

**Personal/Professional Development Plan**

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### **Personal/Professional Development Plan**

Embarking on a journey to be a better steward in an increasingly complex healthcare environment involves the critical process of creating a personal/professional development plan. The recently completed self-assessment, [NHS: Leadership Framework Self-Assessment Tool](#), highlighted my strengths and weaknesses as a leader. Using this assessment as a guide, I will outline a personal/professional development plan to be used as a tool in helping me become an effective nurse leader (Healthcare Leadership Model Appraisal Hub, n.d.). In this paper, I will summarize my self-assessment findings, in addition to formulating goals to improve leadership skills and level of competency. I will also develop a plan for life-long learning, define my code of ethics, discuss my plans for involvement in professional organizations, and outline my plans to promote the future of nursing.

#### **Personal Leadership Assessment**

The leadership self-assessment tool that I chose to use was the [NHS: Leadership Framework Self-Assessment Tool](#)—completing the online leadership assessment provided insight into my leadership style, aptitudes, strengths, and weaknesses. Since my current leadership experiences in a clinical setting are limited, I based my evaluations on my current role as a HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) advisor and educator. The Leadership Framework Self-Assessment Tool indicated that my greatest strengths as a leader include "inspiring shared purpose," "sharing the vision," and "engaging the team." This means that I value service and seek ways to improve service quality. It shows that I can inspire others and motivate them to action. It also hints that I can engage team members by making them feel valued. I agree with these results as they show values I have worked hard to develop. I am good

at being able to see the big picture. Generating ideas, fostering creativity, and motivating others to share in this purpose are some of my most vital innate qualities. I am not afraid to challenge assumptions, although this has been an acquired skill. I show enthusiasm in my work and inspire hope in those around me. As demonstrated in figure 2, my performance ratings showed a balance between performance and importance, as indicated in the amber field, meaning that my strengths align with skills that are of high importance ("The Leadership Framework Self Assessment Tool," 2012).

**Figure 1**

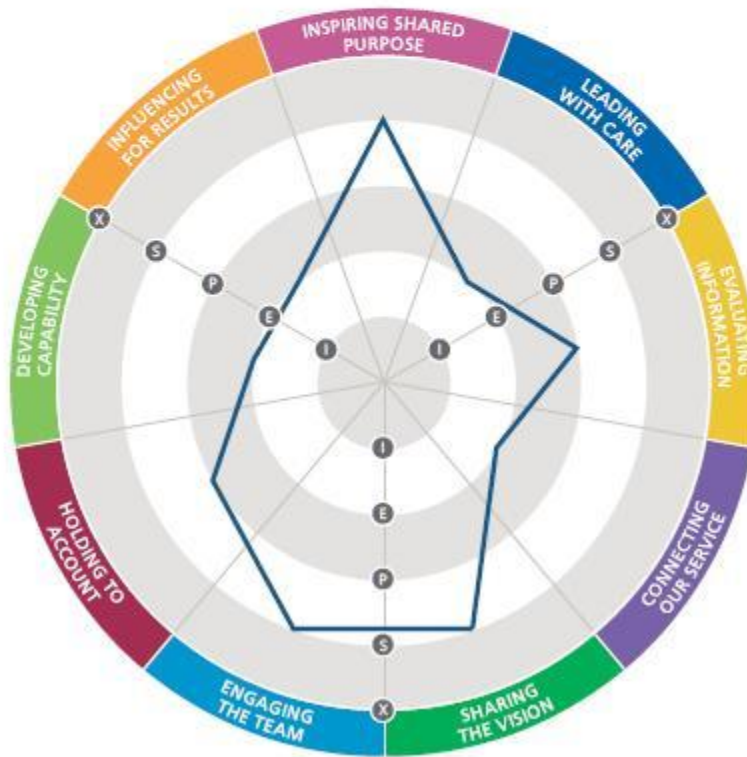
*Self-Assessment Overview*

## Your Self Assessment overview

The diagram below displays your average Self rating on the nine leadership dimensions of the Healthcare Leadership Model (shown by the blue line —).

The nine dimensions are rated against the five levels:

- I – Insufficient
- S – Strong
- E – Essential
- X – Exemplary
- P – Proficient



The NHS self-assessment tool also indicated areas for improvement. I am not surprised that the assessment shows that I am good at seeing the big picture but struggle when implementing details and achieving results. Figure one pinpoints strengths in addition to areas for improvement. The figure shows a very one-sided leadership approach. Weak areas include "developing capability," "influencing for results." and "connecting Our Service." As indicated in figure 2, these skills fall in the red or risk category. They include "using a range experience as

a vehicle for individual and organizational learning," "using interpersonal and organizational understanding to persuade and build collaboration" and "understanding how health and social care services fit together and how different people, teams or organizations interconnect and interact" ("The Leadership Framework. Self Assessment Tool," 2012). While I frequently look for opportunities to learn and better myself, I fall short in developing my team members and seeing how all the parts of an organization fit together. Developing people necessitates a plan for achieving the desired results and also requires experience, which I lack. While I feel that I understand people, I need to develop the skills to recognize and develop their strengths. I acknowledge that to achieve desired results as a leader; I need to have a better understanding of the organization and all of its moving parts to persuade and build collaborative relationships. During my first year in education, I attempted to change an existing policy without fully comprehending the organizational infrastructure. As a result, I failed to affect the desired change. My assessment revealed that I might be good at inspiring others but weak at actually implementing the action.

## **Figure 2**

### *Performance Versus Importance Summary*

## Your Performance versus Importance summary

The table below shows a summary of your Performance versus Importance ratings for each of the nine dimensions.

If you rated yourself low in Performance on dimensions that are of high Importance this is an area of risk (marked in **red**) and you should prioritise your development actions here. If you rated yourself the same in Performance as on Importance this shows appropriate balance (marked in **amber**). If you rated yourself high in Performance on dimensions that are of low Importance this is an area of talent or strength (marked in **green**) and may be an opportunity worth discussing with your Line Manager or other colleagues who will help support your development.



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found it very interesting to see how my leadership style, as indicated by my assessment overview, was very uneven. This highlighted area needs to be developed by learning new skills

and gaining experience to make me a more balanced leader. The Transformational nursing leadership model, as outlined by Roussel, et al., 2020, states the necessity of a leader to be adaptable to change and uncertainty and includes the ability of a leader to influence and inspire others. This is increasingly important as the healthcare climate continues to evolve. A transformational leader is respected and can be trusted to make decisions for others. Transformational leadership demonstrates a shared vision, inspiring shared purpose, and engaging team members. This model supports my NHS: Leadership Framework Self-Assessment Tool results and "provides a framework for enhancing team/leader effectiveness." I believe that it is imperative for a leader to "empower people to achieve their best" (Roussel et al., 2020). Although my leadership roles are primarily in education, fortunately, most of my strengths are qualities rather than skills. I feel that it is more difficult to change one's characteristics than to cultivate additional clinical skills, such as understanding the dynamics of organizations. These skills, while important, can be learned through diligent research and experience.

#### Plan for Ethical Leadership

According to standard .7 of the Scope and Standards of Practice (2015), Registered Nurses must demonstrate ethical leadership. "Leadership style adopted by nursing managers is a key element in the progress and development of nursing and quality of healthcare services received by patients. In this regard, the role of ethical leadership is of the utmost importance" (Barkhordari-Sharifabad et al., 2017). As part of developing ethical leadership attributes, I will strengthen the competencies outlined in standard 7 to practice the principles of respect, compassion, and dignity. I will advocate for my patients and staff members; I will utilize evidence-based principles as a basis and standard for practice to ensure the highest quality care is

provided to my patients. Providing high-quality care and changing people's lives is the fundamental reason I went into health care in the first place. I want to help people help themselves. To reduce health disparities and promote overall standards of health, I will regularly collaborate with other healthcare professionals and work to promote health policies (Association, 2015). As part of my professional development plan, I will outline several SMART goals to improve some of the gaps in my leadership technique. The following table demonstrates my SMART goal to help me develop ethical leadership. It follows The Scope and Standards of Practice by demonstrating professional accountability and responsibility in nursing practice (Association, 2015).

**Table 1**

*SMART Goal for Ethical Leadership*

Name	Goal
S-specific	I want to be someone who people trust to "do what I say I am going to do when I say I am going to do it." This is important because people need to know they can rely on me to carry out my plans.
M-measurable	When I tell people I will do something, I will immediately put a reminder on my phone, with notifications, and due date, to help keep me on task.
A-achievable	This is attainable because I have used this technique successfully in the past.
R-realistic	If people know that I will do what I say, all of the time, this will build trust and strengthen my team from within.
T-timely	I will evaluate my progress in December and make adjustments to notifications and techniques accordingly. I will also send my HOSA (Health Occupations of America) students an anonymous survey at the beginning and at the end, to see if I have improved in this area. I will use their feedback as a way to guide improvement.

**Practicing at the Highest Level of My Education**

"The public has a right to expect registered nurses to demonstrate professional competence throughout their careers. Each nurse is responsible for maintaining professional competencies, and life-long learning is essential to performing to industry standards"



(Association, 2015). I will strive to practice at the highest level of my education and skill level. Since receiving my Bachelor's degree, I have aspired to advance my knowledge further. Obtaining my Master's degree is the next step in this process. Furthering my education will enrich my professional development and competence as a professional nurse and provide advanced skills and knowledge. Becoming an APRN will allow me to give a more holistic approach to patient care by seeing the person as a whole and caring for the body, mind, and spirit (Alligood Ph.D. Rn Anef, Martha Raile, 2013). After completing my MSN, I hope to practice family medicine and gain as much experience as possible. Objectives for practicing at the highest level of my education include: completing my MSN, taking and passing the FNP state board exam, getting a job in rural family practice, building that practice to help bridge coverage gaps for an underserved community, staying current on local and federal Healthcare policy and acting as an advocate for change and improved policies at a local and national level.

As part of defining and improving practice, I created a SMART goal to help me focus on an attainable outcome. As a means of correcting revealed weaknesses, I would like to focus on developing HOSA team members to improve the overall effectiveness of the student organization. Improving the skill at this level will translate into healthcare leadership in the future.

## Table 2

### *SMART Goal for Practicing at the Highest Level of my Education*

Name	Goal
S-specific	I will get to know each HOSA Presidency member better. This goal is essential because I need to understand each person's individual needs and help them achieve their best. If each person functions at their best, the whole team is more effective
M-measurable	I will implement "get to know you" and team building activities at the next HOSA Presidency meeting. I will make a concerted effort to interact with each student individually and assess for any specific needs
A-achievable	This goal is achievable because we plan to have our first meeting soon, and this will be a great ice-breaker to start the school year.

R-realistic	Getting to know and building up my HOSA Presidency is a great way to build our HOSA organization and strengthen its purpose.
T-timely	I will implement the activities at our meeting on Monday when our next meeting will be held. I plan to implement a short team-building activity at each session to build rapport within the group. I will assess the overall climate of the group at each monthly meeting.

### Life-long Learning

Florence Nightengale said, "Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses...we must be learning all of our lives" ("The Role of Nursing Professional Development in the Future of Nursing," 2015). I love learning and believe that as a nurse practitioner, I will have increased responsibility to maintain and even exceed standards for continuing education. My education will not stop just because my degree has been awarded. I will need to be continually learning and growing personally and professionally to maintain industry standards, stay abreast of new emerging technologies, and be a more effective provider. Newland, 2019 encourages clinicians "to lead teams that will translate research evidence into practice, bringing state-of-the-art findings to the clinical setting."

My objectives outlined for life-long learning include taking continuing education courses often, listening to webinars, attending conferences, and participating in research projects. Increasing my knowledge will result in closing performance gaps, improving patient outcomes, reducing cost, and increasing personal satisfaction to prevent burnout. Skills I would like to enhance are improving my evidence-based practice research skills; how to conduct research and analyze and utilize findings. Below is a table outlining my SMART goal for improving research skills. This will help to improve deficiencies in my leadership practice.

### Table 3

*SMART Goal for Life-Long Learning*

Name	Goal
S-specific	I want to be able to use an academic research database more effectively. This goal is essential because it is the first step in utilizing evidence-based practice.
M-measurable	I will make an appointment with an NNU librarian and ask for recommended tips and guidelines to streamline my searches.
A-achievable	I will be doing a lot of research this year, so this is something I know I can accomplish.
R-relevant	Improving this skill will allow me to use my time more effectively and find high-quality research.
T-timely	I will email the librarian this week to set up an appointment. I will give myself one month to improve and will be practicing this skill daily.

As I pursue my education and career, I will remember to place family and duty to God above any other priorities. My plan over the next ten years includes completing the MSN program and then obtaining APRN certification. I am not sure if I will seek a doctoral degree but will reevaluate upon completion of my MSN. I hope to find a job locally and will work to build a network of connections while I am still in school to help ensure this transition. My objective is to find a job in family practice providing care across the lifespan. I will focus on gaining experience, exposing myself to new opportunities, and building relationships. I would be interested in obtaining additional certifications in wound care, dermatology, and/or pediatrics. Participating in professional organizations, promoting healthcare policies, taking care of my mental and emotional health, and ensuring best-care practice will be incorporated into my ten-year plan. Additional information on my ten-year program can be found in subsequent paragraphs.

#### Personal Plan to Support Self-Care

Self-care is an essential part of a professional development plan, for without taking care of personal and emotional needs, all other worthy plans are likely to fail. According to the

Nursing Code of Ethics Provision 5, "The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth." This reminds me of the directions given by a flight attendant during pre-flight instruction to put on your oxygen mask before assisting others with theirs. If our needs are not met, we will be unable to help others (Elle Allison-Napolitano; Daniel J. Pesut & Elle Allison-Napolitano; Daniel J. Pesut, 2015).

Self-care for me includes 1. Knowing my limitations, 2. Learning to say no 3. Setting aside time for enjoyable activities 4. Spending more time with family 5. Taking time for meditation and relaxation and worship, and 6. A regular exercise routine. I will outline a plan for self-care because life can get so hectic and busy that it would quickly be passed up for "more pressing" duties, if not planned. As part of a daily plan, I will start my morning with prayer. This will help ground me and remind me that I am part of a greater goal/good. This will help me keep an eternal perspective. Weekly, I will exercise at least three times and incorporate enjoyable activities, such as a bike ride with the family or a walk with my husband into the mix. As part of a monthly plan, I will fast for strength and insight and help others with special needs. Monthly, I will plan a fun family activity or extended family visit to maintain family relationships. Yearly, I will arrange a family vacation to "get away from it all" and live in the moment. I feel that these activities, as part of a self-care plan, will allow me to be a better mom, wife, and healthcare provider.

#### Professional Organization Involvement

Throughout my career, I have been involved in many professional organizations, clubs, committees, and teams. I served on a committee to review evidence-based practice protocols to

treat venous insufficiency. I took an active part in the Employee Engagement committee at my last place of work. I served as chairperson in the United Way campaign. I was also a member of several professional organizations, including AAWC (American Association for the Advancement of Woundcare), ANA (American Nurses Association), and I am currently an active member of ACTE (Association for Career and Technical Education). As previously mentioned, I serve as a CTSO (Career and Technical Student Organization) local advisor. My activity in these organizations and committees has given me a broad range of experiences and provided me with national and state connections. I have enjoyed meeting new people, hearing different perspectives, keeping current with research trends, and networking with other professionals.

According to the American Nurses Association (ANA), "Professional organizations and associations in nursing are critical for generating the energy, flow of ideas, and proactive work needed to maintain a healthy profession that advocates for the needs of its clients and nurses, and the trust of society." It will be necessary for my career to continue seeking opportunities to be part of professional organizations. I will keep my membership current in the ANA and ACTE. I plan to join the AANP (American Association of Nurse Practitioners) upon completion of my MSN and will explore other options as well. Being an active member of a professional organization will help me develop and strengthen my leadership skills.

#### Promoting Nursing's Future

The nursing profession, with a workforce of more than 3 million members, makes up the largest part of the healthcare workforce (Medicine & Committee On The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative On The Future Of Nursing, At The Institute Of Medicine, 2011). As part of

this great workforce, I need to seize the opportunity to help promote nursing's future. According to the IOM, 2011, nursing practice can be advanced by removing barriers to the scope of practice, expanding opportunities, implementing residency programs, increasing the number of BSN trained nurses, doubling the number of nurses with a doctoral degree, ensuring life-long learning, preparing nurses to lead change, and through collection and analyzation of data. Completing my BSN and then my MSN aligns with recommendations 4, 6, and 7 of the IOM, 2011 report. By increasing my level of education, I will be better equipped to "anticipate future healthcare needs" and "provide care across the lifespan" (Medicine & Committee On The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative On The Future Of Nursing, At The Institute Of Medicine, 2011).

I have found great satisfaction in researching and implementing plans for program improvement at my school. As I navigate the system and discover gaps, I make a concerted effort to bridge those gaps to improve outcomes. I have learned a lot about policy, rules, and regulations from contacting local and state representatives and working with school and district administration. As a result, I have assisted in changes to school policies in my district by recognizing a need for change, researching solutions, presenting a plan of action, and implementing the change. It is with the same strategy that I can exert change to healthcare policy.

My SMART goal plan to use a research database more effectively will help in my efforts to advance nursing. Utilizing databases for access to evidence-based research will allow me to search for data as a means of effecting change. My objectives for promoting the future of nursing include the following:

1. Complete my FNP and glean as much knowledge as I can.
2. Continue to take an active role in promoting nurses at the high school level.
3. Become

familiar with local, state, and national nursing representatives. 4. Become familiar with and build a network of nursing professionals. 5. Research state and federal healthcare reform/policy and advocate for change where needed. 6. Assume a leadership role to advocate for patient rights and provide the best possible care for optimal health outcomes. This plan outlines my goals and objectives for advancing the future of nursing. I genuinely believe that as nurses prepare individually that we can make a difference collectively.

### Conclusion

Developing a personal/professional improvement plan has provided me with a map of clear goals for my nursing future, and utilizing this plan as a guide, will allow me to pay particular attention to areas for improvement and propel me towards acquiring skills and experience to make me a more balanced and successful leader. "Interventions should relate directly to meaningful outcomes and be prioritized based upon impact (Mold, 2017). It has given me insight into how I can take care of myself, assist in advancing the future of nursing, become more involved in my professional community, advocate more effectively for patient care, and continue learning and professional development throughout my life.

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