Career Development Guidelines

Cornell University advances an environment of continuous learning and professional growth as a way to align the needs of the institution with the skills, interests and abilities of those in our workforce. These guidelines describe the career development programs designed to prepare staff to meet the challenges of today’s workplace and outlines staff and university responsibilities regarding career development.

Responsibilities

The development of staff is a shared responsibility of individual staff members, managers and the university leadership.

Staff:

The staff member has the primary responsibility for maintaining effective individual performance and managing professional and career development by:

- Keeping skills and knowledge up to date to meet changing workplace needs and the expectations of the current position.
- Examining current skills and identifying areas for further development.
- Seeking opportunities for ongoing skills enhancement.
- Pursuing relevant training.
- Contributing to the department/division's goals and objectives.

To participate in a professional development opportunity, the staff member will initiate the request to participate in a relevant opportunity by engaging in a discussion with his/her immediate supervisor.

Supervisors:

The responsibility of supervisors is to create and foster an environment that facilitates and enhances the skills training and career development of staff by:

- Discussing with staff members development needs in relation to the work of the unit.
- Providing opportunities for the discussion of individual goals on at least an annual basis and for the development of a mutually agreed on plan for training and career development.
- Recognizing developmental achievements during the year.
- Based on the operational requirements of the unit, providing job-specific training to enable staff members to acquire skills and knowledge necessary to complete the work of the unit based on identified needs.
- To the extent that operational requirements allow, providing staff members with appropriate opportunities to acquire skills or experience which would enhance the staff member's ability to make a continuing contribution to the work of the University.
Organization

The university provides tools and programs that allow staff to plan and grow their careers. [https://www.hr.cornell.edu/training/](https://www.hr.cornell.edu/training/)

Career Development Opportunities

The university provides tools and programs to support staff and supervisors to create and implement individual development plans. Career development opportunities may be designed to increase career expertise and performance in current jobs, and increase awareness about and prepare staff for new career opportunities.

Individual Development Planning

Staff are encouraged to explore development options to build a career strategy and establish long-term milestones for their selected career direction toward enrichment in their current work, progression along their current path or transition to another path.

- Talent Planning offers a suite of services that work together to provide development strategies, planning tools, resources and programs to stimulate communication about work and development planning, and to help staff develop in their current roles and prepare for future opportunities.
- Individual Development Plan (IDP) – Taking time to discuss individual staff member’s professional needs or aspirations for growth, at least once a year, is the basis of the IDP process. Together, staff and supervisors create an action plan of realistic steps the staff member can take to build a desired skill, better use their existing talents, or prepare for a career goal. IDP is a part of the Performance Management Process and encourages staff to invest in their work and themselves.
- Staff also have the opportunities to advance their careers when they move to another position at the university.

Training and Development

Staff benefit from and are encouraged to participate in some form of training and development on an ongoing basis to ensure they keep up-to-date with their fields of expertise training and development comes in many forms such as academic programs, workshops/seminars, annual conferences, distance education, books/journals, specific training courses, membership in professional associations, and electronic discussion groups, including, but not limited to:

- Career Planning and Development programs
- University training, academic courses, or degree programs. The following educational assistance programs are available for staff:
  - Extramural Program - Cornell academic courses;
  - Employee Degree Program - Cornell degree programs for staff, and
  - Tuition Aid Program - tuition aid for staff enrolled in approved courses and programs at other educational institutions.
• Experiential Learning Opportunities (ELOs) such as cross-training, job rotations, job shadowing, special projects.
• Participation in professional conferences, workshops, seminars, discussion groups, etc.
• Independent learning through on-line courses, reading, web-based materials, etc.
• Serving on university committees.
• Assistance – Staff can find assistance in selecting appropriate courses of interest through the college or department in which their area of interest lies; Cornell Training; and in Continuing Education and Summer Sessions.
• Departments are expected to make required licenses and/or certifications clear to each staff member. When a department requires a specific training or skill building, the cost of the development activity rests upon the department. Departments are encouraged to fund career development activities with a fair and equitable distribution of available resources.

Release Time

Supervisors have the discretion to either grant release time for time away from work to participate in career development opportunities or to require that all or part of the time be made up when the absence from work interferes with the department’s operational requirements. When an employee is required to attend a training or development program, the time spent in attendance shall be counted as time worked. Release time will be recorded as leave with pay.