

# Step 1: Professional Self-Reflection

## Purpose

In this step consider what external factors or trends are affecting your professional practice. The outcomes are your short-term (1 to 3 years) and long-term (3 to 5 years) goals.

Reflect on where you are in your career and where you would like to be in the future. This becomes a critical first step in planning for continuing professional development and career management.

Self-reflection will clarify where you are now and where you want to go. You can then position yourself to achieve your desired level of proficiency through establishing short-term and long-term goals.

## Process Requirements

This worksheet is for your personal use. It serves as the basis for completing the Step 3: Learning Plan. It is recommended that you complete this worksheet before the start of your five-year recertification cycle. The minimum number of goals you must identify is one, but the appropriate number will depend on your personal/professional situation. Note that it is not a requirement to reach each goal in order to receive CPE credit or to recertify. Any goals not reached in a given 5-year cycle can be used as a basis for self-reflection in the next recertification cycle. If your professional situation changes, you may revise your goals as needed.

## What are my current practice area(s) and/or professional interests?

Identify your work setting (e.g., acute care hospital), position (e.g., clinical manager) and/or practice area (e.g., pediatric nutrition, public health, management, sales/marketing, performance improvement, wellness). Be as specific as possible. If you work in multiple practice settings or practice areas, list all of them. If you are not currently employed, you may wish to indicate your professional interests.

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## Within my area(s) of practice and/or professional interests, what roles or responsibilities do I perform now?

Indicate what it is that you do in your current practice areas. Sample questions could include:

- Do you teach?
- Do you conduct research?



## ***What do I want my future practice area to be?***

Identify a work or volunteer setting (e.g., acute care hospital), a position (e.g., clinical manager) and/or practice area (e.g., pediatric nutrition) you hope to obtain in the future. Be as specific as you can. If you anticipate working in multiple practice settings or practice areas, list all of them.

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- peer review and discussions with colleagues
- review and appraisal of prior learning activities, and
- awards, recognition certificates.

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## ***What are my professional strengths? What are my professional areas for improvement?***

Considering your responses to the questions so far, determine your strengths and professional areas for improvement.

To answer this question, it may be beneficial to gather information from a variety of sources. Components might include:

- formal evaluations, including peer review, annual performance appraisal or regulatory surveys
- customer feedback, e.g., surveys, compliments and complaints
- practice outcomes, e.g., client/patient success from planned interventions, contributions to teams and completion of identified objectives

## ***What are my professional goals?***

Based on the professional self-reflection you have just completed, develop and prioritize your professional goals, both short-term (1 to 3 years) and long-term (3 to 5 years). List as many goals as you want to, but be realistic in your expectations. These are the goals you will submit on your Step 3: Learning Plan.

It may be helpful to distinguish between professional goals and learning goals. A professional goal may consist of an overall professional objective, (e.g., “I want to become a Board Certified Specialist in Pediatric Nutrition,” or “I want to become elected as the state president of my dietetic association,”) whereas a learning goal might support a professional goal (e.g., “I want to learn more about pediatric nutrition,” or “I want to learn more about

verbal communication, leadership or organizational structure.”). For the most part you may want to focus more upon learning goals when submitting your Step 3: Learning Plan.

### ***Long Term: (3-5 years)***

### ***Short Term: (1-3 years)***