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On the Road to *Learning*

your learning resource guide

- RESPECT
- ACCOUNTABILITY
- INTEGRITY
- EXCELLENCE

ALBERTA'S PUBLIC SERVICE
Proudly working together to build a stronger province for current and future generations

Government of Alberta ■

Why Learning?

Learning is an essential part of life at work. Building knowledge and skills, learning about different approaches and strengthening your competencies can help you adapt to change, find new solutions, and be more innovative. In short, learning can make you more effective at what you do and can help you prepare for the future.

With so many options for learning, knowing where to start can be challenging. This resource puts information about Alberta Public Service learning and development opportunities at your fingertips. Use this information when mapping out your learning and development goals in your Career and Learning Plan.

Individually and together, we're on a learning curve that never ends. This helps us be the best we can be as we proudly work together to build a stronger province for current and future generations.



A word cloud graphic on a dark blue background. The words are in various shades of light blue and white. The largest word is "learn". Other prominent words include "develop", "success", "grow", "progress", "build", "lead", "excellence", "gain", "inspire", "think", and "expand".

Introduction

In today's ever-changing work environment, learning is an important strategy in building capacity, for individuals and within the Alberta Public Service (APS). The labour market and work environment of the future will demand new skills and the need for strong leadership. We are committed to helping you develop so you are equipped to support the achievement of government goals.

For you, it is important to continue to grow in new directions so that you are prepared to take on the challenges you face today and in the future.

How to use this Learning Resource Guide

This guide is a tool to help you generate ideas when you plan out what and where you need to develop. It pulls together information on all the cross-government learning and development supports the APS offers to help you meet your development goals through your Career and Learning Plan.

Organized to help you find the information that is most applicable to you, each section contains information on programs and offerings relevant to specific groups including:

- all employees,
- supervisors, including those who aspire to become supervisors, and
- managers at all levels.

Paving the Foundations of Learning: APS Career and Learning Plans

What is a Career and Learning Plan?

Your Career and Learning Plan is an integral part of your performance plan. It connects your personal learning strategy to your current performance goals and longer-term career aspirations. It is a place for you to capture your annual learning goals, map out specific actions to help you meet those goals and track your progress throughout the year.

Your learning goals are based on the gap between the skills and competencies you have and what you need to achieve your performance goals. They may include maintaining your technical expertise or developing new skills to achieve your business or leadership results.



Career and Learning Plan (continued)

Career growth is the result of ongoing planning, learning and experiences that contribute to advancing individual and organizational goals. Your career goals are based on the gap between your current skills and competencies and those you need to succeed in the future. Check out the Career Management Portal for tips, suggestions and tools to help you reflect on your career aspirations (www.chr.alberta.ca/careerportal).

Reflect

The first step is to identify your learning needs. Here are some ways to help you think through your learning goals:

- Look at your job description and performance plan and note any areas where you will need to use new skills or do something different.
- Ask your supervisor where you can enhance your skills or develop new ones to help you do your job even better.
- Assess yourself using the APS Competencies and discuss them with your supervisor.
- Use the tools identified in the Career and Learning Planning Guide (www.chr.alberta.ca/careerlearningguide-employees).

Next, think about your longer-term career development:

- Ask yourself where you would like to be in three to five years. What skills will you need to develop to help you get there?

- Discuss your career goals with your supervisor and get their perspective on which skills or competencies you should focus on and how you can develop through training and on-the-job experience.
- Use the tools and resources available through the Career Management Portal (www.chr.alberta.ca/careerportal).

Research

Once you have mapped out your learning goals, use this guide to help you find opportunities that match your learning goals. Be sure to consider both formal learning and on-the-job opportunities.

Decide

Talk with your supervisor and prioritize your career and learning goals and the opportunities you have identified to help you meet your goals.

Plan

Capture the actions you will take throughout the year in your Career and Learning Plan. Your final step is to action your plan and start on your road to learning!

For more information and assistance with filling out your Career and Learning Plan, visit www.chr.alberta.ca/career or contact your HR Consultant.

Competencies

What are Competencies?

In every job, some people perform more effectively than others. Competencies provide a means of looking at those behaviours that differentiate the “best from the rest” and a common language for talking about critical on-the-job behaviours.

Essentially, competencies are any attitude, skill, behaviour, motive or other personal characteristic that are essential to perform a job, or more importantly, differentiate superior performers from solid performers.

The Government of Alberta Competency Model contains a set of core competencies that apply to all roles across the service and a set of role-specific that apply only to certain roles in the APS. There are seven core and eight role-specific competencies. Within each competency, there are several levels which describe the cumulative behaviours within that competency that are required for different roles.

For more information on the APS Competencies, go to www.chr.alberta.ca/competencies.

Levels of Excellence

The Levels of Excellence are a guide for competency development based on the APS Competency Model. They provide a starting point to help you narrow down which competencies, and which levels within those competencies, are most relevant in your role.

Your Individual Competency Profile is a guide for you, as you focus on your competency development. You may need to customize your profile with your supervisor, as needed, to better fit your specific role. Discuss your profile with your supervisor.

Find out more about the Levels of Excellence at www.chr.alberta.ca/loe.





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excellence

learn
develop
grow

ALL EMPLOYEES

All Employees



The programs, courses, tools and resources in this section are open to employees across the Alberta Public Service (APS). For more information about each of these opportunities including how to register, follow the associated web link or contact information. Your individual Competency Profile on our APS Levels of Excellence website can also be useful when thinking about your Career and Learning Plan (www.chr.alberta.ca/loe). Remember to talk to your supervisor to see which opportunities make the most sense for you!

GoA Learning Centre

The GoA Learning Centre offers high quality classroom and e-learning opportunities in order to improve competencies, knowledge, and skills that help employees become productive and effective members of the Alberta Public Service (APS).

The GoA Learning Centre Catalogue is a tool to help you identify and plan out areas to develop whether you are looking to focus on your role as a supervisor; improve your communication skills; or refine a specific competency. View the complete catalogue online at www.goalearningcentre.gov.ab.ca/catalogue.

To make it easier for you to identify the area you aspire to develop, the courses and offerings are organized into 4 sections:

Topic Areas

Are you looking to develop a particular area? This section identifies nine core topic areas and their respective courses and descriptions.

- *Career Development*
- *Communication in the Workplace*
- *Leadership Development*
- *Managing Business Resources*
- *Personal Effectiveness*
- *Service Excellence*
- *Team Building*
- *Technology Training*
- *Workplace Health*

Target Audience

Perhaps you want to focus on your job as a supervisor or a specific role within your job. Here you will find courses organized into four core target audiences and their designated symbol.

+	All Employees	All employees at all levels.
■	Role-specific	Professionals and specialists requiring specific training based on their role or function.
◆	Supervisors	Employees who supervise others.
●	Managers	Employees in a management role.



In addition to the GoA Learning Centre website, you can log on to MyAGent (<https://www.myagent.gov.ab.ca>) to find out about course offerings and current training opportunities. Current opportunities show up on the homepage of MyAGent, indicating courses, dates and locations.

Registration for all GoA Learning Centre courses is done through MyAGent. Detailed instructions on how to register for training are available through the On Line Assistant link located on the MyAGent homepage.

** The first time you use MyAGent, you'll need to validate your ID to be able to register for courses online.*

Competencies

Do you want to strengthen behaviours associated with one of the 15 competencies outlined in the APS Competency Model? This section will provide you with a listing of courses by competency and identify the most relevant competencies that align with the specific learning objectives for each course.

Programs and other learning opportunities

Looking for additional opportunities to develop your skills? This section provides you with a list of certificate programs, speaker series, and other learning and developmental opportunities.

Orientation to Government

If you are a new employee, these quarterly sessions give you an opportunity to meet and make connections with other new employees and gain a sense of the “big picture” in the APS. Profiled speakers at the session include the Deputy Minister of Executive Council, the Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, the Public Service Commissioner and a fellow employee. They cover topics including the Government’s strategic plan and priorities, the vision and values, government structure and processes and how to be successful in the APS.

The New Employee Orientation Website is also a valuable resource. It pulls together valuable resources and information and answers frequently asked questions.

www.chr.alberta.ca/orientation

Leading in Learning Series

Events are theme-based learning opportunities featuring expert speakers on business topics relevant to all levels of managers, and professional, technical, and senior administrative employees in the APS. There are typically three half-day sessions per learning year (September – June) on a particular theme, which is determined by a cross-government advisory panel.

www.chr.alberta.ca/lis

Employee Assessment Services

Provides multi-rater feedback on the level of your competencies based on the supervisor profile. The assessment asks you, your supervisor, your peers, and others you interact with to provide feedback. A consultant will help you interpret your results and provide advice on building your learning and development plan. Note: There are also specific services for supervisors and senior and executive managers.

www.chr.alberta.ca/assessment



On-the-Job Learning and Development

Courses, sessions and conferences are great, but some of the best learning happens on the job. It's effective because you learn the skills you need in the environment where you will use them.

The possibilities for on-the-job learning are limitless! From reading articles and publications to keeping on top of emerging issues to taking on a new project or joining an organizing team, there are lots of ways you can enhance your knowledge, skills and abilities in your workplace. For more ideas, look here:

www.chr.alberta.ca/onthejoblearning.

Other Learning Opportunities

In addition to the resources found in this guide, there may be a number of learning opportunities supported through your Ministry. Available opportunities are typically communicated through your Ministry Intranet site, Human Resources department and/or supervisor. Feel free to discuss with either your supervisor or Human Resource Consultant before registering for a course or program to see if the opportunity is right for you.

Focus on Career

With more than 100 different occupations in locations across Alberta, there are plenty of opportunities to grow and pursue a meaningful career in the APS. Your career may focus in a single Ministry or take you through several throughout your career journey. Be sure to take advantage of the many career supports we offer to help you as you reflect on your career aspirations and goals.

APS Career Development Resources

Find APS online career development resources all in one spot! Whether you're looking for tips on preparing your Career and Learning Plan or searching for learning and development opportunities, this site can lead you right to them. It also has a link to the Career Management Portal and to resources for supervisors to help them in developing others.

www.chr.alberta.ca/career

Career Management Portal

This site provides you with information, resources and tools to help you manage your career. It encourages self-discovery and personal accountability in determining your career path.

www.chr.alberta.ca/careerportal

Career Communities

Across the APS, groups of professionals have come together to form communities related to their occupations and careers. If you are on a similar career path, it may be worthwhile connecting with peers in your community. The APS career communities include the Intern Network, HR Community and Finance Community.

www.chr.alberta.ca/orientation/career-communities.htm

Key Resources

Development Tips Booklet

Helps you generate ideas and provides direction for your Career and Learning Plan. It contains suggestions and tips for on the job learning and experience, relationships and feedback from others you work with, training and formal education and off the job learning. The suggestions and tips also take into consideration your learning style and help you to find options well suited to the way you learn best.

<http://internal.gov.ab.ca/chr/learning/development-tips.pdf>

Corporate Membership Services

You have access to a number of corporate memberships to leading research organizations, including:

Conference Board of Canada

Founded in 1954, the Conference Board of Canada is an independent, not-for-profit research organization. They specialize in conducting research and assessing economic trends, public policy and organizational performance across Canada and internationally. As an APS employee, you have access to CBC research reports, on-line periodicals and presentation notes.

Corporate Leadership Council

The Corporate Leadership Council offers access to best practices information and research on a number of human resource and workplace related topics. Through the APS Corporate Membership, you have access to their teleconferences, reports, issue briefs and library of benchmarks and tools. Some of their recent research focuses on talent management, productivity, retention and employee engagement. As an APS employee, you have access to online research papers, presentations, discussion boards, teleconferences and databases.

Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC)

Founded in 1947, IPAC is an association of public servants, academics and others interested in public administration. They conduct research into areas of current interest in public administration and create knowledge networks in regions across Canada.

www.chr.alberta.ca/corporatememberships

Alberta Government Library

The Alberta Government Library (AGL) provides a full range of library services through its eight libraries. Their services include assistance with research requests, access to online databases and other electronic resources, subject-specific alerts and scanning services, interlibrary loans and more.

www.servicelink.gov.ab.ca/libraries





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*expand**inspire**excellence**think*

Supervisors



This information applies to you if your role is mainly focused on supervising and guiding staff towards achieving unit, program or organizational goals, through coaching, influencing and directing. This information will also be of interest if you aspire to become a supervisor. As a supervisor, you are responsible both for your own learning and for supporting your employees in their learning.



Developing Yourself

Here are some tools and learning opportunities to enhance your knowledge and skills as a supervisor. Refer to the section for All Employees for learning and development opportunities in other topic areas. Remember to review the APS Level of Excellence Supervisors Profile to help you narrow down which competencies - and which levels within those competencies - are most relevant to your role as a supervisor.

When you engage in your own learning, you not only develop yourself, but you also provide a good example to your staff.

Supervisor Assessment Services

Provides multi-rater feedback on the level of your competencies based on the supervisor profile noted above. The assessment asks you, your supervisor, your peers, and others you interact with to provide feedback. A consultant will help you interpret your results and provide advice on building your learning and development plan.

www.chr.alberta.ca/sas

Supervisor Certificate Program (SCP)

Is focused on developing the skills, knowledge and competencies that APS supervisors need to be successful in their role. It was designed for new and aspiring supervisors but if you are a seasoned

supervisor you may also consider attending to refresh your skills. Participants who complete all eight courses in the program receive a certificate of completion.

www.chr.alberta.ca/scp

Management Development Program (MDP)

Can help you develop your management and leadership competencies. It offers the opportunity to learn from colleagues and develop networks that are vital for success in a changing environment. The program is open to managers, technical, professional, and senior administrative employees.

www.chr.alberta.ca/mdp

Developing Others

As a supervisor, you are also responsible for supporting your staff in their learning. In addition to all of the tools and resources listed under the *All Employees* tab, here are some links to additional tools and references to assist you.

Competencies

A review of the APS Competencies is a good place to start when talking to your employees about developing their Career and Learning Plans. Review the Level of Excellence profiles for both the employee's current job and any that he or she aspires to. Agree on one or two competencies to focus on developing.

www.chr.alberta.ca/loe

Career & Learning

This website has information and tools to help you support your employees in their learning and development. It's a great resource for them too!

www.chr.alberta.ca/career

Development Tips Booklet

Taking a course is a good start to learning, but what comes next? Share the Development Tips Booklet with your employees to discover other ways to learn and, more importantly, ways to apply the learning in the workplace.

<http://internal.gov.ab.ca/chr/learning/development-tips.pdf>

Conversation Resources

As a supervisor, conversations around an employee's performance and learning and development are a key responsibility of your role and will provide some of the greatest support to the employee's success. These tools and resources will help you have effective conversations with your employees.

www.chr.alberta.ca/conversationresources





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lead

progress

inspire *build*

Management



Managers

Here are some tools and learning opportunities to enhance your knowledge and skills as a **manager** in the APS. Refer to the section for *All Employees* for learning opportunities available for other topic areas. If you supervise, be sure to look at the information in the *Supervisors* tab, particularly the section on *Developing Others*. Your individual Competency Profile on our APS Levels of Excellence website can also be useful when thinking about your Career and Learning Plan (www.chr.alberta.ca/loe).

Supervisor Assessment Services

Supervisor Assessment Services provides multi-rater feedback on the level of your competencies based on the supervisor profile. The assessment asks you, your supervisor, your employees, your peers, and others you interact with to provide feedback. A consultant will help you interpret your results and provide advice on building your learning and development plan. *If you do not supervise employees, consider the Employee Assessment Services.*

www.chr.alberta.ca/assessment

Management Essentials in the APS

This three-day program offers information on what new managers need to understand in the areas of

finance, human resources, administration, information management, and security. If you are a new manager, this course will assist you in becoming familiar with practices, policies and information specific to being a manager in the APS.

www.chr.alberta.ca/essentials

Management Development Program (MDP)

Designed to help you to develop your management and leadership competencies. It offers the opportunity to learn from colleagues and develop networks that are vital for success in a changing environment.

www.chr.alberta.ca/mdp

Senior Managers

Here are some tools and learning opportunities to enhance your knowledge and skills as a **senior manager**. Refer to the section for *All Employees* for learning opportunities available on other topic areas. If you supervise, the resources listed under *Developing Others* in the *Supervisor* tab will help you support your staff in their learning. Your individual Competency Profile on our APS Levels of Excellence website can be useful when thinking about your Career and Learning Plan (www.chr.alberta.ca/loe).

Senior Manager Assessment Services

Provides you with feedback on your levels of competencies using the APS Competency Model Senior Leader Profile. The assessment asks you, your supervisor, your peers, your employees and others you interact with to provide feedback. A consultant will help you interpret your results and provide advice on building your learning and development plan.

www.chr.alberta.ca/smas

Senior and Executive Managers' Development Program (SEMDP)

Designed to help senior and executive managers enhance their leadership skills. Attendance at these modules will give you an opportunity to learn from your colleagues and develop networks that may help you as a leader in the APS.

www.chr.alberta.ca/sem dp

Executive and Senior Manager Mobility Program

Provides you with the opportunity to further develop your knowledge and skills by participating in a 12-18 month secondment to a different ministry.

www.chr.alberta.ca/mobility



Executive Managers

This section contains tools and learning opportunities to enhance your knowledge and skills as an **executive manager**. Refer to the section for *All Employees* for learning opportunities available for other topic areas. If you supervise, the resources listed under *Developing Others* in the *Supervisor* tab will help you support your employees in their learning. Your individual Competency Profile on our APS Levels of Excellence website can be useful when thinking about your Career and Learning Plan (www.chr.alberta.ca/loe).

Executive Assessment Services

This service uses feedback from multiple sources including your supervisors, peers and direct reports to assist with individual development. It provides information to create an individual development plan based on the APS Competency Model and will help you be strategic in defining your developmental focus.

www.chr.alberta.ca/eas

Senior and Executive Managers' Development Program (SEMDP)

Designed to help senior and executive managers enhance their leadership skills. Attendance at these modules will give you an opportunity to learn from your colleagues and develop networks that may help you as a leader in the APS.

www.chr.alberta.ca/sem dp

Executive and Senior Manager Mobility

Program

Provides an opportunity to further develop your knowledge and skills by participating in a 12-18 month secondment to a different ministry.

www.chr.alberta.ca/mobility

Corporate Executive Development (CED) Competency Sessions

These sessions are offered in partnership with the University of Alberta and are designed to facilitate leadership development and leadership continuity in the APS. They merge practical knowledge with a theoretical foundation providing you with comprehensive training focused on each of the key competencies for deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers including building relationships, leadership, resource management, results orientation and strategic thinking.

www.chr.alberta.ca/competencysessions

Assistant Deputy Ministers

In addition to the learning opportunities available to you as an executive manager, there are also several learning initiatives specific to your role as an **Assistant Deputy Minister** (ADM) in the APS. Your individual Competency Profile for ADMs on the Levels of Excellence website can be useful when thinking about your Career and Learning Plan (www.chr.alberta.ca/loe).

ADM Orientation

If you are a new ADM in the APS, you will be provided with an orientation. A representative from Corporate Human Resources along with your Ministry Human Resource Director will connect with you during your first week to start your orientation process.

ADM Network

The ADM network meets every two months to network and discuss timely and relevant topics of interest to assistant deputy ministers. This network is open to ADMs across the APS.





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success *develop* *learn*
grow

Frequently Asked Questions



Whether you started three days, three weeks or fifteen years ago, chances are you have questions about learning and development. Remember, your supervisor and HR Consultant can provide you with advice and information about your learning. Be sure to talk to them if you have questions. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions.

How do I start to develop my Career and Learning plan?

You've already made a great start on your road to learning by using this guide. Use the information and links to walk you through developing your Career and Learning Plan. Follow the steps outlined in the Career and Learning Plan section of this guide to help you reflect on your learning needs, map out your learning goals, decide what learning opportunities match your learning goals and plan out your actions.

Before making any commitments, a discussion with your supervisor is important to ensure your learning and development initiatives are aligned with organizational needs. It will also give you a chance to further explore what competencies are important to develop in your current work as well as in the future from your supervisor's perspective. Your HR Consultant is another resource if you have any questions on any learning and development opportunities you are interested in.

How can I further my career through learning?

Career growth can mean different things to different people. Overall, career growth is defined as the result of ongoing planning, learning and experience that contribute to advancing individual and organizational goals. It is the result of all the efforts you take to continually develop yourself through defining your purpose/goals, acquiring knowledge and skills and developing through day-to-day work.

Keep in mind that sometimes the best move is not vertical. If a move sideways, across or downward is the right fit at this time for your career, then it's the right move for you. Developing new skills or enhancing the skills and knowledge you already have will strengthen your employability, freeing you up to consider a variety of career options.

How will I benefit from learning and development?

Learning is an essential part of life at work. Building your knowledge, skills and competencies can help you adapt to change, find new solutions and be more innovative. It can help you be more effective in your current role and help prepare you for the future.

If I complete a program or course, will I get a promotion?

For most promotional opportunities, APS employees apply on postings through the Jobs Website (www.jobs.alberta.ca) and go through a fair recruitment and selection process.

By continually building your knowledge, enhancing your skills and applying what you learn from programs and courses on the job, you are building and developing the competencies that may help better prepare you when interviewing for an opportunity.

What training does the Alberta Public Service pay for?

Approval for and the type of financial assistance for training initiatives is determined within ministries and is dependent on factors such as organizational needs, priorities, and cost effectiveness. You need to discuss any training you want to pursue with your supervisor before submitting a formal training request for financial assistance. More information on financial assistance for training initiatives can be found at www.chr.alberta.ca/finasst, or contact your supervisor or HR Consultant.

How do I find out about what learning and development opportunities are offered/ supported in my ministry?

In addition to corporate learning and development programs and initiatives, your ministry may also offer several opportunities for you to continue learning. Typically, ministry learning and development opportunities are communicated to staff via the department's intranet site, from the Human Resources department and/or directly from your supervisor.

Feel free to discuss with your supervisor of any learning and development opportunities which may be appropriate for you, including those offered through your ministry.

How do I register for courses?

There are various ways that you can register depending on the course you're taking and who is coordinating the session. The most common methods include:

- Via MyAGent at <https://www.myagent.gov.ab.ca> through its "Training and Development" module
- Through your ministry's own internal registration system
- Via a customized registration system developed by the organizing party

The registration process would normally be communicated in the course description and/or from your supervisor or HR Consultant where applicable.

What learning opportunities are available throughout Alberta?

As most of our APS employees are in Edmonton, many of our learning opportunities are held in the Capital Region. In addition, courses, sessions and conferences are offered across the province including MDP, SEMDP, SCP modules, Learning Centre courses and Orientation to Government. Check the websites or MyAGent to see which offerings are available nearest you or talk to your supervisor or HR Consultant.





Where can I go for more information?

Your supervisor and HR Consultant are important contacts in discovering what learning opportunities are available. Contact information is typically given in the course summary and/or website should you need more information.

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Career Growth

Career Growth is the result of ongoing planning, learning and experiences that contribute to advancing individual and organizational goals.

Planning: Creating a defined purpose

Learning: Acquiring knowledge and skills

Experiencing: Developing through day-to-day work





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Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

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