

THE SKILLS YOU NEED GUIDE TO

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



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INTRODUCTION

Personal development is a lifelong process. It is a way for people to assess their skills and qualities, consider their aims in life and set goals in order to realise and maximise their potential.

Early life development and early formative experiences within the family, and in other settings such as at school, can help to shape us as adults. Personal development should not, however, stop later in life.

This book is designed to help you to identify the skills you need to set life goals that can enhance your employability prospects, raise your confidence, and lead to a more fulfilling, higher quality life. It aims to help you plan to make relevant, positive and effective life choices and decisions for your future, to support personal empowerment.

It contains information and advice to help you to think about your personal development and ways in which you can work towards goals and your full potential.

USING THIS BOOK

This book can be used to help with thinking about personal development at any level, from a small change like learning a new language for a holiday, to major changes like a new career. The processes and tools described can be used formally or informally, and also in full or in part.

The key is to take what you want and find useful at any given time, and leave the rest.

WHY IS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPORTANT?

There are many ideas surrounding personal development, one of which is Abraham Maslow's process of self-actualisation. Maslow (1970) suggested that all individuals have an in-built need for personal development which occurs through a process called self-actualisation.

The extent to which people are able to develop depends on certain needs being met. These needs form a hierarchy. Only when one level of need is satisfied can a higher one be developed (see Figure 1). As change occurs throughout life, however, the level of need motivating someone's behaviour at any one time will also change.

The levels are:

- At the bottom of the hierarchy are the basic **physiological needs** for food, drink, sex and sleep, i.e., the basics for survival.
- Second are the **needs for safety and security** in both the physical and economic sense.
- Thirdly, progression can be made to satisfying the **need for love and belonging**.
- The fourth level refers to meeting the **need for self-esteem and self-worth**. This is the level most closely related to 'self-empowerment'.
- The fifth level relates to the **need to understand**. This level includes more abstract ideas such as curiosity and the search for meaning or purpose and a deeper understanding.
- The sixth relates to **aesthetic needs** for beauty, symmetry and order.
- Finally, at the top of Maslow's hierarchy is the **need for self-actualisation**.

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PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

There are a number of things that are vital in supporting your personal development. These include developing a vision of where you want to be, and planning how you are going to get there. Alongside these, it is also helpful to take some simple but practical steps to change how you organise your life.

These changes, outlined in this chapter, will help to give you more time and space to manage your personal development activities. Without that, you may struggle to find the time and energy to improve your skills or study.

For example, you may need to make some changes to the way that you organise your time, to ensure that you have time to practise your new skill.

ORGANISING YOUR TIME

If you are considering making changes in your life, finding additional time often poses a problem. It could be that the changes you are thinking of making are to ensure you have extra time to:

- Spend with your family;
- Spend on things you enjoy doing;
- Devote to your work; or
- Devote to your education.

Whatever the reason, looking at how you spend your time will encourage you to think of ways your time could be managed more effectively.

**The full eBook
is available at
www.skillsyouneed.com**