

Institute for Social Research
Proactive Approaches to Career and Professional Development
Guidance from Center Administrators

March 31, 2020

Career and Professional Development:

Recommendations for Staff Members

- You are the single most invested person in your career.
- Take responsibility for your own career growth in consultation with your supervisor.
- Understand the skills and competencies required for each position in a career ladder. Although some tasks are different, (i.e. filing and data input) the competency required to complete them may be the same.
- Length of service at the University and/or ISR is not an indicator that a competency has been attained.
- Understand the position structure in your area by talking with your supervisor. For example, if there is only one “lead” position designated in your area, there may not be an opportunity to be promoted to that position in that department.
- Discuss career growth, opportunities for professional development, and strategies to develop skills and competencies with your supervisor.
- Talk with your supervisor about a plan to best develop the competencies needed. This should start with an honest assessment of your current status and a plan going forward. This could involve mentoring or taking advantage of HR workshops and skill development such as the Individual Development Plan or IDP (<https://hr.umich.edu/working-u-m/professional-development/development-journey>). Taking a class doesn’t always mean that the competency has increased as application is everything.
- In consultation with your supervisor, the IDP can provide a road map for your career by highlighting your strengths, opportunities for growth, and relevant training (e.g., in person workshops, LinkedIn Learning, webinars, books).
- Help your supervisor understand how a particular offering or training in your IDP will bolster your skills, awareness, or ability to be a more supportive colleague in your unit.
- At least once per year, and ideally more often, talk with your supervisor about your IDP and solicit their feedback on how you are perceived and your performance. Be certain to know not only your performance for “what” you do, but also “how” you do it and contribute to the team. Being an expert at a skill is only half the battle, as you also need to be approachable!!

Resources:

The University has established the “Michigan Expectations Model”(MEM) that identifies 12 benchmark behavioral standards that all university faculty and staff should demonstrate. Training will be offered on this model to further discuss how behaviors and their impact on others align with these standards: <https://hr.umich.edu/working-u-m/professional-development/learning-development-models/michigan-expectations-model>