

Professional Development Plan

John Weng

San Diego State University

Author Note

John Weng is a second year Master's student in the Post Secondary Educational Leadership Program with a specialization in Student Affairs.

Professional Development Plan

Introduction

When I first started considering my goals for my career moving forward, I originally found myself at a surprising loss. I partially attributed this to the fact that I recently started my role as the Coordinator of Student Activities for John Muir College, an undergraduate college at UC San Diego. As such, much of my thoughts had been focused on understanding the various aspects of my job in addition to learning about the culture and processes that exist in the new work environment instead of thinking about my next career goals. The exercise of creating a professional development plan has in turn started to challenge me and my thinking about my career further down the road, and how I might be able to be intentional in this role to gain experiences needed for future positions.

In thinking about experiences to be gained and my goals for the future, I originally started with thinking about career track options that I might be interested in. By creating a professional development model (Appendix A) that applied to my professional interests, I was able to be intentional in my trajectory yet remain broad in terms of my options. The plan is seated on the foundation of my past experiences in Greek Life, Assessment, and student government, three areas of passion that have brought me to my first full-time job. From my current role, I hope to continue developing skills working in advising through advancement opportunities that might arise. This could take the form of an assistant director role or an advising role. As I consider this transition, I might start to consider educational development in the form of a doctoral degree as I start gaining areas of interest in research.

Short Term Goals

In thinking about one of my original reasons for pursuing a graduate education, professional development was one of my main goals; I had entered a graduate program in hopes

that I would acquire the skills and knowledge that would help me succeed as a professional. I consider my first full-time job offer one of the first markers of success of this goal. As such, I have little intentions of searching for a new role for at least a few years. Thus, when considering the short-term goals that I may have, I think about the different ways I can continue to develop the skillsets that will better help me succeed in my current role. I am currently in a position where I am serving undergraduate students of John Muir College developmentally through advising student organizations and coordinating college-wide activities and initiatives. Some ways that I can continue my growth and development includes continuously updating myself on the needs of my students so that my programming can stay pertinent in addressing the needs of the students.

After a few years of serving in this capacity, I would like to continue working in a role that works closely with students, as one of the most rewarding parts of my previous jobs was always the student interaction I had. A way to help prepare for my next transition is to think about the skills or experience needed for any roles that I may be interested in down the road; these include serving as an Assistant Dean or as an Advisor for a larger community, or at a different level. In thinking about the skills needed for some of these roles, I recognize the importance of gaining coordination experience and developing a strong base of advising skills in my current role. Other ways to consider my development are to utilize the self-assessment for professional competencies and to look to see what professional associations currently deem important.

Long Term Goals

When it comes to long-term career plans, I'm not always certain that I would want to stay in administration for higher education. While the ability to lead and impact an entire division is enticing, I also frequently consider the possibility of becoming a faculty member to prepare the

next generation of student affairs professionals or becoming a consultant to help improve departments and organizations. In thinking about some of my past experiences, while I've enjoyed student interaction and working closely with student leaders, I also enjoy creating lasting change and serving as a resource to other people. I particularly enjoy governance and the ability to work with leaders. In thinking about my broad array of potential interests, I recognize that it is important to continue broadening my skill sets and developing a strong network in order to remain flexible in my career track. In order to refine my interests and understand where I might enjoy working down the road, I think it will be important to tap into the network I have developed with leadership, faculty, and higher education consultants to better understand their work and how I might be able to fit into it.

Conclusion

When I first started my graduate education, the main goal I had in mind was to find a job that would allow me to do something that I was passionate about. In considering the importance of continued development and goal setting for the future, I now think about how it might be beneficial to be intentional with the experiences I have in each of my roles. While I value the opportunities that a conference can provide, this plan has also helped me to think outside of the box in the process. I plan to continue utilizing professional competencies as a source to understand areas of improvement as well as my network to continue helping me grow as an individual and a professional.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Appendix A

Professional Development Model

