



## Annual Professional Development Plan Worksheet

Professional development is key to ensure your skills and competencies are staying sharp and up-to-date. And not only does this benefit you as a professional, but it also benefits your organization. Their investment in you and your success is valuable and often quietly encouraged; it's important to know how to ask and how to show a Return on Investment, or ROI, to hear the yes you want.

You'll want to start by completing the Long-Term Professional Development Plan, then this worksheet, and finally the Proposal. You can complete these on your own, follow along with the pre-recorded video in Learn@IAAP, with your admin team, or with IAAP live virtually through HQ or with a branch or region. The worksheet and proposal template are great resources that can be used year after year to work toward your professional development goals and help put together an ROI proposal for your employer to support your goals. You should also bring your Long-Term Professional Development Plan to the table when negotiating a new job offer to ensure your professional development is integral in your new role.

Start by thinking about what you are able to accomplish this year using the Long-Term Professional Development Plan. What are reasonable and actionable steps or offerings that will move you closer to or even accomplish your overall career goals?

What are 1-3 goals or steps you want to accomplish this year and how will they benefit your organization?

What are 1-2 competencies you want to either learn or enhance this year?

Are there any recurring challenges you face that you need help finding solutions for?

Next, let's jump into membership. Membership in IAAP is a huge value-add for both employees and employers, but it often requires more explanation, especially for those unfamiliar with what associations are and what they're about. Lay out how the value you receive in IAAP impacts you and your organization. You may note the networking and community and share how it helps you find solutions more efficiently to common issues or questions. Or being connected to a broad range of industries will help you stay up-to-date on trends and happenings. List all the ways IAAP benefits you as a professional and how that in turn impacts your organization.

Then we'll move on to professional development opportunities that address the goals, challenges, and competencies you noted above. Do you want to get certified? Do you plan to recertify? Maybe you want to expand your role and would benefit from a certificate course on a particular topic. Or perhaps leadership development would positively impact your team or organization. (IAAP has many opportunities listed in the Programs and Services Overview)

Now that you have your list of desired professional development, it's time to get more specific. List each professional development offering and 3-5 bullets under each on how successfully participating and completing that training will benefit both you and your team or organization. How will it help you achieve your career goals, solve your challenges, or increase your competency? Make sure the bullets are specific and measurable.

Next, let's list the cost (both time and money) to each item on the list. Note how many hours/days you'll be away from the office or away from your work and who is willing to fill in while you're gone. (or the back-up plan that works within your organization's culture – spoiler alert: working DURING the training isn't an option. That's just wasted time and money for everyone.)

As you're preparing the financial part of the proposal, make sure to add all costs you'll incur and break it down by line item. So for example, to attend in-person CAPstone, you'll note registration, airfare, ground transportation to and from your home airport (and possibly parking), ground transportation to and from the host hotel, hotel cost, and meals that aren't covered by registration. Virtual events should only require the registration fee. We recommend creating a separate Excel worksheet, which is a great way to keep track of all professional development expenses throughout the year.

Lastly, let's draft a cover letter or email introducing the proposal and requesting time to meet after they've had a chance to review. Make the message professional but authentically you. Your professional development benefits your organization, so make sure to highlight their ROI. High-quality learning integrated into your day-to-day life can make you more productive, efficient, strategic, a more engaged and inclusive team member and in general, a happier employee. Noting these in your cover letter showcases your desire to think of the good of the organization, which is an excellent place to begin from in your annual professional development proposal.

The final step is to bring it all together on the Annual Professional Development Proposal Template. Remember to be brief and concise, citing specific examples, websites, and brochures when available for their additional research.

Send the proposal and cover letter with a request to meet and discuss after they've had a chance to review it. The discussion is essential; adding additional context beyond what you've included in the proposal will show them your commitment to lifelong learning, not only for yourself but for the organization as a whole.

NOTE: If you have a group of admins within the same team or organization, consider creating the proposal as a corporate membership. You have access to all the same trainings and programs with a discount!

**You are a valuable member of your organization, and your professional development is an imperative to both your success and the success of your team. The answer is always no if you don't ask, so be bold and direct; even if you get a no in your first ask, it doesn't mean it's a no every time! Your IAAP community is here to support, so don't hesitate to reach out with questions or tips.**

**NEXT STEP: Complete the Annual Professional Development Proposal Template**

**Employer Support Proposal Package**

**Step 1: Overall Long-Term Professional Development Plan**

**Step 2: *Annual Professional Development Plan Worksheet***

**Step 3: Annual Professional Development Proposal Template**