



**UNIVERSITY  
OF LAGOS**



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# **UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL THROUGH PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Manpower development refers to systemic planning and application of training and related activities to provide employees with the whole range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective performance. Isolating training as the sole means of human resources development by organizations has since shifted to multifarious directions which include: training, mentoring, shadowing, counselling, and personal development.

Personal development in the workplace is a deliberate, intentional, and continuous journey of learning and growing through self-improvement. It is an individual's attempt at enhancing professional skills, expanding knowledge, developing abilities full potential, and quality of life. It boosts the employees'

confidence, performance, and self-worth, and in the long run, contributes more effectively to personal and organizational goals. It is a continuous active search for career growth opportunities. However, emphasis on personal development does not foreclose the provision of other manpower development opportunities by the employer.

The 2024 University of Lagos Best Graduating Student, David Akanmu aptly underscores the importance of personal development by quoting the words of Henry Ward Beecher thus, "...hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody else expects of you."

# UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL

## TO ACHIEVE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, WORKERS SHOULD EMBRACE THE FOLLOWING:

**Identify areas of deficiency:** Employees should identify their weaknesses through self-reflection, self-assessment, and feedback from annual performance evaluations, and from members of their teams. This will help them to determine areas where they need to acquire strength through learning and unlearning.

**Imbibe continuous learning:** Employees should learn new skills, take up online courses, or read books to expand their knowledge. Fee-paying online courses could be audited, that is, taken without payment of fees. The only challenge in that is the inability to obtain certificates. Some online courses are free. UNILAG Members of staff should take advantage of the Coursera online licenses obtained by the University.

**Learn from mistakes and failures:** Employees should view mistakes and failures at work as opportunities for growth and learning. Take redemptive steps. Learn from the challenges and difficulties encountered in the delivery of services. Overcoming them can be a great confidence booster. This position is corroborated by the psychologist Gary Klein. He suggests that two things are required to improve performance: reducing errors and increasing insights. He offers the following equation as a helpful visual.



Source: Coursera

**Embrace change:** Change is inevitable as new skills and responsibilities keep emerging. Moreover, the workplace experience is becoming more technologically driven, increasingly competitive, and dynamic, with the attendant rapid evolution of job requirements. Get curious and learn. Do not be left behind. Move with the time.

**Adopt role models:** Identify exemplary members of your team or colleague with demonstrated prowess and emulate them. Learn soft skills from them. This is called shadowing in manpower development.

**Adopt mentors:** A mentor is a more experienced professional who advises, guides, teaches, and provides hands-on informal training to less experienced ones. Get a mentor.

**Acquire additional skills, competences, and qualifications:** There are a series of part-time diploma and degree courses at the University of Lagos. Take full advantage of them.

## SUGGESTED AREAS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Employees who want to remain competitive and fit for purpose are encouraged to beef up in the understated areas:

- Effective Communication: Improvement of verbal and written communication skills
- Emotional Intelligence
- Teamwork
- Productivity
- Critical Thinking
- Adaptability
- Leadership Skills
- Interpersonal skills

Conclusively, personal development is a journey to becoming a better version of oneself, not a destination. It is about taking responsibility for one's growth and development, as well as thoughts, feelings, and actions. It makes individuals more confident, productive, and effective, ultimately leading to greater success for themselves, their teams, and the workplace; the University of Lagos.



The aforementioned skills and more will be deliberated on in subsequent editions of this newsletter.