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## Overview

In order to compete successfully, commercial businesses have to continuously improve their products and services; other kinds of organisations need to keep up to date with technology and best practice.

One of the ways in which organisations improve is by adopting a culture that encourages their people to take responsibility for improving their own and their organisation's performance. This often involves individuals acquiring new skills or expertise, taking on additional responsibilities and making improvements to working practices.

This standard is about regularly reviewing, planning, implementing and evaluating the success of objectives designed to improve your own performance as well as the performance of your organisation or team.

This standard consists of **three** elements:

- 1 Evaluate and develop your own skills and expertise
- 2 Improve customer service delivery
- 3 Improve quality, productivity and team working within your organisation

### **This is what the standard covers**

The first stage of the planning cycle involves review. You will need to involve colleagues at work and ideally customers. You should discuss which kinds of performance improvements are likely to benefit you and your organisation. Detailed notes should be kept to help in the preparation of an action plan. Once you have collected sufficient constructive advice and ideas, you will need to discuss them with your manager and agree on the priorities. It is important to ensure that the objectives agreed are achievable.

The objectives that you agree with your manager should enable specific targets to be identified that can be written into an action plan. There must be a way of measuring any targets that you set and you should agree how they will be measured. It is also important to set out realistic timescales.

For the purpose of this standard, the action plan should include, as a minimum, proposals for:

- 1 improvement to your own skills and knowledge
- 2 improvement to customer service delivery
- 3 improvements to quality, productivity and team working within your organisation

Once agreed, the action plan should become a 'working' document – not one which is put away and forgotten about. You should frequently check progress towards achievement of the objectives, and make a note of any changes to the

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timescales that were previously agreed.

If the plan soon becomes out of date because, for example,

- 1 all the targets or objectives are achieved very quickly
- 2 it proves impossible to make progress towards any of the targets
- 3 there is a change of strategy within your organisation
- 4 operational changes affect your or your team's plans

you must go back to your manager and revise the plan as soon as it becomes apparent that major changes are necessary

It is perfectly normal to achieve some things in an action plan and not others.

What is important is to honestly evaluate the progress made towards the entire plan at reasonable intervals – at least every three months, but more often if you wish - and then create a revised or a new plan for the next period.

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### Performance criteria

#### Evaluate and develop your own skills and expertise

- You must be able to:*
- P1 objectively assess your existing skills and expertise against current industry standards
  - P2 identify ways in which you can improve your performance at work by improving your skills and expertise
  - P3 seek constructive feedback from others on how your performance at work could be improved
  - P4 identify with your manager areas for development to maintain and improve your own skills and expertise
  - P5 set yourself improvement objectives which are specific and achievable
  - P6 agree an action plan with your manager that includes realistic timescales and measurable targets
  - P7 evaluate your progress and update your action plan regularly with your manager

#### Improve customer service delivery

- You must be able to:*
- P8 check that the service you and your team give meets your customers' needs and expectations
  - P9 where you or your team could have given better service to your customers identify how the service could have been improved
  - P10 include in your personal action plan at least one target that should result in an improvement to the service you or your team give to customers
  - P11 share relevant information with others in your team to improve your organisation's customer service delivery
  - P12 provide evidence that the service you and/or your team give to customers has improved over time

#### Improve quality, productivity and team working within your organisation

- You must be able to:*
- P13 periodically identify possible improvements to the quality of your organisation's products or services by improvements to:
    - P13.1 your organisation's systems or procedures
    - P13.2 your own skills or expertise
    - P13.3 your organisation's resources
    - P13.4 team working within your organisation
  - P14 periodically identify possible improvements to your organisation's productivity by improvements to:
    - P14.1 your organisation's systems or procedures
    - P14.2 your own skills or expertise
    - P14.3 your organisation's resources

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- P14.4 team working within your organization
- P15 discuss with your manager the improvements to quality, productivity and team working that you have identified.
- P16 include in your personal development plan at least one target that might contribute to improvements in your organisation's quality of product/service, productivity and team working.
- P17 provide evidence that the quality of product or service, productivity and team working within your organisation has been maintained or improved over time.

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### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

### Communication

- K1 with colleagues
- K2 with customers

### Workplace policy and practice

*You need to know and understand:*

- K3 workplace objectives, priorities, standards and procedures
- K4 the range of work carried out in the workplace
- K5 the working practices existing in the workplace
- K6 the key job roles within the printing and graphic communications industry and their main purposes

### The identification and assessment of printing options

*You need to know and understand:*

- K7 the reasons for selecting one process over another
- K8 the choice of processes for any particular product
- K9 the stages in the printing process from pre-press to printed product

### Time and resources

*You need to know and understand:*

- K10 the different types of resource, including labour, materials, machinery
- K11 the relationship between resource usage and profitability
- K12 how to maximise productivity
- K13 the relationship between productivity and competitiveness

### Management

*You need to know and understand:*

- K14 target-setting
- K15 problem solving
- K16 ways of presenting and describing workplace activities
- K17 business improvement techniques

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### Additional Information

#### Scope/range

To achieve this standard, it is not necessary to show that all objectives or targets in action plans have been met.

However, action planning and review covering all the areas specified in this standard is a continuing activity over a reasonable timescale. It is unlikely that this timescale would be less than six months.

Action plans must have been used as working documents and updated regularly. A single action plan with little evidence of the cycle of review through to evaluation is insufficient.

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**Scope/range  
related to  
performance  
criteria**

Customers in this context may be 'internal' or 'external' to the workplace.

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**Relevant occupations** 5423 Bookbinders and print finishers

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**Suite** Handbinding

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