

Lesson 3

Personal Growth Plan



Key Words

adaptability
assertion
change orientation
deference
emotional intelligence
intrapersonal
persistence

What You Will Learn to Do

- Develop a plan for personal growth

Linked Core Abilities

- Build your capacity for lifelong learning

Skills and Knowledge You Will Gain Along the Way

- Match the key emotional skills to the relevant skills dimensions
- Develop strategies for growth in two emotional skill areas
- Plan self-directed development activities
- Define the key words contained in this lesson

Introduction

You need to have goals in your life, and those goals should be clearly defined so you know how to achieve them. For example, to choose a certain career or lose a specific number of pounds, you should have a well-defined strategy for getting from where you are now to where you'd like to be in the future. You've probably heard the old adage, "If you don't know where you're going, any road can lead you there." Likewise, if you don't know where you are, how do you know which road to choose? This lesson presents a personal growth plan that you can use to make certain you achieve the goals you set for yourself.

Most of the success-oriented products being marketed today, such as trendy diets and get-rich-quick programs, focus on a goal and tell you how to get there. These programs assume that if you "do as they do," you will be successful. The problem with this approach is that one method of planning doesn't work for everyone. Those who created the programs don't know where you are today, so how can they give you directions to where you want to go?

The Personal Skills Map

All of us at one time or another have taken a trip and gotten lost. Did you stop and ask for directions, look at a map, or call the person at your destination to get more information about how to get to where you're going? Regardless of the method you chose, you first had to ascertain, "Where am I now?" Only then could you determine how to get where you were going. The Personal Skills Map (a short version is on page 18) offers a way to discover where you are now and shows you how to get to where you want to go.

The Personal Skills Map helps you identify where you are now and shows you what you need to know to accomplish your goals.

The Success Profiler

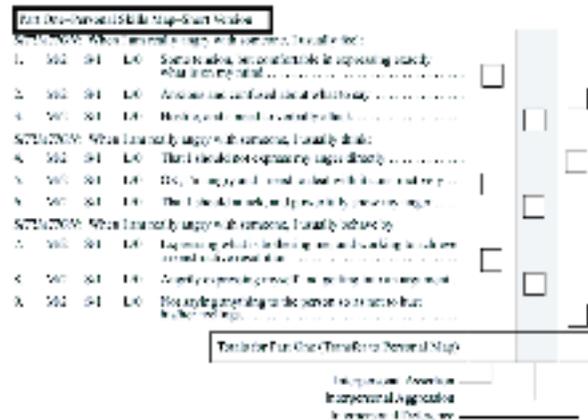
The Success Profiler is a systematic, research-based assessment and skill-building system designed for the following purposes:

- Adapt to change
- Develop leadership skills
- Enhance ability to learn
- Promote sensitivity/diversity
- Build teamwork skills
- Prevent violent behavior

Rather than attempting to address knowledge and skills, this approach focuses on the **emotional intelligence** needed for success in key emotional skill areas. The assessment helps you identify those skills you need to develop, those that need strengthening, and those that can use some enhancement.

Key Note Term

emotional intelligence – a learned ability to identify, experience, understand, and express human emotions in healthy and productive ways



Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

You begin the process of identifying where you are now by completing a four-part profiler assessment. After it's completed, you will transfer your results onto your personal map.

The personal map is divided into 14 critical areas—key emotional skills. The following section covers these critical areas.

Self-Esteem

The Self-Esteem scale indicates a self-perceived level of personal worth. Research indicates that it is the most fundamental skill, and it relates to major aspects of mental health and a healthy personality.

Interpersonal Assertion

The Interpersonal Assertion scale indicates how effectively an individual uses direct, honest, and appropriate expression of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in dealings with others. It indicates an ability to be direct and honest in communicating with others without violating the rights of the other person.

Interpersonal Awareness

This Interpersonal Awareness scale indicates an individual's evaluation of his or her ability for appropriate social, emotional, and physical distance in verbal and non-verbal interactions with others.

Empathy

The Empathy scale indicates an individual's ability to sense, understand, and accept another person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Empathy is a primary characteristic of a skilled communicator. People with strong empathy tend to be sociable and outgoing.

Drive Strength/Motivation

The Drive Strength/Motivation scale indicates motivation and goal-setting abilities. Drive strength shows an ability to marshal energy and motivation toward the accomplishment of personal goals.

Key Note Term

assertion – the act of asserting; to state or declare positively and often forcefully or aggressively

Decision Making

The Decision Making scale indicates perceived skill in formulating and initiating effective problem-solving procedures. The ability to make decisions is a key ingredient of self-acceptance and positive self-regard.

Time Management

The Time Management scale assesses ability to organize and use time to further individual and career goals. Ability to manage time is an ingredient in self-regard, sensitivity to needs, and perseverance in completing tasks.

Sales Orientation/Leadership

The Sales Orientation/Leadership scale indicates perceived skill in positively impacting and influencing the actions of other people. The ability to influence others in a positive way is an important aspect of leadership/sales.

Commitment Ethic

The Commitment Ethic scale indicates perceived skill in completing projects and job assignments dependably and successfully. People with a strong commitment ethic are usually perceived as dependable and committed by others, are inner-directed, and persevere in completing projects regardless of difficulties encountered.

Stress Management

The Stress Management scale assesses perceived skill in managing stress and anxiety. People with skills in managing stress positively are competent managers of time and are flexible, self-assured, stable, and self-reliant.

Physical Wellness

The Physical Wellness scale reflects the extent to which healthy attitudes and living patterns that are important to physical health and well-being have been established. Physical wellness is highly correlated to positive stress management and high self-esteem. People with high scores have developed high levels of self-control over potentially harmful behavior patterns.

Interpersonal Aggression (Anger Management)

The Interpersonal Aggression scale assesses the degree to which communication styles violate, overpower, dominate, or discredit another person's rights, thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. High interpersonal aggression is related to the personality characteristics of rebelliousness, resentment, and oversensitive response to real or imagined affronts.

Interpersonal Deference (Fear Management)

The Interpersonal Deference scale measures the degree to which communication style is indirect, self-inhibiting, self-denying, and ineffectual for the accurate expression of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. High interpersonal deference is related to the personality characteristics of apprehensiveness, shyness, and oversensitivity to threat or conflict.

Key Emotional Skills By Skill Dimension	Intrapersonal (Self-Map)	Interpersonal (Other-Map)	Problematic Behavior (Self-Map)
Self-Esteem	Self-Esteem		
Stress Management	Stress Management		
Physical Wellness	Physical Wellness		
Career/Life Skills	Drive Strength/Motivation		
	Decision Making		
	Time Management		
	Sales Orientation/Leadership		
Personal Wellness Skills	Stress Management		
	Physical Wellness		
Problematic Behavior	Interpersonal Aggression		
	Deference		
Personal Change Orientation			

Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army

Key Note Terms

change orientation – a scale that indicates the degree of motivation and readiness for change in the skills measured by the Personal Skills Map

intrapersonal – occurring within the individual mind or self

adaptability – capability or willingness to adapt

Change Orientation (Comfort Level)

The **Change Orientation** scale indicates the degree of motivation and readiness for change in the skills measured by the Personal Skills Map. A high score indicates dissatisfaction with current skills and a strong conviction of the need to make personal changes.

Integrating the Personal Skills Map and Emotional Skills

On the Personal Map, the 14 key emotional skills are grouped into 5 skill dimensions. These skill dimensions help you identify your strengths and weakness in **intrapersonal** skills (those that occur by yourself), interpersonal skills (those that occur with others), any problematic behavior that needs to be addressed, and your willingness to change (**adaptability**).

The first skill dimension is Intrapersonal Skill and includes the Self-Esteem emotional skill. This skill dimension is related to how you evaluate and accept yourself as a person.

The second skill dimension is Interpersonal Skills and consists of the Assertion, Awareness, and Empathy emotional skills. This skill dimension is related to how you interact with others and how you tend to communicate in stressful situations.

The third skill dimension is Career/Life Skills and consists of the Drive Strength/Motivation, Decision Making, Time Management, Sales Orientation/Leadership, and Commitment Ethic emotional skills. This skill dimension focuses on skills that are important in effectively managing your daily environment and school demands.

The fourth skill dimension is Personal Wellness Skills and consists of the Stress Management and Physical Wellness emotional skills. This skill dimension is extremely important in both emotional and physical well-being.

The fifth skill dimension is Problematic Behavior and consists of the Interpersonal Aggression and **Deference** emotional skills. This skill dimension provides an indication of behaviors that negatively affect personal mental health and career effectiveness.

Key Note Term

deference – the respect and esteem due a superior or elder; also affected or ingratiating regard for another's wishes

At the bottom of the Personal Skills Map is the Personal Change Orientation category. This score indicates your motivation and willingness to change behavior.

High scores on the Personal Skills Map indicate that you are aware of a need to improve your personal skills. It is possible that this awareness has caused some increased stress and anxiety in your life. Conversely, a low score on the map indicates that you are satisfied with your current interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and behavior.

Conclusion

Whether you are satisfied with your current skill level or desire a change, knowing where you are today can help you map a plan that leads you toward your goals.

It's nice to know that our personal skills are changeable and that we are capable of learning and growing throughout our life. If you are ready to strengthen or enhance your current skills, have **persistence** in your efforts, and use the results of the assessment to help guide you toward your personal goals, you will become a better, well-rounded individual.

In the next lesson, you will see how active learners do not wait for learning to happen—they make it happen. You will see how becoming an active learner will broaden your life experiences and help make you a more well-rounded and balanced individual.

Key Note Term

persistence – the action or fact of persisting, to go on resolutely or stubbornly in spite of opposition, importunity, or warning; to remain unchanged or fixed in a specified character, condition, or position; the quality or state of being persistent

Lesson Review

1. Choose one personal skill that you'd like to improve. Explain why and how you'd like to make this improvement.
2. Define the term *emotional intelligence*.
3. How can physical wellness affect your self-esteem?
4. What motivates you to finish a project?