priorities. When attempting to sell an initiative to key stakeholders, explain how the initiative will serve the current direction and priorities of the organization.

Champion your division. As the leader of a division, it is part of your role to make sure that it gets the necessary recognition and consideration on the broader corporate stage. Use both formal and informal channels to ensure that key stakeholders are aware of what your division has to offer and how it contributes to the priorities and direction of your organization.

Be wary of being overly "political". Strive for a balance in your actions between being overly political and paying insufficient attention to the importance of relationships with other stakeholders, whether they be individuals, groups or organizations.

- **Related competencies**

There is an interdependence between Organizational Awareness skills and **Teamwork and Partnering** skills, since to accomplish objectives and best position your own organization, you will need to work collaboratively with stakeholders both within and outside of your organization.

Your ability to establish a network of contacts and influence others will depend on competencies such as Interpersonal Relations and Communication.

- **Learning on the job**

Seek an assignment in a central agency where issues relate to many different departments and/or where there is significant exposure to the political level.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- "Why Leaders Can't Lead: The Unconscious Conspiracy Continues" by W. Bennis (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- "The Boundaryless Organization: Breaking the Chains of Organizational Structure" by Ron Ashkenas et al. (Jossey Bass, 1995);
- "It Takes Two: Managing Yourself When Working with Bosses and Other Authority Figures" by G. Boccialetti (Jossey Bass, 1995);
- "La conquête du travail" by W. Bridges (Village Mondial, 1995);
- "Working the Shadow Side: A Guide to Positive Behind-the-Scenes Management" by Gerard Egan (Jossey-Bass, 1994);
- "The Power of Ethical Persuasion: Winning Through Understanding at Work and at Home" by Tom Rusk and Patrick Miller (Penguin Books, 1994);
- "Networking Smart: How to Build Relationships for Personal and Organizational Success" by Wayne E. Baker (McGraw-Hill, 1994);
- "The Art of Mingling" by Jeanne Martinet (Thorsons Grapevine, 1993);
- "The New Organization: Growing the Culture of Organizational Networking" by Colin Hastings (McGraw-Hill, 1993);
- "Getting Things Done When You Are Not In Charge" by G. Bellman (Jossey Bass, 1993);
- "Styles de pouvoir" by Mike Burke (Dunod, 1992);
- "Organizational Culture and Leadership" by Edgar H. Schein (Jossey-Bass, 1992);
- "Pouvoir, leadership et autorité dans les organisations" by Pierre Collerette (University of Québec Press, 1991);
- "Les paradoxes du management. Des châteaux forts aux cloisons mobiles" by Isabelle Orgogozo (Les Éditions d'organisation, 1991);
- "The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills at Work" by P. Block (Jossey Bass, 1987).

Take a course such as:

- "Canada in the World" offered by CCMD (see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/public_sector/advanced_mgt/g205_e.html)
- On-line course: "Organizational Culture and Leadership " offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)
- "Structures and Operations of Government: Challenges for Accountability" offered by CCMD;
- "How Ottawa Works" offered by CCMD.

Bookmark and regularly peruse "Leaders Digest", an online publication that is part of the CCMD web site (<http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leaders.html>). This web site "Draws your attention to relevant articles, interviews and research papers you might have missed; reviews them in a way that accents the content most likely to interest a public service executive; provides you with the information that will help you locate the article, should you want it for your files."

Visit a web site, such as the "Learning Resource Network"/"Le Réseau des ressources d'apprentissage" (<http://Learnet.gc.ca>).

Regularly read trade journals, departmental and industry publications, newsletters, electronic bulletin boards and web sites, etc., from your organization, other government organizations and partner organizations and from the private and non-profit sectors.

Watch a video such as:

- "Managing Knowledge ... The Challenge of the XX1 Century" by Groupe Innovation (1997).

TEAMWORK

Today's public sector environment is, more than ever, dependent on the flow of information and expertise within and across organizations. Given this trend, a collaborative organizational environment that recognizes and encourages interdependence has become increasingly important. To promote this kind of working environment, the senior levels within the Public Service must be populated by individuals who appreciate the importance of cooperating with others both within and outside of their own organization. Directors play a crucial role in this regard. By promoting teamwork within their own division, Directors will help to ensure that their organization is built around principles of collaboration and interdependence at the working level. Furthermore, by modeling the same spirit of collaboration when interacting with fellow executives, Directors contribute to a seamless and cooperative working environment across their organization.

Directors will display a weakness in Teamwork if they put their own interests, or those of their division, ahead of the interests of the larger organization. This may result when a Director has a strong commitment to his or her own division's mandate and loses sight of the larger organizational perspective. Alternatively, a Director may prefer to act alone, even when communication and consultation with colleagues would result in the more seamless or efficient delivery of services. Within his or her own division, a Director may give insufficient attention to identifying interdependencies and opportunities for cross-functional collaboration, or may devote insufficient effort to promoting a common purpose and an environment of trust and open communication across units.

• Understanding interdependence

Recognize that teamwork isn't just about "teams". Particularly at higher levels in organizations, teamwork is about a philosophy of working with others in your organization more than it is about working with a defined "team" of individuals. Terms like "horizontality" and "interdependence" are more than just jargon. They have emerged because today's environment demands that organizations function in a truly integrated way. The increasing need for organization-wide systems for the management of information and specialized expertise, in particular, has led to greater interdependence among different sectors of organizations.

• Promoting teamwork within your division

Operate interdependently. Encourage managers to operate interdependently, rather than independently. Model this behaviour through your own willingness to air your ideas and plans with, and seek input from, your management team before finalizing them. Approach staff from the perspective of their expertise and the unique contribution they may have to your own ideas and plans. Encourage managers and staff to discuss their ideas with you, and be willing to provide constructive feedback when asked.

Develop a sense of common purpose.

Ensure that your staff and management team understand the mandate and direction of your division, and that everyone is working toward common objectives. By getting staff and management to buy into a common purpose you will help to create a unifying force that will benefit your division's productivity as well as contribute to a more positive organizational climate.

Foster a productive climate. Creating effective working relationships requires that you foster a climate that is conducive to cooperation between team members and that you identify opportunities to work jointly toward common goals.

Leverage your team members' strengths. Be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of your team members, and find ways to benefit from their strengths. This is equally important whether you are leading the team or are simply one member of a team.

Value diversity. Recognize that a diversity of experience and knowledge can only enhance the quality of a team's work.

- **Working collaboratively with other executives**

Find alternatives to power and authority as influencing strategies. When working across functional boundaries, your counterparts will typically be peers. In these situations, you will require skills in areas such as influencing, facilitating and negotiating. Start by identifying common goals and areas of common interest. Identify what you and others can contribute to the solution. Adopt a “give and take” mentality, but always recognize that broader organizational goals should take precedence over any one agenda.

Adopt a collaborative approach. Be aware of tendencies to be competitive as opposed to collaborative in working with others. Solicit feedback from a trusted colleague on issues such as whether you tend to push your own ideas aggressively rather than welcoming the ideas of others or act defensively rather than graciously when your ideas are subjected to criticism.

Recognize the costs of a competitive approach. It goes without saying that an uncooperative or competitive attitude will have a harmful effect on your organization’s ability to function as an integrated and efficient entity. However, the negative effects of an uncooperative approach will, in the long run, be felt most directly by you and your own division. You may end up being shut out of the loop by others. Ultimately, your influence on the organizational stage will be diminished.

Take the high road. When dealing with uncooperative colleagues, try to avoid getting caught up in battles or turf wars. Strive to use listening skills, a willingness to compromise and an even temper to navigate around conflicts that will only serve to worsen relationships and build barriers to teamwork.

Proactively identify opportunities to be helpful. Use formal and informal networks to maintain a line of communication into organizations with which you are working collaboratively. If an opportunity arises for your organization to assist another organization (for example, when you have information or expertise that might be beneficial), volunteer your help. Among Public Service organizations, this type of proactive behaviour shows awareness of others’ concerns

and builds solid relationships that will ultimately benefit the individual organizations and the Public Service as a whole.

Focus on service to the public. Continually remind yourself that service to the public is the primary responsibility of Public Service executives, and outweighs the agenda of their own organization.

- **Related competencies**

Partnering and **Teamwork** are closely related, since both are founded on the principle of interdependence, and the need for collaboration. The key difference between Teamwork and Partnering is that Partnering involves collaboration with non-Public Service of Canada organizations. These can include other levels of Government within Canada, foreign governments, international bodies, not-for-profit organizations and private sector organizations.

The ability to build a sense of common purpose within your own division will depend on **Visioning** and **Communication**.

The ability to demonstrate and foster Teamwork may require effective **Interpersonal Relations** in working with others.

- **Learning on the job**

Seek an assignment in a work environment known for its teamwork, or on an interdepartmental committee or task force whose success will depend upon the collaboration and cooperation of its members.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- “How to Form a Team: Five Keys to High Performance” by Kim Kanaga and Michael E. Kossler (Centre for Creative Leadership, 2002);
- “Effective Collaboration: Managing the Obstacles to Success” edited by Jens Genefke and Frank McDonald (Palgrave, 2001);
- “The power of collaborative leadership : lessons for the learning organization” by Bert Frydman (Butterworth-Heinemann, 2000);
- “Teamwork From Start to Finish: 10 Steps to Results!” by F. Rees (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “Strategic Networks: Creating the Borderless Organization” by J. C. Jarillo (Butterworth Heinemann, 1995);
- “Team Effectiveness and Decision Making in Organizations” by Guzzo and Salas (Jossey-Bass, 1995);
- “Values—Based Leadership: Rebuilding Employee Commitment, Performance and Productivity” by S.S. Kuczmarski and T.D. Kuczmarski (Prentice Hall, 1995);
- “The Skilled facilitator: Practical Wisdom For Developing Effective groups” by R.M. Schwarz (Jossey-Bass, 1994);
- “Cross-Functional Teams: Working with Allies, Enemies and Other Strangers” by G.M. Parker (Jossey-Bass, 1994);
- “Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self-Interest” by Peter Block (Berrett-Koehler, 1993);
- “Le leadership: ce qui différencie un véritable dirigeant d'un simple directeur” by J.J. Cribbin (Les Éditions de l'homme, 1986);

Engage in team building activities such as:

- “Teamwork and Teamplay: Games and Activities for Building and Training Teams” by Thiagarajan and Parker (Jossey-Bass, 1999);
- The Big Book of Team Building Games: Trust Building Activities, Team Spirit Exercises, and Other Fun Things To Do” by Newstrom and Scannell (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “The Team Building Source Book” by Phillips and Elledge (Pfeiffer, 1995).

Read the report of the Deputy Ministers’ Task Force on “Managing Horizontal Policy Issues” (1996) (available at CCMD web site at http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/pubs/pub-task_force_reports_e.html).

Watch a video such as:

- “Team Building: What Makes a Good Team Player?” (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “The Team Approach; (Kantola Productions, 1994) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. VIDQS020B) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or at e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca.
- “Bâtir une équipe” by Barbara S. Harrison (Performance Resources Limited, 1983).

Take a course such as:

- “Leadership and High-Performance Teams” offered by the Centre for Creative Leadership (see <http://www.ccl.org/programs/lhpt/index.html>)
- On-line courses: “Communicating a Shared Vision”, “A Model for Leadership from Within” and “Leadership Development: Motivation” offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)
- “La gestion d’équipes et de groupes de travail” or “Les équipes autogérées en appui à la gestion par résultats” (see <http://www.enap.quebec.ca>) offered by l’École nationale d’administration publique.

PARTNERING

Today's public sector environment is, more than ever, dependent on the flow of information and expertise within and across organizations. It is neither in the best interest, nor always possible, for Public Service organizations to function independently as autonomous entities. In addition to sharing information and expertise within and between Public Service organizations (see Teamwork competency), executives must realize the importance of partnerships with other public, private and non-profit organizations with whom they share common interests and objectives. The number and kind of partnerships, and the nature of a Director's involvement in them, can vary widely between different Public Service organizations and functions. However, all Directors must be aware of the importance of working in partnership with other organizations, and must be willing and able to actively foster relationships with partners. This involves many of the same collaborative skills as Teamwork, but may require even greater sensitivity to others' needs and more savvy in pursuing and managing key relationships. It also means that Directors must be constantly on the lookout for potential strategic relationships to enhance the organization's ability to achieve its mandate or streamline service to the public.

First and foremost, executives will demonstrate a learning need in Partnering if they fail to understand the importance of, or do not share the vision of, a Public Service that is founded in cooperative partnerships, alliances and coalitions. However, even if they do understand and support the values underlying partnering, they may display a weakness if they: do not strive to build and maintain a network of contacts in key organizations with whom they have shared interests; withhold key information from partners or potential partners; put their own interests ahead of the greater good; allow their interactions with partners or potential partners to be driven more by differences and competing interests than by shared interests; do not effectively communicate key aspects of their own agenda to potential partner organizations; do not actively foster a spirit of partnership with other organizations.

- **Understanding partnering**

- **Recognize that we can't do it all on our own.**

- The need to share knowledge, expertise and information is not new. However, the "information age" has magnified the need to the point where organizations that attempt to operate independently put their very survival in jeopardy. The benefits of partnership are many. Included among them are: increased efficiency through the elimination of duplication; increased resiliency and adaptability to change; greater ability to focus on the core aspects of one's own organization's mandate and, hence, sharpen the "thin edge of the wedge"; the ability to benefit from different perspectives of others.

- **Working collaboratively with partners**

- **Build the foundation informally.** An essential ingredient in fostering effective partnerships is the creation of a climate that is conducive to cooperation between organizations and the identification of opportunities to work jointly toward common goals:

- *Recognize that your peers in outside organizations can be a valuable source of new information and perspectives and that they can share how they have handled situations similar to yours.*
 - *Call people in outside organizations to ask for information, discuss ideas or seek advice. Most people will be eager to help you and share their ideas with you.*
 - *Conversely, you should be willing to help your colleagues from outside organizations when they come to you for information or advice.*

- **Identify the partner's needs.** When listening to the concerns of outside organizations, it may be necessary to distinguish what they say they want from what they actually need to achieve. In many cases your organization may be able to deliver the latter without being bound by the specifics of the former. For example, outside organizations may predicate their requests on an incomplete understanding of the range of mechanisms available to address an issue (e.g., drafting new legislation versus changing regulations). It is the responsibility of executives to develop a range of alternative solutions that can balance interests and meet the higher objectives that are the basis of more specific requests.

Build give-and-take relationships. Recognize that healthy partnerships will be based on “what we can do for each other” rather than “what you can do for me”.

- *Identify the resources you can offer to others, and state them up front. Ask all the necessary questions of your partners, and determine what they have to offer up front. Investigate issues thoroughly before entering into partnerships.*
- *Be prepared to compromise. Sometimes, in order to achieve the benefit of a cooperative approach to shared interests, it is necessary to compromise on secondary issues. Before you begin to negotiate with potential partners, classify issues according to whether they are (i) “must have”, (ii) in your best interests but not essential, or (iii) can be dropped without significantly hurting your position. Identify issues that fall into the latter category and be prepared to drop them in the early stages of negotiations as a conciliatory gesture.*

- **Seeking opportunities for partnerships**

Start with the vision. Decisions about pursuing partnerships should be structured around your organization’s mandate, direction, and priorities. Invest in the partnerships that will best serve your organization’s vision.

Involve your management team. When exploring the possibility of a partnership with another organization, keep managers at all levels informed, and seek their input. Line managers may have valuable input because of their more immediate relationship with many of the activities that may benefit from cooperative relationships with other organizations.

Nurture and benefit from networks. Use formal and informal networks to maintain a line of communication into potential partner organizations. If an opportunity for your organization to be of assistance to another organization arises (for example, when you have information or expertise that might be beneficial), consider volunteering your help. This type of proactive behaviour indicates an awareness of others’ concerns, builds solid relationships, and encourages the formation of the kinds of partnerships that will ultimately improve your organization’s capacity to serve the public.

Join industry and Public Service organizations in your area of expertise and take all available opportunities to attend meetings and conferences.

Read newspapers, professional newsletters and journals. Be informed on the issues relevant to partner, or potential partner, organizations.

- **Related competencies**

Partnering and **Teamwork** are closely related, since both are founded on the principle of interdependence, and the need for collaboration. The key difference between Teamwork and Partnering is that Partnering involves collaboration with non-Public Service of Canada organizations. These can include other levels of Government within Canada, foreign governments, international bodies, not-for-profit organizations and private sector organizations.

Partnerships are typically pursued within the context of a strategic plan. In recognizing the opportunities to further the organization’s vision through a partnership, **Visioning** and **Partnering** skills go hand in hand.

Effectively managing a Partnership requires skills in competencies such as **Interpersonal Relation, Communication** and **Organizational Awareness**.

- **Learning on the job**

Seek opportunities to interact with potential partners. Volunteer to work on committees that involve central agencies, outside clients and/or interest groups with different perspectives on issues relevant to your organization’s work.

Seek an assignment in a policy development function where intergovernmental negotiation and/or public consultation is required.

Seek an assignment in a line operations function where improved delivery of services will depend on increased consultation and partnership with the private sector.

Consider an exchange with an outside organization through a program such as Interchange Canada.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- “Effective Collaboration: Managing the Obstacles to Success” edited by Jens Genevke and Frank McDonald (Palgrave, 2001);
- “Partenariats entre le secteur public et le secteur privé: lignes directrices et protocoles” produced by the Ministry of Finance, Province of New Brunswick (1999);
- “Alliance Advantage: The Art of Creating Value Through Partnering” by Y. Doz (Harvard Business School Press, 1998);
- “Le défi des nouveaux partenariats: guide pratique” by Jacques Alméras (Arts et la ville, 1998);
- “The Consultative Approach: Partnering for Results!” by LaGrossa and Saxe (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “Canada 2005: Globalization: Challenges and Possibilities” produced by the Sub-committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers on Globalization (1997);
- “Strategic Partnerships: Challenges and Prospects” by Robert B. McKersie (Queen’s University Press, 1996);
- “Strategic Alliances: Gaining a Competitive Advantage” by S. Garone (Conference Board, 1996);
- “Partenariat pour le développement: situation et perspective” by Yvon Gasse (Fisher Press, 1995);
- “Strategic Partnering” by the Society of Management Accountants of Canada (1994, 21 pages);
- “Partnerships: An Introductory Guide” by the Interdepartmental Committee of Heads of Training Canada, Treasury Board Secretariat (PSC, 1994);
- “Managing the New Organization: A Blueprint for Networks and Strategic Alliances” by David Limerick (Jossey-Bass, 1993);
- “Organizations Working Together” by C. Alter (Sage, 1993);
- “Alliance stratégique et stratégie d’alliance” by Alain Noël (École des hautes études commerciales, 1992);
- “The Power of Partnering: Vision, Commitment and Action” by J.G. Sujansky (Pfeiffer and Company, 1991).

Watch a video such as:

- “Les pièges de la mondialisation: justification économique et illusion politique” by Riccardo Petrella (Liaisons internationales, 1999);
- “The Customer Service Connection” (1994, Kantola Productions) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. VIDQS020D) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or at e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “Positive Partnering: Building Bridges with Customers” (Jossey-Bass, 1994).

Take a course such as:

- “Canada in theWorld” offered by CCMD (see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/public_sector/advanced_mgt/g205_e.html)
- On-line courses: “Communicating a Shared Vision” and “A Model for Leadership from Within” offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)
- “Les partenariats: de l’émergence à la mise en oeuvre” offered by l’école nationale d’administration publique (at the Internet site: <http://enap.quebec.ca/perfectionnement>);
- “Gestion de projets internationaux” offered by l’école nationale d’administration publique.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Good leaders achieve results through the work of others. Strong interpersonal skills are fundamental to the ability of executives to persuade, motivate, and develop constructive working relationships with individuals at all levels. Effective Directors must be able to influence others through the use of persuasive skills; this is key to their ability to shape others' views and gain support for initiatives. Calling on well-honed interpersonal skills, a Director must also be able to negotiate with associates and resolve conflicts in both formal and informal settings. As the leaders of their divisions, Directors serve as role models and set the tone for a positive climate where respect for others and a spirit of cooperation prevail. All executives in the Public Service of Canada are expected to value diversity, respect differences, and build upon cultural and individual variability in the workplace.

Directors with weaker Interpersonal Relations will typically have difficulty influencing others through the use of interpersonal skills. This may be because they have difficulty building relationships with others, or it may reflect a lack of recognition of the importance of interpersonal skills to the accomplishment of objectives. One common reason why a Director may have difficulty forming effective working relationships with his or her colleagues is an inability to adapt quickly and effectively to the broad range of situations that are encountered by executives. Another common reason is a lack of understanding of others' situations and needs. Regardless of the reason, Directors who do not form good working relationships with others will have greater difficulty bringing people on side, motivating others, and gaining support for their initiatives. This will affect their ability to promote a positive working environment within their own division, as well as their ability to accomplish objectives in the broader organizational environment.

- **Using interpersonal skills constructively to influence others**

Build relationships gradually. For all but the most charismatic individuals, relationship-building is a gradual process of accumulating trust and respect. Use informal interactions with your peers, superiors and subordinates as an opportunity to build valuable working relationships. Be consistent and predictable with people. Use common courtesies such as smiling and saying "hello" when you encounter people casually. Treat your co-workers with respect, and be nonjudgemental in your dealings with them. Recognize that it takes a great deal more time and effort to build and maintain relationships than it does to ruin them.

Strive to improve poor working relationships. Consider the peers with whom you work on a regular basis, and identify the individuals with whom you have poor working relationships.

- **Identify interpersonal barriers.** Attempt to identify the barriers or problems that affect your working relationships with those individuals, and ask yourself how you can go about removing barriers and solving problems. You should view these problems in the same way you view the other problems you face as an executive; they are a challenge that can and must be overcome.

- **Look for common ground.** *The pair of individuals with absolutely nothing in common is rare indeed. You should already be aware of your points of departure with people with whom you have a poor relationship. Try to identify and enumerate areas of common interest you may have, either personal or professional. Take time to nurture those commonalities, and draw the focus away from the barriers.*
- **Be willing to adapt.** *Resolving interpersonal differences will usually require that you ask yourself what aspects of the other person's style can be dealt with by simply acknowledging them and being prepared to face them. Other problems may require that you be able to adapt your own style when interacting with the other individual. In these situations, it is always helpful to try to take the perspective of the other individual, and understand his or her reasons for behaving as he or she does. In most cases the reasons are neither selfish nor misguided; they are simply unique. Individual uniqueness is the basis of the diversity that is crucial to the adaptability and resilience of any organization.*

- **Acknowledge others' viewpoints.** *Accept that other people will perceive their views as being as valid as yours and that some individuals will never be completely persuaded to accept your point of view or be willing to compromise.*

- **Forgive others for their failings.** You will likely encounter individuals who are simply “difficult” to work with. Unfortunately, whether this person is a peer, subordinate or superior, you will almost certainly need him or her in some capacity to help you accomplish your objectives. If you are unable to find common ground and establish a more effective relationship with such individuals, you may simply have to accept them as they are, focus on what they have to offer, and work with them in a way that minimizes conflict and leverages their strengths. View these challenging situations as a kind of “interpersonal stretch assignment” — an opportunity for you to hone your interpersonal skills under the most difficult circumstances.

Be a mentor. Be a mentor to a less experienced manager who could benefit from your wisdom and guidance. You have an important role to play in developing and mentoring your own staff in preparation for the next generation of Public Service leaders.

Show appreciation. Continually seek opportunities to show appreciation to others for their work. Acknowledge and credit the contributions of your staff in open forums, as well as in private.

Recognize your dependence on others. Remind yourself regularly that you will become successful as an executive only to the extent that you help those around you become successful.

Learn to consciously recognize the situations that call for influencing skills. In order to enhance your ability to influence others, you first need to recognize when it is called for. Only then can you take a deliberate approach to developing and applying these skills.

Study the ways you influence people. Schedule an hour to brainstorm all the different techniques you use, consciously or subconsciously, to influence others and shape their views. Have a trusted colleague or mentor list the ways he or she sees you influencing others. List all the approaches you and your colleague came up with, and think about the kinds of circumstances that best suit each technique. The next time you find yourself needing to shape the views of other individuals, think back to your list and choose the method or methods best suited to the circumstance.

Study the ways others influence people. Identify someone who has particularly strong influencing skills. Working with your colleague or mentor, list the different techniques they use, and compare it with the list you generated of your own influencing techniques. Choose one or two approaches used by the other individual that you don’t typically use yourself and that you feel could be adapted to your own interpersonal style. Make an active effort to use these approaches the next time you need to influence someone.

Develop your negotiation skills. Whether in the context of formal negotiations with a union or potential partner organization, or in dealing with day to day situations that arise within their own organization, seasoned negotiation skills will serve a Director well. There are many resources available on the topic of negotiating; the following suggestions are just a starting point:

- **Prepare for negotiations.** Make sure you spend the time necessary to prepare for negotiation sessions by collecting and gathering information to support your position, determining your goals for the session and working out a strategy for the meeting. Skilled negotiators not only take the time to work out how they will present their position, but also try to anticipate the goals of the other party as well as the approach they will take. Your strategy should be geared toward finding a solution that not only satisfies your goals, but also meets those of the other party if possible. Before beginning serious negotiations with the other party, make an attempt to establish a feeling of mutual trust.
- **Learn from your negotiating experience.** When you have finished a negotiation session, take time to go over what took place and evaluate how well you were able to anticipate the other party’s strategy and adapt when things did not go as planned.

- **Fostering positive interpersonal relations within your division**

Be a role model for positive interpersonal relations. As a Director, you can have a major impact on the climate of your division by setting the tone for interpersonal relations. Exemplify respect for others, positive interpersonal interactions, an appropriate sense of humour, and respect for diversity. You will find that these kinds of behaviours are contagious.

Recognize the importance of sensitivity. Be aware that one of the factors associated with derailment of executives is behaving in ways that are insensitive and uncaring concerning the needs of others. To be effective, executives must be able to establish working relationships with others that are based on trust, respect and caring and must show an awareness of and sensitivity to the opinions, feelings, and interests of others when communicating with them.

Consider the impact of your decisions on people. This includes staff, clients and other colleagues with whom you are working. Before implementing a decision, try to list all those who will be affected by it. How will they be affected by your decision? How will they perceive you and your organization given the way your decision impacts upon them? Have you fully considered their needs, and their situation? Armed with answers to these questions, you will be better equipped to evaluate whether the decision is having the result you intended.

Be approachable. If your employees consider you to be unapproachable, ask yourself what it is you do that creates this feeling. Be wary of behaving as if the suggestions or concerns of your employees are unimportant. Make an active effort to interact informally with your employees, and consider establishing and encouraging the use of an open-door policy.

Be aware of hierarchical relationships when delivering criticism. Be aware that your hierarchical relationship with associates will colour the way they interpret the comments and criticisms you make. Criticism that a peer may consider to be constructive and beneficial may be devastating and counterproductive if couched in the same terms when directed at subordinates.

Value the strength inherent in diversity. Recognize that people of different backgrounds and cultures or with different strengths, weaknesses and styles will provide their work environment with unique perspectives and solutions, and that the greater the diversity that exists in the workplace, the greater the repertoire of experience and perspectives that the organization has to draw upon. An organization that fosters this kind of diversity will be more adaptable in the face of challenges, and will be in a better position to respond quickly to problems that are best approached from one particular style or perspective.

Be sensitive to multicultural issues. Ensure that you understand the issues linked to delivering products and services to a multicultural society.

Challenge prejudice in others. Challenge others when they make prejudicial decisions or comments, but do so in a non-confrontational manner.

- **Related competencies**

The competencies in the “Personal Competencies” cluster, particularly **Personality**, **Behavioural Flexibility** and **Ethics and Values**, will have an impact on your relationships with others. Undesirable personality characteristics such as arrogance and vindictiveness will create significant interpersonal barriers. The ability to adapt your interpersonal style as necessary for different people, and to demonstrate respect for individual differences will have a major impact on the ability to form positive and lasting working relationships.

- **Learning on the job**

Seek an assignment that will require intense and difficult negotiations with a partner or potential partner organization.

Involve yourself in projects or committees that will require you to work with difficult individuals, or individuals that you have difficulty working with.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- “Resolving Conflicts at Work: A Complete Guide for Everyone on the Job” by Cloke and Goldsmith (Jossey-Bass, 2000);
- “Encouraging the Heart: A Leader’s Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Employees” by Kouzes and Posner (Jossey-Bass, 1998);
- “Differences that Work: Organizational Excellence through Diversity” by Mary C. Gentile (Harvard Business Review Press, 1994);
- “The Art of Mingling” by Jeanne Martinet (Thorsons Grapevine, 1993);
- “Handling the Difficult Employee — Solving Performance Problems” by M. Brounstein (CRISP Publications, 1993);
- “Valuing Diversity and Similarity: Bridging the Gap through Interpersonal Skills” by Joe Wittmer (Educational Media Corporation, 1992);
- “Managing a Diverse Workforce” by John P. Fernandez (Lexington Books, 1991);
- “Managing with People in Mind” (Harvard Business School Press, 1991) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. MI51) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “L’individu dans l’organisation”, edited by J.F. Chanlat (Université Laval 1990);
- “Getting Disputes Resolved: Designing Systems to Cut the Costs of Conflict” by Ury, Brett and Goldberg (Jossey-Bass, 1988);
- “Règles et stratégie pour exercer un leadership efficace, ou, l’art d’influencer sans remord! En comité, en réunion, en conseil d’administration” by Pierre Mongeau and Jacques Tremblay (Libre expression, 1988);
- “Le gestionnaire négociateur” by Walter Baker and Jane Fulton (University of Ottawa, 1987);
- “Working with Jerks” by R. Zemke (Training Magazine, 1987) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. TW02) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “Win-Win Negotiating: Turning Conflict Into Agreement” by Landt and Gillette (Wiley, 1985);

- “People Skills” by Robert Bolton (Spectrum, 1979);
- “Le nouveau concept du management: L’empowerment” by Cynthia Scott and Denis Jaffe (Les Presses du Management).

Take a course such as:

- “Coaching for Results: Maximizing the Development Process” offered by the Center for Creative Leadership (See <http://www.ccl.org/programs/cfr/index.html>)
- On-line course: “The Enabling Leader ” offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)
- “Négocier gagant-gagant”, “Gestion des conflits” or “Le coaching en gestion” offered by École nationale d’administration publique (see <http://enap.uquebec.ca>);
- “Mobilisation et valorisation des personnes: nouvelles perspectives” offered by l’École nationale d’administration publique;
- “Leadership: Reflection and Action” offered by CCMD (see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/programs/LRA/index_e.html)

Watch a video such as:

- “1001 Ways to Reward Employees” by B. Nelson (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “A Peacock in the Land of Penguins” (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “L’art de communiquer : Le facteur non-verbal” produced by the Department of National Defence.

Within your organization, **consider making use of a training system** such as the “Valuing Diversity Training System” offered by Griggs Productions, 1993.

The Public Service Commission library web site has an excellent listing of resources relating to diversity, including an extensive listing of books by category, and links to a variety of related internet resources: <http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/library>.

COMMUNICATION

Executives must be able to present complex issues with clarity, credibility and impact in widely varied forums. Effective communication involves, not just the ability to concisely and accurately convey information, but the ability to motivate others and gain support for initiatives. Directors have an important role, both in championing their division and its initiatives through their own communication skills, and in establishing the tone of communication within their division. The latter includes promoting an environment of open communication, as well as using a variety of communication media to enhance the productivity and service delivery. In addition to communicating effectively in one-on-one or informal settings, directors must be able to successfully deliver presentations and represent themselves and their organization in the context of “on-the-spot” questioning by staff, clients, more senior public officials and/or the media. The most effective communicators are able to adapt their style of communication to a variety of situations and audiences.

There are a number of possible reasons why a Director might have weaker communication skills. Some may not be sensitive to the need to get their point across in a clear, simple and understandable manner. Others may not actively think about the best way to deliver messages, and may rely too heavily on a limited number of communication media. Some Directors may be unable to command the attention of their audiences because they fail to adapt their style of communication to the situation. However, even those with well-honed communication skills will be less effective as leaders if they do not give priority to maintaining open communication lines with staff, superiors and clients. Some, more task-oriented, executives may not be aware of the vital role of communication in managing execution, gaining buy-in, and accomplishing objectives. These Directors may not commit sufficient attention and resources to fostering an environment of open, honest and vibrant communication.

- **Identifying and transmitting key messages to superiors and subordinates**

Adhere to basic principles of communication. Strong communication skills are demonstrated by executives who consciously give priority to some rather simple and straightforward principles.

- Remember that style is as important as content when communicating.
- Remember that nothing communicates better than the use of clear, simple language. As well, acknowledge that wordiness is not an indication of knowledge or power. In fact, it can obscure the meaning of a person's point and may distract or even annoy the audience.
- In order to be an effective communicator, an individual must be able to listen and show that he or she is listening to others. This involves demonstrating openness, honesty and a sensitivity to the perspectives of others.

- If you find that people are constantly missing the point you are trying to make, you may need to spend more time thinking about and organizing what you want to communicate. Determine the major theme or idea you wish to express and develop it into a clear and concise statement or set of statements. Organize your supporting ideas into a logical flow that leads up to the point you are trying to get across. If you are making your point orally, ask the listener if the message is clear to him or her. It helps to practice these skills, even when talking informally to someone, in order to develop finesse in getting your point across more effectively.

Simplify the message. Whether communicating to subordinates or to your organization's executive management committee, it is generally true that the more simple and succinct the message, the better it will be received, and the more it will be retained. It is your challenge to find the clearest, most concise, way of delivering key messages, while ensuring that your audience has all the information it needs to respond in the way you wish.

Prepare arguments in advance. If you are going into a meeting with the intention of trying to influence or sway other members of your team, prepare your key messages in advance. Be aware of issues that may arise as you present your ideas, and be prepared to respond if they are raised.

Prepare for presentations. The adage that “an impromptu speech isn’t worth the paper it’s written on” is all too often true. Unless you are that extremely rare bird that can deliver compelling, engaging and credible presentations off the cuff, you may need to spend more time doing advance preparation — especially when delivering important messages to key stakeholders. While it is no substitute for formal training in presentation skills, following these suggestions may have a substantial impact on the quality of your presentations.

- **Identify the core objectives for your presentation.** When beginning preparation for your presentation, ask yourself, “what are the key messages that I need to deliver?” Structure your presentation around these themes. State them up front in the introduction, reiterate them as you deliver the main content, and review them at the conclusion.
- **Prepare opening and concluding remarks.** When preparing oral presentations, invest relatively more time on the introductory and concluding remarks. A smooth introduction to a topic will not only create a positive first impression in your audience (which will facilitate more active listening on their part), it will help to put you at ease for the remainder of the presentation. Similarly, a strong last impression will have a disproportionately strong influence on the overall impression of your presentation, and provides an opportunity for you to emphasize the key issues and messages you wish to leave with people.
- **Prepare transitions between major topics or themes.** A presentation will go much more smoothly if you prepare the transitions between main topics in advance. Write them down or, even better, commit them to memory.

Be prepared to handle on-the-spot questioning. Keep in mind that the ability to field on-the-spot questions is an acquired skill. Few skills are likely to pay greater dividends than being known as the organization’s verbal troubleshooter. The following suggestions will help you to more effectively represent yourself and the Public Service when responding to on-the-spot questions in the context of presentations or other public forums:

- **Listen to the question.** When a person from an audience is asking a question make sure you actively listen to it. Make direct eye contact with the person and let them finish before you respond.
- **Clarify the question.** If you do not understand the question or you think that people in the audience have not understood it, then rephrase the question in your own words. This will give the questioner a chance to confirm or clarify your interpretation of the question.
- **Answer the question.** You should respond to the question as completely and concisely as possible. If you do not know the answer to a question (which is bound to happen no matter how knowledgeable you are), tell the audience that you will seek out the answer and be sure that you do. In addition, when a person asks you a particularly difficult question, use techniques such as lead in phrases (e.g., “that’s an interesting question”) or pausing before your answer to allow you some time to organize your response. Do not hesitate to take a few extra moments to prepare a proper response, if necessary.
- **Ensure that the question is answered.** After you have finished answering the question, ask the questioner, “Does that answer your question?”. This will give the questioner the opportunity to raise any remaining concerns, and will indicate a genuine interest in the concerns of your audience.

- **Adapting communication style to suit the audience and context**

Consider your audience. Consider your audience carefully before choosing the approach you will use to present your ideas or plans. Be aware of their perspective on the issue, what they have to gain or lose, and the style of communication that will be most effective in gaining support for your ideas (for example, a rational argument versus an impassioned plea).

Adapt your communication to the audience. If you want to be sure that your presentation or written document is appropriate for your target audience, then have someone who is fairly typical of the intended audience review it. Use technical terms, acronyms and jargon only when appropriate. If you are making a presentation and there is no way to find out beforehand the knowledge level of your audience, then be prepared to present background information at the start of your presentation.

- **Using communication to enhance efficiency and productivity within the division**

Foster an environment that is conducive to open and positive communication. View internal communication within your organization as your responsibility. Take concrete steps to ensure that the information that others need is provided in a timely fashion. Ensure that your organization has a climate in which internal communication is positive and useful.

Use communication as a tool to achieve objectives. Recognize that effective use of communication media (e.g., newsletters, videos, electronic media, public presentations) can be crucial to the prevention of potential problems, the solution of existing ones, and the achievement of longer-term strategic objectives.

Communicate your ideas enthusiastically. Acknowledge that the most effective way of getting people to take action is by expressing your ideas in such a way that they do so willingly and enthusiastically. Communicate your objectives clearly, and make an effort to communicate your own enthusiasm for achieving them. When promoting ideas, be sure that you frame them so that it is clear how they can benefit other organizations and the greater public good. If you have difficulty doing this, you may need to reconsider the ideas you are promoting.

Communicate in manageable doses. The most effective communicators speak frequently, but in small, manageable doses (15-30 seconds). Summarize frequently, and ask questions for clarification or to confirm understanding.

Arrange for a workshop on communication skills or presentation skills for your staff to attend. Encourage and reward their participation.

- **Using communication as a promotional tool**

Recognize that communication is fundamental to service delivery. Whether it is reaching out to clients, listening to their concerns or reacting to their needs, effective communication is critical to your ability to deliver your services. This means both that you and your division's spokespersons must be effective oral and written communicators, and that you must take advantage of all the communication media available to your organization.

Know your clients. You as a Director, and your division as an organization, need to have a clear understanding of the audience you are trying to reach with your services. Who are they? What are their characteristics? What do they want from you? Are there groups you should be reaching, but aren't? Make it a formal and regular process within your division to ask these and other questions related to your client base. Document the answers, update them regularly, and refer to them when formulating strategy.

Communicate strategically. Focus your communication efforts to maximize your ability to reach your target audience. This means establishing the time, place and communication medium that will give you the best opportunity to deliver your message to the individuals that need to hear it.

Nurture client relationships. Keep in touch with both existing and potential clients. Use both formal (e.g. newsletters, email, websites) and, especially, informal (e.g. networking) means to maintain these communication lines. Use these communication opportunities to:

- *promote your organization and its services;*
- *get feedback on how you are doing at delivering those services;*
- *learn more about your existing and potential client population.*

• **Related competencies**

Part of effective Communication is being able to adapt the content and style of a message to the audience. This is closely related to certain elements of **Behavioural Flexibility**.

Self-Confidence can be particularly important to Communication when delivering messages under difficult circumstances (e.g. public speaking, briefing situations senior officials or on-the-spot questioning). One’s self-assurance in delivering a message can affect both your ability to convey the message as you intended to, and the way others receive and interpret it.

Effective **Interpersonal Relations** are strongly related to aspects of Communication — particularly those related to one-on-one verbal communication. Interpersonal Relations can set the tone of a dialogue and serve as a “filter” through which messages are perceived.

• **Learning on the job**

Seek an assignment in a role with significant exposure to the press.

Get involved in activities involving exposure to the senior decision-making levels and requiring the preparation of briefing material and/or the delivery of advice to a Deputy Minister or ADM.

Participate in a senior decision-making committee or working group.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- “Management Communication” by Beel and Smith (Wiley, 1999);
- “Corporate Communications for Executives” by M. Goodman (State University of New York Press, 1998);
- “Why Didn’t You Say That in the First Place?” by R. Heyman (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “How Not To Take It Personally: 10 Action Strategies for Communications Success in Business and in Life” by V. Held (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1996);
- “Communication professionnelle et techniques 12: ensemble de ressources intégrées” edited by British Columbia, Study Programs Office, 1996;
- “La communication et la gestion” by Solange Cormier (University of Québec Press, 1995);
- “Communicate with Confidence: How to Say it Right the First Time” by Dianna Booher (McGraw Hill, 1994);
- “Comment parler en public” by Dale Carnegie (Quebecor, 1994);
- “Articulate Executive: Orchestrating Effective Communication” (edited collection, Harper Business Review, 1993);
- “A Briefing for Leaders: Communication as the Ultimate Exercise of Power” by Robert L. Dilenschneider (Harper Business, 1992);
- “Fifty One-minute Tips to Better Communication” by Phillip E. Bozek (CRISP Publications, 1991);
- “La gestion: une affaire de parole” by A. Chanlat and R. Bédard. In “Les Cahiers du CETAI” (École des hautes études commerciales, 1990);
- “J’améliore mes communications” by Francine Fillion (Centre d’animation émotivo-rationnelle, 1990);
- “L’art de la communication: les techniques des meilleurs” by Bert Decker (Agence d’Arc, 1990).

Join an organization such as toastmasters.

Subscribe to “Communication Briefings: A Monthly Idea Source for Decision-Makers”, a monthly newsletter that is intended to “provide you with down-to-earth communication ideas and techniques you can put into action to persuade clients, influence peers and motivate employees; to help you earn approval, command respect, spur productivity, gain recognition and win public support”. Information on the newsletter is available at <http://www.briefings.com/cb/index.html> or at (703) 548-3800.

Watch a video such as:

- “Clear Communication: Breaking Down Barriers” by Vital Learning Corporation (Jossey-Bass, 1994);
- “Effective Presentation Skills” by International Training Corporation (Jossey-Bass, 1993) (accompanied by guide and exercises);
- “Listening: The Key to Productivity” by Tony Fulginiti (Communication Briefings, 1992);
- “How to Speak with Confidence” by Bert Decker (NC Video, 1987);
- “L’Art de communiquer : Le facteur non-verbal”, produced by the Department of National Defense.

Take a course such as:

- On-line course: “The Enabling Leader ” offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)
- “Savoir communiquer pour mieux gérer” offered by l’École nationale d’administration publique (see <http://enap.quebec.ca>);
- “Communication avec les médias en période de crise” offered by l’École nationale d’administration publique.

Attend a workshop on communication skills or presentation skills. Provide opportunities for your staff to participate in such a workshop.

STAMINA/STRESS RESISTANCE

Directors in the Public Service face a dynamic work environment that is fraught with ambiguous and fluctuating work demands. Often, unforeseen factors disrupt task completion, leading to stress among all involved. To ensure the smooth functioning of their division in the face of this uncertainty, Directors must be able to balance operational demands and the abilities of their employees. Therefore, they must be realistic about their own and others' limits, and incorporate this knowledge into their work plans and schedules. This is necessary for the well-being of the individuals involved and for the division's ability to respond effectively in times of increased demand. Overall, the high energy level and the positive, "can-do" outlook of executives sets an example for employees to emulate when dealing with uncertain and stressful situations.

A weakness in Stamina/Stress Resistance may be related to a number of factors, including: insufficient planning; a lack of delegation or uneven distribution of workload; over-committing resources or an inability to say "no"; a tendency to ignore or minimize one's own and others' stress and anxiety; failure to recognize individual workload limits; believing that successful executives must openly disregard the reality of stress; a lack of balance between family and work life, and not conveying the importance of this balance to employees; low overall energy levels, which may be due to insufficient attention to one's physical and/or psychological needs.

- **Understanding and coping with stress and anxiety**

Understand the effects of stress. Understand that stress and anxiety are real and potentially damaging. Anxiety is a response to an event that you view as threatening. Low to moderate anxiety levels are not harmful, and can improve your performance by raising your arousal and your ability to focus on problem resolution. However, persistent stress has both harmful physiological (e.g., impaired immune response, hypertension, increased risk of cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal disturbances, fatigue), and psychological effects (e.g., reduced concentration and productivity, higher risk of depression, burnout).

Recognize the signs of stress in yourself and others. Since many signs of stress are hard to read, look out for behaviors that are typical of stress (headaches, irritability, difficulty making decisions, low appetite, accident proneness, productivity changes, rapid speech, fidgeting, jaw or fist clenching, sleep problems, and overly-quick reactions to negative stimuli). Alone, they may be benign, but in combination they can disrupt work performance and relationships.

Remember that stress is additive. Recognize that each new event can increase your stress level. By itself, a single stressor may seem manageable, but if you already feel stressed, it can be "the straw that breaks the camel's back", and make you feel overwhelmed. Try to deal with each event as it comes, so that you can be free to face new stressors free of encumbrance.

Remember that each situation is unique. Remember that not every stressor should be dealt with in the same way. Some strategies (e.g., taking a step back from a situation, deep breathing, or taking a short walk) can allow you to deal with acute stressors. Others (e.g., physical activity, hobbies) are effective for coping with accumulated anxiety. Use coping mechanisms that work for you.

Discuss your worries with someone you trust. Talking over your problems with a colleague or family member can help relieve stress. Remember that expressing your anxiety to a receptive listener will be more constructive than keeping it inside and allowing your stress to influence your interactions with others. Also, the listener may offer valuable insights that you might have overlooked.

Maintain physical fitness. Keeping fit will raise your energy level and your ability to cope with stress. Too often, executives recognize, but set aside, the many aspects of physical health that allow them to perform at an optimal level. Remember that physical activity can help you “burn off” anxiety and frustrations of the moment and gives you the stamina to deal with future stressors. Also keep in mind that adequate nutrition, water intake, and sleep allow you to stay productive and help stave off headaches and fatigue. Finally, be aware that stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine can increase your level of irritability and susceptibility to stress, and that your productivity and general feeling of physical and mental well-being will suffer if you are deprived of them (which is most likely to happen in times of high workload and/or crisis). While each of these aspects is usually considered separately, think of them as a set of inter-related factors that contribute to your ability to maintain high energy levels and manage stress. For example, if for some reason you must temporarily neglect one of them (e.g., sleep or physical activity), you can partially compensate by giving greater attention to another (e.g., food and/or hydration).

Ask for help. If you find yourself overwhelmed by career and/or professional concerns, you might consider seeking the assistance of professionals trained and experienced in dealing with such issues. Your department’s Employee Assistance Program, or the Executive Counselling Services at the Public Service Commission, should be able to provide assistance in this area.

- **Maintaining a healthy workload and organizational climate**

Plan, plan, plan. Remember that every organization has times of heavy and light workload. Look to the coming months and identify times of lighter workload, and reschedule some work from busy times so that it falls during a slower period.

Prioritize. Look at the deadlines for projects and activities within your division and consider whether they are critical to its mandate. Be willing to shift priorities, reallocate resources, or modify timelines where non-critical activities are stretching the limits of your staff.

Know your limits and those of your employees. Know your limits and recognize when you have reached them. Look for signs of stress in yourself and others. Encourage your employees to approach you if they are anxious, to learn about the signs of stress in themselves, and to work with you to find stress-reducing solutions. Periodically, discuss with them their progress toward their goals, so that if you need to reallocate resources to meet a deadline, you can do so before a crisis occurs, and not after the deadline has already passed.

Respect your employees’ work values and needs. A truly diverse workforce will include people from different backgrounds and cultures or with unique physical capabilities or needs. Ensure that neither you nor your management team impose a work ethic on others that is contrary to their personal belief system, or at odds with their needs. Explore different working arrangements as a means to be more inclusive and accommodating. For ideas and information on how best to do so, consider consulting with the Employment Equity Positive Measures Program (EPPMP) at the Public Service Commission of Canada (visit the EPPMP internet site listed in “Suggested Resources” below).

Set a good example. Recognize the impact of your behaviour on your employees. If you do not demonstrate self-preservation, your employees may feel obliged to emulate that behaviour. To show your commitment to reducing stress, circulate any interesting or particularly informative stress-reduction resources among your colleagues. Acknowledge that you also feel stress and that you are willing to listen and learn from their own coping strategies.

Distribute the workload. Resist the temptation to rely too heavily on a few, highly competent employees. Doing so will lead to physical and mental fatigue in those employees, and will deny others the opportunities they need to develop their own skills. Strive to optimize the use of all your human resources; this will minimize workload for all concerned.

- **Exemplify a balanced approach to work**

Learn to say no. Despite your heavy workload as an executive, others will make demands on your time. Learn to say no. Start by saying no to some non-urgent requests from those with whom you feel comfortable. Practice using tact when saying no and justifying your refusal, so that you can increase your comfort level when doing so under more difficult circumstances.

Maintain reasonable work hours. Do not work yourself “into the ground”. Some executives behave in ways that suggest that work should take priority over all else. Particularly during periods of lower demand, maintaining reasonable work hours and going home when your employees do will demonstrate that you have priorities outside of the workplace.

Choose your battles. Trying to devote yourself to every issue and project while maintaining an optimal performance level is stressful and difficult, if not impossible. To manage effectively, list the issues that are important to you and choose a smaller subset that is manageable and that you can champion. Delegate those which can be delegated, and place the remainder in a “wish list” that you can refer to when your workload allows.

Establish a personal leisure plan. To maintain a high energy level (which is needed to cope with the inevitable stress that is felt by Public Service executives), you should nurture outside interests. When you are tired, take a vacation. Schedule and give priority to non-work activities (e.g., reading, pursuing cultural interests, joining sports or leisure clubs, or engaging in volunteer activities). Nurture the very important relationships with family and friends that are personally rewarding and rejuvenating. Be sure to convey the value of a leisure plan to your employees by asking about their leisure time activities, and discussing your own.

Recognize the benefits of family and social life. Your relationships with family and friends can give you a “cheering section” that accepts you unconditionally. These people can provide emotional support, allow you to vent, and offer a neutral opinion about workplace issues. Most importantly, family and friends are your early warning system against burnout, since they know you well and thus can identify when you are demonstrating signs of potentially damaging stress levels.

- **Maintain a positive attitude in changing, stressful situations**

Vent to a mentor or coach. In stressful situations, lingering negative emotions can be counterproductive. Find someone with whom you feel comfortable who will listen to your concerns. Expressing your feelings will help to reduce your stress level and clear your mind for rational decision-making. A mentor or coach can also provide a separate perspective on the cause of your stress, and may even offer sound advice about how to deal with it.

Work with others. When faced with an overwhelming situation, brainstorm with a group of others to find a solution. The shared experience will provide you with needed social support and will strengthen the ties in the group. By consulting others, you may find that stressful experiences can be enjoyable, and look forward to challenges in the future, rather than dreading them.

Focus on immediate goals. Often, big projects can seem overwhelming. When you take on a formidable project, break the “big picture” into smaller, easily measurable goals. As you achieve these smaller goals, recognize this fact publicly, and acknowledge the contributions of your employees. Regular positive feedback about progress (rather than just at the end of a long project) can improve morale, provide a sense of completion, and foster an eagerness to work toward the overall goal, all of which can protect against stress.

Learn to laugh at yourself. Laugh at yourself. Take yourself less seriously, and realize that no one is perfect. Some people become the most frustrated at their own failure to meet standards of performance they set for themselves.

Maintain a sense of humour. Encourage one in your staff. Laughter is a great release. While stress is unpleasant, being able to laugh when swamped can make the unbearable seem bearable and can let you see challenge in a positive way. If you’re alone and feel pressured, try forget your anxiety for a time, and recall a funny or pleasant incident from your life.

Aim high and learn from failures. Realize that everyone fails occasionally. Take pride in aiming high and working hard, and accept failure as a chance to grow and as a necessary building block for future success, without dwelling on it.

• Related competencies

Strong **Action Management** skills are key to minimizing stress and anxiety — both for an executive and for his or her staff. For example, by distributing workload as evenly as possible among staff and over time, the stress associated with periods of peak work levels should be reduced.

Certain aspects of **Personality** will also be related to Stamina/Stress Resistance. For example, a strong desire to set and achieve challenging goals is desirable for an executive, but must be reconciled with a balanced approach to work.

Behavioural Flexibility is also related to Stamina/Stress Resistance. An individual with less Behavioural Flexibility, for example, will react to ambiguity or to unusual or unexpected situations with more anxiety and will thus experience more stress. Learning to take the unexpected (or less than ideal) in stride will help Stamina/Stress Resistance by minimizing unnecessary stressors.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- “Stress, bien-être et productivité au travail” by Richard Pépin (Trancontinental, 1999);
- “Integrating Work and Life” by Friedman, DeGroot and Christensen (Jossey-Bass, 1998);
- “Vaincre le stress personnel et organisationnel” by Denis Boucher (Éditions nouvelles, 1997);
- “The Truth About Burnout: How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What To do About It” by Maslach and Leiter (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “Managing People During Stressful Times: The Psychologically Defensive Workplace” by S. Allcorn (Quorum, 1997);
- “Managing Workplace Stress” by Cartwright and Cooper (Sage, 1997);
- “Preventive Stress Management in Organizations” by J. Quick (American Psychological Association, 1997);
- “Libérez-vous du stress” by Trevor. J.Powell (Éditions canadienne, 1997);
- “Le stress et la réussite: Comment identifier et gérer son stress” by Gaétane Collin (Dauphin blanc, 1997);
- “Controlling Stress in the Workplace: How You Handle What Happens” by R. Gatto (Jossey-Bass, 1993);
- “Exceller sous pression: Comment maximiser sa performance” by Saul Miller (Éditions de l’Homme, 1993);
- “Stress and Challenge at the Top: The Paradox of the Successful Executive” by J. Quick (Wiley, 1990);
- “Healthy People in Unhealthy Places: Stress and Fitness at Work” by Kenneth R. Pelletier (Delacorte Press, 1984);
- “Coping with Executive Stress” by Executive Health Examiners (McGraw-Hill, 1982).

Watch a video such as:

- “Gold of the Desert Kings” by Eagle’s Flight (1990) (includes a game that simulates the daily stresses and pressures of the workplace) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. VIDTM003) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “Gérer le stress” by Constance A. Zimmerman (Owen Stewart Performance Resources, 1991).

Take a course such as:

- “Rentabiliser son temps et réduire son stress” offered by l’École nationale d’administration publique (at the Internet address <http://enap.quebec.ca>).

Contact your department’s Employee Assistance Program.

Visit the web site of the Employment Equity Positive Measures Program (http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/eeppm-pmpee/index_e.htm).

Subscribe to “Leadership Strategies” newsletter. Information and a sample issue available at <http://www.briefings.com/ls/index.html>

ETHICS AND VALUES

Serving as an executive in the Public Service requires that an individual be committed to a set of basic values, both organizational and Public Service-wide. Executives must continually assess the degree to which their actions reflect their principles and values and the extent to which those principles and values are congruent with the values and culture of their organization. Directors, as do all executives, have a leadership role in promoting the values of the Public Service within their organization and fostering an environment of trust, acceptance and respect. This is accomplished by encouraging the open expression of individuals' personal values while working to build a common culture of values, principles and attitudes that reflect those of the Public Service. Compared to their experience at lower organizational levels, Directors will find themselves encountering more complex ethical issues. They may be required to make difficult decisions in grey areas where different values conflict. Resolving these kinds of situations requires a strong foundation of personal, organizational and Public Service values, and an ability to see issues clearly and exercise sound judgement.

Executives will display a weakness in this area if they hold values that are incongruent with those of the Public Service or their organization. However, it is equally important that those values be visibly expressed in the leadership style of the executive. For example, taking "shortcuts", or failing to identify and/or respond appropriately to conflicts of interest will reflect poorly on the integrity of an executive, regardless of the individual's initial intentions. Executives will be viewed as unethical if they fail to honour commitments, or do not notify their clients or colleagues when extenuating circumstances interfere with their ability to honour commitments. Similarly, executives with the best of intentions may be viewed as unfair in their treatment of others if they do not make a point of being accessible, explaining decisions, openly embracing the value of fairness and promoting an organizational culture in which transparency and fairness are founding principles. Finally, inexperienced Directors will have to resist the temptation to see ethical issues in "black and white" terms, particularly where values clash and require a careful consideration of issues and potential outcomes.

- **Being a role model for commitment to Public Service ethics and values**

Set a good example. Set a good example for your staff to follow. Never ask your staff to do something that you would not do if you were in their position. Give your staff the necessary support so that they can do their jobs and do not undermine them.

Monitor yourself on an ongoing basis. Try to "step outside of yourself" and see yourself, and your behaviour, as you are perceived by others. If you are uncomfortable with what you see, try to establish why you are, and what you might have done differently.

Expect ethical behaviour in others. Don't be afraid to demonstrate "righteous indignation" when appropriate. Although executives are usually expected to remain calm and collected, sometimes this style is not effective in getting across to someone else that their behaviour goes against the ethics and values of the organization.

Know and operate within Public Service ethical guidelines. Ensure that the actions and decisions taken by you and your staff are within the Public Service guidelines relating to such matters as conflict of interest, and confidentiality. If you are not already familiar with the principles of conduct for public service employees, take the necessary steps to learn them. Seek out and study Public Service guidelines and regulations that govern ethical behaviour that is relevant to your work (for example, if your work involves the awarding of contracts, you should be familiar with the Treasury Board code governing conflicts of interest).

Know and respect privacy and access to information legislation. Recognize that executives are legally and ethically bound to respect the laws of Canada regarding access to information and privacy, to provide, when requested, all information that is legitimately available to the public, and to respect the privacy of individual citizens. Be familiar yourself, and ensure that your staff are familiar, with the Public Service legislation (Access to Information Act, Privacy Act) that governs freedom of information and privacy. You will find information regarding the Offices of the Information and Privacy Commissioners of Canada at their web site: infoweb.magi.com/~accessca.

Follow through on commitments. Recognize the value and importance of following through on your commitments to others. Negotiate realistic deadlines so that your chances of meeting commitments are maximized. In planning your projects, establish controls so that you can detect problems early on, correct them and notify those involved if extenuating circumstances will prevent you from meeting a commitment.

- **Fostering a climate of respect for others and for PS values**

Recognize that others have their own value systems. A key aspect of a diverse workplace is the presence of people with a broad range of value and belief systems that reflect different personal and cultural experiences. To the extent that an organization embraces and benefits from these different perspectives, it will be a more resilient and productive work environment.

Be objective in your assessment of others. There are a number of biases, often subtle, that can affect the impartiality of the decisions you make about others. Be aware of these and try to minimize their influence on the decision making process. One such bias is the “halo effect”, which occurs when individuals allow their evaluation of one trait or behaviour to influence their evaluation of another unrelated one. For example, executives who assume that because an employee is a highly skilled communicator he or she is also a good decision-maker are adhering to the halo effect. Another bias relates to people’s tendencies to view others who are similar to them as good and individuals who are different

from themselves as bad. Finally, the tendency to stereotype and pigeon-hole involves attributing a whole set of characteristics to an individual solely on the basis of one characteristic (e.g., gender).

Be aware that the perception of fairness can be as important as fairness itself. It is difficult, if not impossible, to always appear to be fair, given that fairness is a subjective quality. You can, however, assess others’ perceptions of your fairness and attempt to create more equality by seeking and responding to the feedback of others. You can do this informally by establishing an open-door policy to hear complaints or by implementing more formal mechanisms such as setting up meetings to listen to the frustrations of others. Make sure you are not defensive when you respond to others’ input.

Get to know your staff. To establish the respect of your staff, you will need to establish their trust. To establish trust, you will need to establish relationships and active two-way communication. Strive to be accessible by having an “open-door” policy and taking an active interest in your staff and their work.

Demonstrate your trust in others. By showing your trust for others, you will help to gain their trust in you. This will not only pay off in terms of a more positive working climate, but will also help to avoid “micro-management”, give you more time to focus on the big picture, and result in a more productive organization.

Be open and honest. Understand that an executive must either earn and maintain a reputation as someone who is honest and open in his or her dealings with others, or live with the negative consequences of not doing so. To be effective, executives must establish and maintain a network of high quality work relationships that are based on trust.

Recognize that all employees in your organization have the right to fair treatment.

- **Dealing with complex ethical situations.**

Subject difficult ethical decisions to an “acid test”. Making difficult ethical decisions can be particularly challenging when circumstances give rise to a clash of values or ethical concerns. To help guide yourself in making difficult ethical decisions, establish an ultimate criterion or “acid test” to which all your decisions must be submitted. For example, you may wish to ask yourself if you could comfortably justify your decision on national television.

Discuss ethical dilemmas openly. Do not hesitate to seek help with making ethical decisions and openly discuss ethical dilemmas with stakeholders. Use a mentor, coach, or respected colleague as a sounding board to help you think through the grey areas or complex ethical decisions.

Examine your values. Identify the values and ethics that you feel must be upheld in the decisions and actions you take. This involves taking the time to reflect on your values and standards, and regularly checking whether you are actually acting in ways that are congruent with those values, and that they are congruent with those of the Public Service.

- **Related competencies**

Modelling commitment to Organizational and Public Service Values demands on-going introspection and self-monitoring, and requires that you be motivated by a desire to put achievement and service to the public ahead of self interest. These are all key characteristics of the **Personality** competency.

The ability to foster a positive, respectful organizational climate will be linked to skills in **Teamwork** and **Interpersonal Relations**.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read the “A Strong Foundation: Report of the Task Force on Public Service Values and Ethics”. Available electronically on CCMD web site: http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/pubs/pub-task_force_reports_e.html

Read the “Building on a Strong Foundation - The Dialogues Continues volume II” - case studies on values and ethics in the Public Service (2001) Available electronically on CCMD web site: http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/pubs/pub-recent_e.html

Read “Core Values in the Public Service” published by the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (1993).

Read books such as:

- “L'éthique dans les entreprises” by Samuel Mercier (La Découverte, 1999);
- “Professionnalisme et délibération éthique: manuel d'aide à la décision responsable” by Georges Legault (University of Québec Press, 1999);
- “Ethics, Accountability and New Organizational Forms Document” by Judith Moses (Public Service Commission, 1998);
- “Trust in the Balance: Building Successful Organizations on Results, Integrity, and Concern” by R. Shaw (Jossey-Bass, 1997);
- “Ethical Dimensions of Leadership” by Kanungo and Mendonca (Sage, 1996);
- “Values-Based Leadership: Rebuilding Employee Commitment, Performance and Productivity” by S.S. Kuczumarski and T.D. Kuczumarski (Prentice Hall, 1995);
- “Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It” by Kouzes and Posner (Jossey-Bass, 1995);
- “Leadership et intégrité” by Cynthia Bloskie (Optimum, 1995);
- “Spirit at Work: Discovering the Spirituality in Leadership” by Jay Conger and Associates (Jossey-Bass, 1994);
- “The Dewar Series Perspective on Public Management” produced by CCMD (1994);
- “Ethics in Public Service” by R. Chapman (Carleton University Press, 1993) — available from the

Learning Resource Network (Call No. ET13) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or at e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;

- “Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self-Interest” by Peter Block (Berrett-Koehler, 1993);
- “L'éthique: des codes à la responsabilité” by Jean-Claude Deschênes (Avenir, 1991);
- “Leadership Is an Art” by M. De Pree (Dell Publishing, 1991);
- “Straight Talk for Monday Morning: Creating Values, Vision and Vitality at Work” by Allan Cox (Wiley, 1990);
- “Executive Integrity: The Search for High Human Values in Organizational Life” by S. Srivastva (Jossey-Bass, 1988);
- “Questionnement éthique” by J.M. Beaudoin et al. (Éducation permanente).

Participate in informal discussions such as those offered by CCMD about: Values and Ethics in the Public Service. More information is available at the CCMD Internet site: <http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca> (click on Learning Events, then Armchair Discussions).

Take a course such as:

- “Leadership: Reflection and Action” offered by CCMD, see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/programs/LRA/index_e.html
- “EX Orientation” offered by CCMD, see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/public_sector/advanced_mgt/g202_e.html
- “Diversity: Vision and Action” offered by CCMD, see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/diversity/vision_action/index_e.html
- “Living Leadership - The Executive Excellence Program” offered by CCMD, see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/programs/living_leadership/index_e.html

PERSONALITY

The Public Service of Canada has, among its core values, respect and appreciation for the richness inherent in having a diverse range of backgrounds, interests and personalities among its workers at all levels. In such a diverse culture, it is important to recognize that, while there is no single personality that is right or wrong for an executive in the Public Service, the presence of certain personality attributes are strongly associated with success and career progression as a Public Service executive. Foremost among these personal qualities is a sense of commitment, drive, and resolve. Directors must deal with ambiguity and, in many cases, work from the ground up in formulating and pursuing goals. They must orchestrate goal alignment and attainment in their division, and do so with vigour and conviction. To succeed and to be fulfilled as a Director requires one to be intrinsically motivated and compelled by a sincere desire to serve the public interest. While Public Service executives cannot be driven by personal gain or a need for power, they should be able to use their personal influence to facilitate service delivery and the attainment of their organization's mandate. As with leaders at all levels, the most outstanding Directors inject life into the work experience of their subordinates by modelling an infectious enthusiasm and dedication to their work and that of their staff.

Directors with developmental needs in this competency may lack the drive or motivation to achieve high standards or accomplish challenging goals. They may also have difficulty influencing others, motivating staff, or gaining support for initiatives. A lack of insight into the strengths, weaknesses, and ambitions of others can handicap one's ability to motivate others and meet objectives. This can be an obstacle, not only to task accomplishment, but also to the morale and tone of relationships among individuals. Some Directors may have an authoritarian temperament, or a rigid approach to dealing with others. Personality characteristics such as arrogance, vindictiveness and a "defeatist" attitude are associated with derailment in executives.

• **Setting and achieving challenging goals**

Be proactive. Whether in terms of improvements in productivity or service delivery, be willing to take calculated risks and capitalize on opportunities as they present themselves. Goals should be attainable, but also ambitious and challenging. Therefore, try not to shy away from or avoid difficult, or less well defined projects or objectives. Choosing, embracing, and tackling such challenges can prove extremely gainful and rewarding.

- **Break down challenging goals.** *If a task seems daunting at first, partition it into a step-by-step plan involving various manageable sub-goals; this will make the initiative appear more doable, as well as facilitating achievement of the larger objectives.*
- **Forsee obstacles.** *Regard obstacles or impediments as challenges themselves and try to forecast possible obstacles in advance. Once you have a sense of what barriers to expect, you can carry out contingency planning to offset setbacks.*

Be persistent. Having, in advance, taken stock of potential "known" pitfalls, you should have a sense of how to address them. However, what about unexpected or "unknown" impediments that arise? Your first instinct may be to second-guess yourself (or others) and your (or their) ability to accomplish objectives. However:

- *No matter how seemingly "air-tight" your planning and goal-setting, the "unforeseeable" will inevitably occur; and*
- *Unknowns and unforeseen obstacles are a hallmark of a challenging task (or a useful goal). In fact, you should be concerned if they do not arise!*

React decisively to setbacks. Temporary setbacks should be taken in stride but need to be dealt with quickly. Armed with a positive outlook, the key is to act promptly and not let problems reach a point where the success of an initiative is endangered. Dealing with setbacks can involve re-assessing the situation, or attacking a problem from another angle, or it may involve added blood, sweat, and toil. Without the drive, determination, and perseverance to surmount obstacles, foreseeable or not, many endeavours will fail.

• **Modelling drive and perseverance**

Know yourself. To the extent that goal-setting is about choosing ambitious but attainable goals, it is important to be aware of your strengths and limitations when establishing what is and what isn't attainable. Take time to step back and reflect on your capabilities. A deeper understanding of your strong suits and weaker areas can go a long way in terms of not only setting realistic goals, but in assembling the appropriate resources and employing the right strategies to accomplish objectives.

Do not ignore feelings of demotivation. If you do not feel immersed in, or committed to achieving the challenging goals you face, consider taking some time for reflection away from the office. Look closely at any reasons why you may not be committed to your goals. Are they inherently unchallenging? Is your skill set poorly suited to the task? Are your personal values not meshing with those of your organization? Think about the activities that truly interest you and ask yourself if you believe that you can develop more enthusiasm and optimism about your role in meeting those challenges. If not, ask yourself whether you can "tough out" the current adversity until circumstances improve or new opportunities present themselves.

Talk to others. If you are encountering feelings of de-motivation or discouragement, a mentor or coach may be able to help you walk through the relevant issues. If it is a case where you have reached a stumbling block in a project, involving subordinates and peers may be especially helpful both in terms of the provision of advice, or direct contributions to the work. Sometimes fresh perspectives elicited from others can inject new life into a project.

Project a positive attitude. As a Director, your attitude and demeanor can have a considerable impact on your subordinates. By maintaining a positive outlook on issues and demonstrating commitment and drive in accomplishing tasks, you can set an important example for employees and other colleagues. Demonstrating resolve and perseverance in difficult times can have a substantial uplifting effect on staff. In fact, it is perhaps in the most difficult times where a positive, goal-oriented outlook can have its greatest impact. Modeling a work ethic characterized by perseverance, determination, and infectious enthusiasm especially in times of need is characteristic of outstanding leadership.

• **Bringing out the best in others**

Know your staff and colleagues. Directors should not only be aware of their own personal strengths and weaknesses but should be familiar with those of their staff. In particular, knowledge of employees' capabilities should guide the appropriate assignment of resources. This in turn, can fuel the motivation, drive, and goal-setting of the staff. For example, a Director's allocation of resources can have an impact on subordinates': 1) likelihood of task accomplishment, and 2) sense of fulfilment in carrying out the task. Both of these factors can bear on an employee's motivation. It is thus important to meet with employees regularly to allow you to gauge their strengths, weaknesses, developmental objectives, and career ambitions. Ensuring that goals set in collaboration with subordinates are challenging yet realistic will assure that their skills are cultivated and used to their full potential.

Help others and let others help you. Once goals have been set, it is important to encourage ongoing feedback. This will require not only feedback to subordinates from you, but feedback among subordinates, and feedback from subordinates to you. Be open and positive in receiving feedback from others about your strengths and weaknesses, and this will pave the way for frank, open, and candid discussions concerning your expectations of others. It will also set the tone for feedback among staff members.

Give constructive feedback. When providing feedback and assisting subordinates in attaining their goals, make your comments constructive by emphasizing specific behaviours that could be changed. For example, rather than telling someone he “isn’t a team player”, point out that he frequently interrupts other people in meetings or uses words like “dumb” to describe their proposals. In addition to sharing constructive criticism, you should be equally inclined to offer verbal encouragement, recognition, and rewards for desirable performance. The power of such motivators can not be overestimated.

• **Leveraging personal influence**

Exploit your soft skills. Don’t shy away from using your interpersonal and communication skills to help you accomplish organizational objectives. Functioning as a Director necessarily requires the ability to influence people in a broad range of situations. Whether motivating or directing subordinates, influencing superiors or trying to shape the opinions of your peers, a sincere, engaging, confident and self-assured approach can inspire confidence and buy-in from others.

Invoke authority as appropriate. Some Directors shy away from using their legitimate authority because they fear they will be perceived as heavy-handed. However, at times, it is not only desirable but it is incumbent upon a Director to invoke appropriate measures of authority in order to achieve the objectives of his/her division.

Be willing to adapt. While assertiveness and authority are required from time to time, they are by no means the defining characteristics of a strong leader. Indeed, some Directors may rely too heavily on authoritarian means of influencing others. This is frequently found in cases where a Director’s self-interest and need for power dominate his or her actions, a quality commonly associated with “heavy-handed” or “command and control” leaders. However, we are all capable of falling into this trap if we do not adapt our style to the situation or know when to “let go”. The key is to learn to discriminate between situations that are best served by different leadership styles, and to be able to modify your own style as appropriate to the situation.

Do not allow yourself to become abusive or hostile. These approaches are ineffective in motivating others, and will ultimately lead to a demoralized staff and poisoned work environment. While most Directors would not deliberately choose to treat others with hostility, it is sometimes necessary to make an extra effort to guard against that tendency when under extreme stress. It is also important to ensure that criticism isn’t perceived as abusive or hostile, regardless of your intent.

• **Related competencies**

If you are experiencing difficulty finding the motivation to enthusiastically pursue challenging goals, you may need to examine the aspects of your **Stamina/Stress Resistance** that relate to work/life balance and managing stress. It may also be worthwhile examining the extent to which your personal values are aligned with organizational values (**Ethics and Values** competency).

Negative personality characteristics such as arrogance and vindictiveness can sometimes reflect a lack of self-assurance in an individual (**Self-Confidence** competency). If others detect these characteristics in your behaviour, it may be worthwhile for you to seek assistance in dealing with them. Your department’s Employee Assistance Program, or Executive Counselling Services at the Public Service Commission, should be able to provide guidance in this area.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books and articles such as:

- “The Leadership Pipeline” by Ram Charan, Stephen Drotter & James Noel (Jossey-Bass, 2001);
- “Leading with Soul” by Lee G. Bolman, Terrence E. Deal (Jossey-Bass, 2001);
- “The Skills of Encouragement — Bringing Out the Best in Yourself and Others” by Dinkemeyer and Losoncy (St. Lucie Press, 1996) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. M106) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “Keeping Spirits Up When Times Are Down” by S. Caudron (Personnel Journal, August, 1996) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. SR39) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “Leadership and Integrity” by Cynthia Bloskie (in *Optimum*, Autumn, 1995), 37-41;
- “Mobilisation du personnel: une condition essentielle au développement des entreprises” edited by Centraccès PME, 1995 (available from the National Library of Canada);
- “Motiver et mobiliser ses employés” by Richard Pépin (Éditions Transcontinentales, 1994);
- “Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self-Interest” by Peter Block (Berrett-Koehler, 1993);
- “Successful Self-management — A Psychologically Sound Approach to Personal Effectiveness” by P. Timm (CRISP Publications, 1993) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. SL01) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca;
- “Leadership is an Art” by M. De Pree (Dell Publishing, 1990);
- “L’individu dans l’organisation”, edited by J.F. Chanlat (University of Laval, 1990);
- “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic” by Stephen R. Covey (Simon & Schuster, 1990);
- “Performance maximum: développez l’excellence en vous-même et chez les autres” by Zig Ziglar (Un Monde différent, 1990);
- “The Charismatic Leader: Behind the Mystique of Exceptional Leadership” by Jay A. Conger (Jossey Bass, 1989);

- “Managing for Peak Performance: A Guide to the Power (and Pitfalls) of Personal Style” by A. Weiss (Harper, 1989);
- “Executive Qualities” by Joseph M. Fox (Addison-Wesley, 1976);
- “Le nouveau concept du management: L’empowerment” by Cynthia Scott and Denis Jaffe (Les Presses du management).

Take a course such as:

- The “Leadership Development Program” offered by the Niagara Institute (358 St. Mary Street, P.O. Box 1041, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, L0S 1J0) (see website <http://niagarainstitute.com>).
- On-line course: “The Mark of a Leader” offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-cg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)

BEHAVIOURAL FLEXIBILITY

Modern organizations are constantly changing. The nature of work is evolving nearly as fast as the technology that supports it. The ever-increasing need to share knowledge and to function interdependently requires the involvement of more key players and partners. Stakeholders typically have diverse and sometimes divergent needs, and all managers need to be able to adjust to the evolving needs of an increasingly diverse workforce. Fluctuations of human and material resources are more frequent and appear in more rapid cycles. Within this ever-shifting and ambiguous climate, it is the responsibility of the Director to facilitate productivity, implement change and smooth organizational transitions in their division through careful handling of communications, workload, financial resources and commitments. Directors should feel at ease interacting with a variety of individuals in a broad range of contexts. To summarize, Directors must be able to read the environment and adapt to current conditions, while providing the people around them with a solid sense of direction.

Directors will demonstrate a learning need in this area if they use a limited set of behavioural responses despite varying situations. Difficulty recognizing how and why peers, team members, direct reports, and other colleagues react differently to situations will contribute to this learning need. In addition, Directors who have difficulty functioning in the midst of ambiguity, or who react negatively to change may need to work on developing their Behavioural Flexibility. Above all, a Director will have difficulty with Behavioural Flexibility if he or she doesn't recognize the reality of a changing environment and the need to respond decisively to thrive within that environment.

- **Adapting to organizational change.**

Acknowledge and work with ambiguity. The ability to thrive in an ambiguous environment is a defining characteristic of true leaders. When constantly shifting priorities are the norm, Directors must find a balance that reflects both the stability their direct reports need to perform effectively, and the reality that not all elements are, or even can be, totally clear.

Recognize that organizations are in constant change. Some say that the only thing that never changes is the constant necessity to foresee change, to prepare for it and adapt to it. For Directors this may mean finding new ways to pursue the mandate of the organization through the activities of their division, or embrace a completely different organizational orientation.

Foresee changes. It goes without saying that you can respond more quickly to that which you have anticipated. Be constantly on the lookout for trends in the environment and shifts in priorities and organizational direction that will affect the work of your division. Be prepared to respond to those circumstances before they are formally imposed upon you by others.

Benefit from everyone's perspective.

Encourage all staff to come to you with new ideas or observations. Consider using a retreat with your management team as an opportunity to get their collective input into key changes in the environment and the future of your organization as it relates those changes.

Be a stimulus for change. In addition to looking externally, Directors should also be looking internally for ways to enhance the efficiency of work processes, to better match peoples' strengths with project demands, to streamline policy-making and to make the best use of technology as it evolves.

Manage with courage. Managerial courage is a necessary condition for quick responses to change. Incomplete information and ambiguous circumstances inevitably present the executive with two options: (1) take calculated risks; or (2) do nothing.

Smooth the transition through communication. Fostering change in others' behaviours requires a well thought out and effective communication strategy. Directors need to constantly listen to what people are saying, both directly and indirectly. They also need to ask themselves if their communication strategies are aligned to what people need to know and how the message can be most effectively transmitted.

Smooth the transition through management of workload and resources.

As needs and priorities change, so must the structure and processes of the organization. Failure to adapt resources and reallocate workload during times of change will lead to a tension between the demands on your division, and its capacity to meet them. This will lead to unnecessary strain on individuals, sub-optimal work performance and, ultimately, a less effective transition.

Avoid change for the sake of change.

Societies evolve, technology advances, organizational mandates change and the availability of resources fluctuates. These are some of the many legitimate catalysts of organizational change. Because behavioural flexibility is so vital to effective leadership, and something you should constantly be striving to develop, you may have to resist the temptation to initiate change for the sake of change. If you have difficulty explaining the need for change to those affected by it, perhaps you need to reconsider why you are promoting it.

View change positively. Determine whether your reactions to change allow you to cope effectively with new situations. If not, you may need to look at developing a more positive approach. The next time you find yourself reacting negatively to something new or different, determine why you are feeling this way and look for constructive ways to deal with it. Often, negative reactions are based on fear or the insecurity that changes bring with them. Understanding the basis of your fear and insecurity will allow you to develop strategies to neutralize their negative effects. For example, if you find yourself reacting negatively to a possible restructuring in your organization because you are unsure about how it will affect your roles and responsibilities, then get involved in planning the change.

- **Interacting effectively with a broad range of individuals in different contexts**

Recognize that people and situations interact.

While going through an external audit might prove to be stressful for everybody in a division, different people will react to it differently. For example, some might perceive it as a threat, while others view it as an opportunity to enhance the quality of their work. Things become even more complex when groups of people work together in a context of change and lack of clarity. As a Director, you should not only be aware of how and why you react to these ambiguous situations, but also to the different ways in which your co-workers, direct reports, peers, boss, partners, etc., will respond.

Adapt your style to different people and contexts.

Ask yourself whether you adapt your style of interaction to the individual with whom you are dealing. This is, above all, a matter of sensitivity and respect for others, but can also be crucial to developing influence with people and/or gaining support for your initiatives. Consider each of the following when contemplating the way in which you will approach an interaction with a given individual:

- **Diversity.** *Recognize that people from different cultural backgrounds may have very different assumptions, beliefs and interpersonal styles than you have. Similarly, persons with disabilities may have different perspectives and alternative ways of accomplishing objectives. Respect these differences, learn from them, and expect sensitivity from everyone in your organization. Organize a workshop on diversity for your division as a starting point. View the way you manage diversity as an ongoing process of learning and adapting — for both you, and your division as a whole.*
- **The organizational level of the individual** *(is he/she a subordinate, peer or superior). Many people are relatively comfortable engaging in heated debate with their peers, and this may, depending on the context, be a worthwhile and constructive process. Using the same tone when responding to suggestions or contributions from subordinates may be construed as bullying or intimidation. On the other hand, using a heated tone when interacting with superiors may be interpreted as insubordination and may adversely affect your ability to gain crucial influence and/or support.*

- **The individual's personality.** *Different people will respond to an adversarial or critical tone in different ways. This can range from open acceptance, to withdrawal, to outright anger.*
- **The context in which the interaction is taking place.** *A style of interaction that is appropriate for an informal one-on-one conversation is not necessarily appropriate for a formal meeting. Similarly, a style that is constructive in a time of stability may be destructive in times of crisis.*

Be open-minded. Be conscious about improving your adaptability when interacting with others. If you are considered to be opinionated by others (or yourself), you may not be listening enough to what others have to say, particularly under stressful or confrontational circumstances. For example, in the course of discussion or debate, try to avoid focussing more on preparing rebuttals than on listening to alternatives. Use listening skills to force yourself to understand differing opinions before evaluating them. Mentally reverse sides to attempt to see the other person's viewpoint.

Know your own style. Identify your typical leadership style. For example, do you tend to be more task-oriented (i.e., more focussed on the task at hand than the people involved) or are you more relationship-oriented (i.e., more focussed on the people involved than the task at hand)? Make sure that you are able to use either approach as the situation dictates.

Expand your repertoire. Describe the usual ways you react to key situations, then determine alternatives. Try to engage in these new behaviours when the situations arise.

Experiment with new approaches. Recognizing when a particular solution or pattern of interaction is not working is the first step toward developing more flexibility. The next step is to find effective alternative solutions or behaviours. Often this involves experimenting with new approaches to situations. Reflect on your performance, and strive to fine tune your new behaviours. Ask a trusted peer to provide you with feedback when you try to use new approaches. Keep in mind, however, that new behaviours or responses do not become ingrained overnight; it will take substantial practice and time until you and others become comfortable with these changes.

Learn from others. Carefully observe people who have varied management styles and try to extract new ideas that could provide you with new ways of dealing with similar situations. "Shadow" a senior executive with well-developed behavioural flexibility to see if you can learn new approaches to improve your own behavioural flexibility or better recognize the situations in which adapting your style would be beneficial.

Do not abandon your values. While behavioural flexibility is necessary, it is just as important that you strive for a balance between rigid inflexibility and the tendency to change your style unpredictably to serve your own agenda. Demonstrating strong behavioural flexibility does not require you to abandon your basic principles, values or beliefs. On the contrary, it involves the ability to change the way you express your personal styles and abilities, as appropriate, to suit changing circumstances.

• Related competencies

The ability to adapt to organizational change, depending on the context, may draw on a number of other competencies. Recognizing the need to adapt will be tied to the **Visioning** competency, for example. Acting without all the information you would like will often require you to demonstrate **Self-Confidence**.

Modifying one's approach to suit different interpersonal and organizational contexts will depend on the breadth of one's repertoire of behaviours in a number of different areas, such as **Interpersonal Relations** and **Communication**. Accepting others' differences and being able to interact effectively with a diverse range of individuals may also depend upon personal beliefs and values associated with the **Ethics and Values** competency.

• Learning on the job

Try a different approach. Seek opportunities to do the same work in new and different ways. Ask for input from co-workers to provide fresh perspectives and help get you started.

Broaden your horizons. Look for opportunities to do different work within or outside your organisation. Step outside of your comfort zone, and seek the opportunities that will *require* that you adapt in order to be successful.

Seek an assignment in a different functional role, preferably one in which you have little or no previous experience.

• SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Read books such as:

- "On Leading Change" by Frances Hesselbein and Rob Johnston (Jossey-Bass 2002)
- "The Dance of Change" by Peter Senge et al. (Doubleday, 1999)
- "Mener ses interventions autrement: À la découverte d'un processus pour y parvenir" by Michel Boisclair (Government of Québec, 1999);
- "The Inventive Organization: Hope and Daring at Work" by J. Janov (Jossey-Bass, 1994);
- "Leadership is an Art" by M. De Pree (Dell Publishing, 1990);
- "Motivating Strategies for Performance and Productivity" by Champagne and McAfee (Quorum, 1989);
- "Developing Corporate Character: How to Successfully Change an Organization Without Destroying It" by A. Wilkins (Jossey-Bass, 1989);
- "Managing Change: Implementation Skills" by American Society for Training and Development (ASTD (Info-Line), 1989) — available from the Learning Resource Network (Call No. MC01) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787 or e-mail: LRN-RRA.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca.
- "The Situational Leader" by Paul Hersey (Warner Books, 1984);
- "Management of Organizational Behaviour: Utilizing Human Resources" by P. Hersey and K.H. Blanchard (Prentice Hall, 1982);
- "People Skills" by Robert Bolton (Spectrum, 1979).

Watch a video, such as:

- "Le leadership situationnel" produced by College of Taxes and Exise, Revenue Canada.

Take a course that addresses the need to be able adapt to the style of others, such as:

- "Leading Transitions" offered by CCMD (see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/programs/leading_transitions/index_e.html);
- "Coaching for Breakthroughs and Commitment" offered by CCMD (see http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/programs/coaching/index_e.html).
- On-line course: "Change Leadership" offered by CCMD (See http://www.ccmd-ccg.gc.ca/leadership/index_e.html)

SELF-CONFIDENCE

The effectiveness of a Director will be linked to his or her Self-Confidence in a number of ways. Directors frequently have to make difficult decisions where the best course of action is not necessarily the one with the least risk. They are able to face these circumstances knowing that they and their staff have done their best to weigh the risks against potential benefits. They understand and accept that sometimes circumstances beyond their control will lead to undesirable outcomes. In some situations, the complexities of a difficult decision are compounded by the likelihood that the best course of action will be an unpopular one. Directors must be able to “weather the storm” in these circumstances; this can be particularly difficult in the face of criticism and negative reaction. On the other hand, Directors understand that their authority is directly linked to their accountability, and must be willing to accept ultimate responsibility for the outcome of their division’s activities. Related to this accountability is the role Directors play as the advocate or champion of their division. They understand their role in promoting their division and its activities on the broader organizational stage. Their Self-Confidence ensures appropriate recognition of the work and people of their division, and for the role they play in fulfilling the vision and mandate of the organization.

Directors will project weaker Self-Confidence if they lack assurance in their capabilities and capacities, or those of their staff. They may be unwilling to take calculated risks or to be exposed to uncertain challenges. Similarly, they may be uncomfortable assuming responsibility for the work of their division; in the extreme, this can lead to denial of negative outcomes or the assigning of blame to others. Directors with weaker Self-Confidence may also have difficulty making unpopular decisions, thus diminishing their capacity to exert influence in many situations. Note that it is possible for a Director to err in the other direction; these individuals are so confident about their own views that they may fail to appropriately consider risks, give consideration to those affected by their decisions, or seek a compromise even when it is in the best interest of the organization.

- **Championing the work of your division**

Promote the activities of your division.

Directors are champions of their divisions when they encourage achievements and promote them both within and outside the division, even as far and wide as the whole Public Service. Success motivates them, and they view initiatives as a potential advantage. They know how to generate and inspire employee enthusiasm and commitment to new ideas by using strategic objectives. In addition to the optimism they are able to engender in their employees, Directors manage to gain the support and backing of senior management and of all the divisions in the organization.

Learn to influence without authority.

Outstanding leaders are able to influence and negotiate “without authority” in a way that inspires others to follow them and to co-operate. Directors will be more successful in this regard when they project a confident and self-assured manner. Use enthusiastic and impassioned explanations to show confidence in your ideas. Use positive mental imagery, an exercise that requires a bit of conscious effort. The exercise simply involves imagining yourself saying or doing something successfully and with self-assurance. Imagine situations where you are sure of yourself, confident, powerful, and effective.

Trust your employees. Directors with self-confidence and trust in their employees do not hesitate to delegate responsibility. Resist the temptation to see yourself as the only one who can handle certain responsibilities. Be sure that you have staff that you can trust with appropriate levels of responsibility. If you do not have that level of trust, you may need to seek an objective perspective on whether the problem lies with your staff’s abilities, your expectations, or your ability to “let go” and concede responsibility to others.

- **Taking responsibility for your division**

Recognize that you are responsible for your division. Directors with self-confidence recognize that they are responsible for their employees and division. They are thus aware that they have to back, within and outside the organization, any action taken. They accept failure and criticism and chalk them up to experience. If you have a high level of self-confidence, you will not be afraid to acknowledge your responsibility.

Take responsibility for your division. Directors in the Public Service, at times, have to back the actions taken by their employees and the decisions they have made and take the resulting responsibility, even if it presents high risk or provokes a lot of criticism. As backers of their divisions, Directors identify problems and develop strategies to solve them in everyone's best interest. Directors show their self-confidence even more when they have to tackle major problems.

Be a model. When Directors show employees their self-confidence by acknowledging and taking responsibility for their division, they are a positive model for employees. By demonstrating their sense of responsibility, Directors encourage their employees to reconsider their role and their own accountability for results.

- **Making difficult decisions**

Take calculated risks. As Directors fine-tune their talents and their responsibilities increase, they sometimes face situations that require tough choices. One problem that many Directors face is an aversion to taking risks. If you repeatedly punish your failures with negative self-talk, you will condition yourself to avoid taking risks. Learn to recognize and deal constructively with your failures and mistakes. The next time you are unsuccessful, ask yourself "What have I learned?" Understanding your failures will make you a better Director, and if you maintain a positive attitude toward them, the new knowledge you gain should increase your self-confidence when facing new challenges.

Believe in your decisions. Lack of confidence on the part of a Director may give the impression he or she is incapable of making sensitive decisions or defending their opinions. To avoid giving this impression, hold to your decision once it is made and avoid revisiting the situation unless a number of factors clearly indicate that a decision should be reviewed.

Be open to others' points of view. When your decision has already been made, others' viewpoints may be hard to understand. However, you will inspire confidence and promote respect if you include others in your decision-making, and if you recognize their views while being able to maintain your own when necessary. Acknowledge that other viewpoints may be beneficial and profitable for the organization. Take part in ongoing feedback by frequently asking others for their opinions and advice, thus creating an atmosphere of dialogue. Benefit from the different perspectives from which members with different cultural backgrounds see issues. Join committees examining employment equity issues to broaden your exposure to different perspectives.

- **Expressing unpopular decisions**

Communicate with others frankly and honestly. As a Director, you sometimes have to announce, within and outside your organization, some decisions that are unpopular. Directors with self-confidence engage in frank and honest communication with others; that way, they manage to create an atmosphere of mutual trust. Create enduring links with others by ensuring your decisions are clearly understood. Don't wait; tell the individuals involved about anything that may affect them. If they have questions, try to answer them as soon as possible.

Describe the situation in accurate and concrete terms. Directors in the Public Service know how to make themselves understood by others when they state decisions forcefully, without hesitation. To ensure the maximum impact of their decisions, Directors should plan presentations and stress key points they want others to focus on. Eliminate anything that seems unnecessary or without a solid basis. Always be convincing and ready to defend your opinions.

Anticipate opposition and adverse reactions.

Directors who predict how people will react are prepared to respond to reservations and opposition. If you anticipate the reactions of others, you can arrive at a compromise more easily.

Be sure of yourself. Directors who are sure of themselves win by influence and negotiation. Others voluntarily choose to follow them and to co-operate. If you are sure of yourself, you can state your decisions openly and fully and take responsibility for them. Directors who are sure of themselves encourage their employees to have confidence in their own abilities.

Be wary of projecting an arrogant attitude. Recognize that overconfidence, rigidity, and arrogance are common causes of derailment for Directors. The key to avoiding these characteristics is to remain open to others and to new information. Place yourself in the other person’s situation and imagine how you would feel and react. Try to see their side before defending yours or deciding not to accept their ideas.

Seek feedback on your style. To ensure that you are not coming across as overconfident, try to arrange opportunities that will allow you to get feedback on this aspect of your interpersonal style. For example, you could ask a respected peer or superior to give you their impressions of your style and its impact in a variety of situations. When conducting performance appraisal interviews, you could encourage employees to give you some feedback (recognizing the obvious fact that some staff may be reluctant to provide negative information to their boss).

• **Related competencies**

The willingness to take assume responsibility and accountability for the work of one’s division will depend in part on personal characteristics associated with the **Personality** (particularly the tendency to embrace ambitious goals) and **Ethics and Values** competencies.

Behavioural Flexibility will help a Director to take risks and make decisions in the face of ambiguity.

Finally, the ability to *project* Self-Confidence can depend heavily on **Communication** skills; effective communication skills will serve an individual well when expressing unpopular decisions or “speaking truth to power”.

• **Learning on the job**

Seek a “turnaround” assignment that requires the defence of minority opinions and that provides opportunities to take calculated risks.

Step outside of your “comfort zone”, and look for new challenges.

• **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

Read books such as:

- “Rèussir grâce à la confiance en soi” by Beverly Nadler (*Un Monde différent*, 1999);
- “Self-esteem at Work: How Confident People Make Powerful Companies” by N. Branden (*Jossey-Bass*, 1998);
- “Les chemins de l'Équilibre personnel” by Christian Messier (*Quebecor*, 1997);
- “Communicate with Confidence: How to Say it Right the First Time” by Dianna Booher (*McGraw Hill*, 1994);
- “Communication: Skills to Inspire Confidence” by Barrie Hopson and Mike Scally (*Pfeiffer*, 1993);
- “52 façons de développer son estime personnelle et sa confiance en soi” by Catherine E. Rollins (*Un Monde différent*, 1993);
- “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic” by Stephen Covey” (*Simon and Schuster*, 1990);
- *L'attitude fait toute la différence: Modelez-vous sur les gagnants*” by Dutch Boling (*Un Monde différent*, 1990);
- “Making Tough Decisions: Tactics for Improving Managerial Decision Making” by P. Nutt (*Jossey-Bass*, 1989);
- “Calming Upset Customers: Staying Effective During Unpleasant Situations” by R. Morgan (*CRISP*, 1989) — available on the Learning Resources Network (ID No. CL09) at (613) 953-7923 or 1-800-265-9787, or by electronic mail: LRN-RRR.ref@psc-cfp.gc.ca.

Watch a video such as:

- “How to Speak with Confidence” produced by NC Video (1987);
- “The Psychology of Achievement” by Brian Tracy (*Nightingale Conant*, 1984).

Visit the Internet site of the Learning Resources Network, where you will find activities, seminars, self-evaluation tools, self-confidence courses, a reading list, and video tapes at the address: <http://learnnet.gc.ca/fran/index.htm>