

# The Executive Professional Development Plan

*Mapping Out Continued Personal  
and Professional Success*



Name:

Date:

## About ClientWise LLC



ClientWise is the premier business and executive coaching firm working exclusively with financial professionals. We specialize in helping clients optimize growth and maximize revenue by engaging as a knowledgeable partner in accomplishing specific and significant business results. Our full-service coaching program empowers financial advisors, wholesalers, managers and executives to enhance performance through customized, action-oriented solutions based on each client's specific vision and situation.

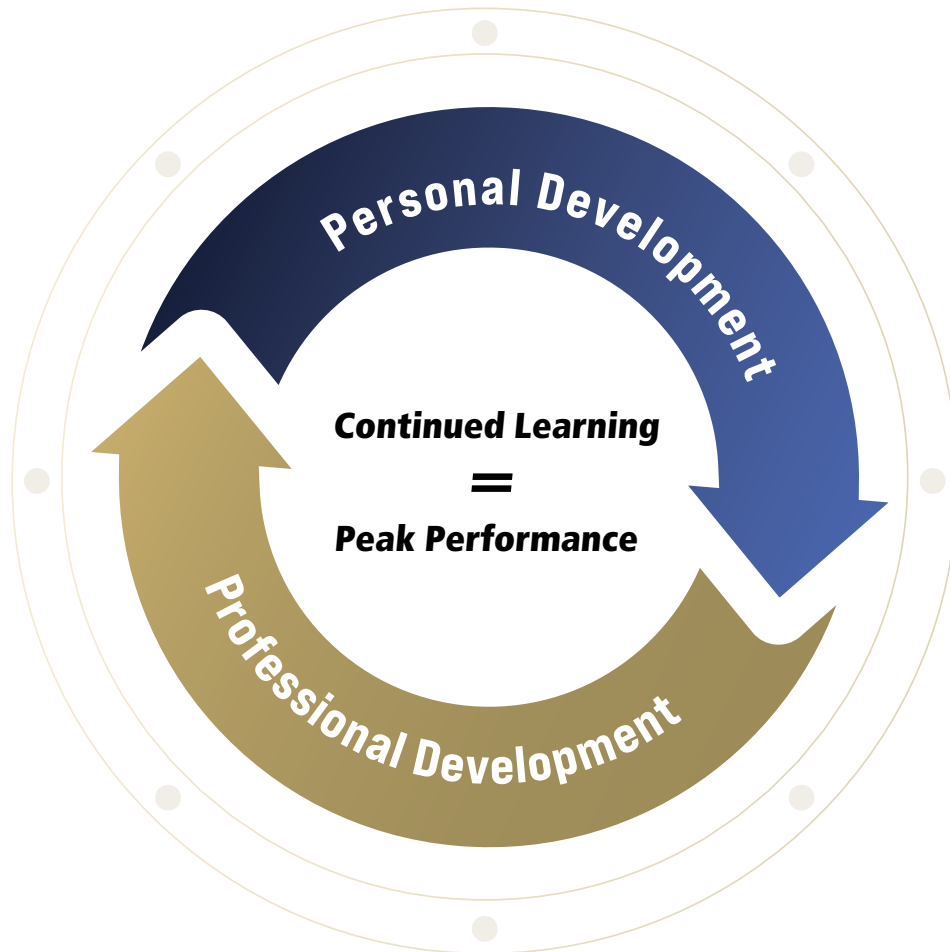
Our certified coaches are members of the International Coaching Federation (ICF). They adhere to ICF's strict code of ethics and have the experience and insight to work with you on the unique challenges and opportunities you face each day.

Drawing from an in-depth knowledge of the financial industry, ClientWise's mission is to professionally develop industry leaders and consistently raise the bar for industry service, commitment and integrity. Simply put, our singular focus is to help you get **clear**, get **focused**, and get **results**.

Get **Clear**. Get **Focused**. Get **Results**.™

# The Executive Professional Development Plan

*Mapping Out Continued Personal  
and Professional Success*





## How To Use This Workbook

This workbook is designed to help you map out a thoughtful and actionable professional development plan. By reflecting on your future goals, current skills, and desired growth areas, you can create a strategic roadmap to achieve success while aligning with your personal and professional aspirations.

To help make each section clearer, we will be using the analogy of a GPS.

You should devote planning time to addressing the questions and activities that are part of each of the seven steps in this workbook.

Take your time, think through each question or prompt, and provide as complete an answer as possible.

A couple other suggestions to consider:

- 1 Unlike a test, there are no right or wrong answers. Whatever makes sense for you is the best answer. And, your answers can—and often do—change with time.
- 2 Completing this workbook at a location outside your practice may reduce distractions, freeing your mind to remain in a planning mode.
- 3 Allocating several hours on separate days may help you look more holistically at your personal and professional development.

***“You have to work hard to discover how to work smart. You won’t know the best solutions until you’ve made nearly all the mistakes.” – James Clear***



## Overview

Creating an executive professional development plan may seem like a huge investment of time for a small return. Yet creating an executive professional development plan can be a transformative step for you in maximizing your potential and long-term success.

At its core, a well-designed plan provides a roadmap for personal and professional growth. How will you know when you achieve a milestone or goal if you operate without a plan? As good as a GPS is in helping to reach a destination, the first and vital step is putting in the destination you want to reach. Without a destination, a GPS merely tells you where you are.

Your plan will align your career objectives with actionable strategies, while also enabling you to stay ahead of industry trends, regulations, and client expectations by committing to continuous learning and skill enhancements.

Personal development focuses on enhancing internal skills and attributes that contribute to your individual growth, such as time management, effective communication, and leadership capabilities. In contrast, professional development is centered on advancing skills and initiatives that directly benefit your team and align with your broader vision. This might include, for example, implementing a new client relationship management system, developing technical expertise to become a more effective financial advisor or portfolio manager, or leveraging artificial intelligence to streamline processes and improve efficiency.

Planning is the cornerstone of achieving personal success. It provides clarity and direction, helping you define what success actually means for you beyond financial gains.

Think about it this way: Personal development fuels professional development, and through continuous learning, you and your team achieve peak performance. This cycle continues as long as you and your team invest time to plan your personal and professional development to align with your team's strategic goals.

Several aspects of this plan must align to achieve your vision for your future and your team's future. Your personal development goals, skills, experiences, and competencies, and your vision for your team must all point in the same direction.

Notes:

***“If plan A doesn’t work, the alphabet has 25 more letters – 204 if you’re in Japan”***  
– Claire Cook

The GPS can only go one way. If more than one destination is entered into the GPS, it becomes unable to reach any destination.

Another critical area to consider is the feedback and vision of others within your team. If your other partners have a different vision for your future, you are not aligned. What if your vision for your future leadership role differs from those of the future controlling owners and partners? Similarly, what if, as a current partner or owner, you see yourself slowing down and spending less time with the team yet expect to maintain your current level of earnings? In contrast, do your future partners or owners plan to adjust your compensation accordingly? Turning these implicit expectations into explicit discussions with your future partners and owners is essential to ensure alignment. What if you want to obtain a new certification for your future role, but your partners do not see expansion into that area as viable? Not only could each of these possible misalignments create frustration and friction, each could also make achieving any vision less feasible.

Asking other partners where they see your future role as you develop this executive development plan ensures that all visions for the future dovetail. Furthermore, where possible deviations arise, all parties can address them now and set realistic expectations for the future.

To reach where you are now, you may have focused much of your time on work—at the expense of your personal life. Determining how you want your personal life to look as part of your vision allows you to work toward an ideal work week. Exploring this area and aligning your hobbies and interests with your ideal work week can help ensure your future is robust and vibrant.

#### **KEY QUESTION**

**When considering your future role, what feedback have you received from other partners and team members on how they envision your leadership role evolving?**

# 1 SECTION

## Defining Your Future Role

To say that your future depends on how you define your role is not an overstatement. It truly does.

Like a GPS, you cannot know how to get somewhere efficiently if you don't know where you are going. The GPS ensures the most efficient use of your traveling time.

Defining your future role ensures the most effective use of your personal and professional time. Remember that time is the only thing we can never replace.

Here's something to consider: Carefully planning allows your future role to incorporate your personal interests seamlessly. By intentionally crafting a plan now, you can design a role that will enable time for these pursuits while continuing to deliver exceptional value to your team and clients as your responsibilities evolve.

Defining your future role involves integrating three key components. First, articulate a clear vision for the role you aspire to. Second, establish measurable criteria for success in that role. Third, seek input from partners and team members to understand their perspectives on how they envision your future role within the team.

Integrating these three components into your future vision helps ensure alignment between your vision and that of your partners.

### 1.1 Future Professional Role

#### KEY QUESTION

How will your professional role change in 3-5 years? Consider aspects such as responsibilities, leadership scope, and the impact you want to have.



Notes:

## **1.2 Future Impact**

### KEY QUESTION

Knowing what you are looking to achieve is essential to actually knowing when you achieve it.

## **1.3 Feedback from Others**

### KEY QUESTION

What input have you obtained in creating your vision and ensuring it aligns with other partners and the team?

# 2

## SECTION

*"It does not do to leave a live dragon out of your calculations, if you live near one."*

– J.R.R. Tolkien

## Personal Development: Skills, Experiences, & Competencies

Making an honest assessment of your current professional skills, experiences and competencies compared to your anticipated needs in the future is an essential second step in this process. While you may have the latest GPS technology, it is useless if your vehicle doesn't have fuel.

The fuel that starts you and your practice on your path of personal development begins with a realistic assessment of your current skills, experiences and competencies. Layered on top of that should be a careful investigation of what skills, experiences and competencies you need to reach your future vision. Admittedly, these predictions may not all be accurate, but having a clear picture of where you need to grow to achieve your goal is critical.

### 2.1 Current Strengths and Gaps

We often fail to recognize our current strengths because it's often more apparent and easier to focus on our gaps.

#### KEY QUESTIONS

1. What are your strengths that can serve you in your future role? (List your top 3-5)
2. What gaps have you identified as you look toward your future role? (List your top 3-5)

Notes:

2.2

Addressing Gaps

By identifying gaps now, you can address them in one of two ways. You can improve your skills and competencies in those areas.

Another approach is to recognize them now and ensure that others on your team—either existing team members or strategic hires—fill those areas.

KEY QUESTION

1. List each of the gaps you identified. Which of the two strategies will work best in addressing your gaps?
2. Specifically, how do you intend to address it?  
What are the action steps to improve this area?

Personal Development			
Gap	Improve or Enhance Team	Specific Action Plan	Action Steps
<i>Example: Don't like detailed work</i>	<i>Ensure that assistant likes and performs detail work effectively.</i>	<i>Include detail work in job responsibilities</i>	<i>Advertising for position and interviews</i>

# 3

## SECTION

# Professional Development: Future Goals for Learning and Development

As you contemplate what will be required of you in your future role, your education and expertise will probably need to expand.

On a trip using your GPS, you encounter a billboard or hear about an interesting place that you now want to visit, even though it deviates from your original plan to reach your destination. To go to that stop, you need to add the new stop to your GPS so you don't get lost.

## 3.1 Learning Goals

In this section, you will look at what you need to learn to continue the path toward your vision.

### KEY QUESTION

What are specific goals for your learning and development over the next 1-3 years. List them. (Ex.: Completing an executive education program, mastering a new technology, attending industry conferences.)

## 3.2 Learning Resources

In this section, you will identify resources that will help you achieve the goals you documented in the last section. Next to each of the items on the list of learning goals, develop a specific plan. (Ex: Books, online courses, professional coaches, peer networks.)

## 3.3 Tracking Progress

In this section, you will create a timeline and metrics for tracking your learning and development. List the appropriate dates and milestones next to each item in your list.

Learning and Development		
Learning Goals	Learning Resources	Tracking Progress/Timeline

# 4

## SECTION

## Personal Interests & Priorities

Throughout the process of building your team and client base, it's likely that personal interests and priorities were set aside.

One significant advantage of planning for the future is the opportunity to thoughtfully integrate the activities and pursuits you've always wanted to prioritize into your evolving role. Creating a compelling blend of professional contributions and personal endeavors can be one of the most rewarding aspects of intentionally shaping your future vision.

For example, after years of dedicating 70-hour work weeks to your career, you may now envision transitioning to a 20-hour work week. Achieving this goal requires careful planning, including identifying potential gaps and developing strategies to address them. This intentional approach ensures that you invest your time in a way that aligns with your evolving priorities while maintaining alignment with your team and clients.

### 4.1

#### Current Hobbies and Interests

Reflecting on the personal interests and activities you value most can help you shape how you want to invest your time in the future.

#### KEY QUESTION

What hobbies, passions, philanthropic endeavors, or other interests outside of work are your priorities now?

### 4.2

#### Future Hobbies and Interests

Looking ahead, you probably have some things you want to incorporate into your week. Perhaps you want to travel or spend more time with your family.

#### KEY QUESTION

What new hobbies, passions, and interests do you want to add?

Notes:

### 4.3

### What Responsibilities Will Shift to Others?

As your role shifts, so will your responsibilities. Some of your current responsibilities will have to become the responsibilities of others within your organization.

#### KEY QUESTION

What responsibilities will you be giving up? How do you envision them being picked up by others on the team?

### 4.4

### Integrating into Your Work/Life Blend

Imagining these new areas, along with more of your current hobbies, passions, philanthropic interests, and other pursuits, and integrating them into your ideal week can help you move in that direction.

#### KEY QUESTION

How could you integrate your current and future hobbies, passions, philanthropic interests, and other pursuits into your week?

***“Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.” – Gloria Steinem***

Personal Interests and Priorities	
Hobbies and Interests	Integration With Life/Work Blend
<i>Example: Playing golf in the afternoon three times a week Get more involved as a at the local Boys &amp; Girls Club</i>	<i>Ensure on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays no meetings are scheduled after 2 PM</i>



# 5 SECTION

## Ideal Work Week

One perk of leading your practice is setting your work schedule. While it may not seem possible now, planning helps you build your ideal work week.

Without a destination, how can you get there? Like using GPS, people plan how many hours to drive each day on long trips. This helps them plan stops and lodging efficiently, ensuring they don't overextend themselves.

Your ideal workweek must align not only with your personal vision but also with the collective vision of your partners and team. For example, if you envision spending Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays on the golf course, but your partners expect you to host seminars or client meetings on Wednesday evenings, this misalignment can lead to friction. Similarly, misalignment can occur regarding future leadership roles. You may aspire to manage a group of financial advisors, but if the future owners view your strengths as better suited to client-facing responsibilities rather than team management, it's crucial to address these differing perspectives proactively. Establishing clarity and alignment now ensures a smoother path forward and helps prevent conflicts as roles and expectations evolve.

### 5.1 Describe Your Ideal Work Week

We often speak of our "ideal work week" in mythical terms because the path to achieving it seems unclear.

You need to compare and contrast your current typical work week with your ideal work week to ensure you are moving toward it.

#### KEY QUESTION

How would an ideal work week look? Include core working hours, time to think and plan strategically, time to engage and collaborate with your team, and time away from your work and what you intend to do with that time.

## 5.2

### Align Ideal Work Week with Your Future Role

So often we find ourselves working in opposition with ourselves. By planning how your ideal work week dovetails with your priorities, you ensure maximum benefit from your efforts.

#### KEY QUESTION

How does your ideal work week align with your future role and personal priorities?

Now, envision your future and identify a way to ensure that both your professional and personal priorities are seamlessly integrated into your workweek. Aim to include at least three key professional and personal commitments, while allowing room for additional priorities as needed.

Use the space provided on the next page.

***"It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan."***

*– Eleanor Roosevelt*

## My Ideal Work Week

**Sunday**

# 6

## SECTION

*"The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining."*

— John F. Kennedy

## Keep, Stop, Start Exercise

No plan is perfect, especially looking beyond a year. As the 1700's Scottish poem says, "Even the best laid plans of mice and men may go astray." Plans may need adjusting as situations change.

Like GPS rerouting for road hazards—crashes, construction, or weather—when the original route isn't optimal, you must evaluate what helps or hinders your progress.

To make it easier, you can break your efforts into three categories, each of which is essential to evaluate.

**Keep:** Professional activities that align with your vision

**Stop:** Professional activities that do not align with your vision

**Start:** Professional activities to add that align with your vision

After listing items in each category, develop action plans.

### 5.1 Reflection

Explore the things that are working or not working for you right now. You can create three separate lists, one for each category. Write down items from your current actions under the appropriate categories. Utilize the next page to write down your answers.

### KEY QUESTIONS

1. Keep. What activities, habits, and processes are serving you well and should continue? (Ex: Weekly strategic review, mentoring team members, daily exercise.)
2. Stop. What activities or habits are not serving you or are misaligned with your future goals? (Ex: Micromanaging, attending non-critical meetings, working late unnecessarily.)
3. Start. What new activities, habits, and processes should you adopt? (Ex: Delegating effectively, prioritizing professional development, setting aside creative thinking time.)

### 5.2 Action Plan

Now that you have completed these planning steps, you can create a specific action plan. Be as specific as possible, as you consider the actions that will support your executive professional development plan.

KEEP Professional activities you envision for your future that align	STOP Professional activities you envision for your future that do not align	START Professional activities you envision for your future that need to be added
<i>Strategic lunches with key clients each month</i>	<i>Not holding meetings after 2 PM M-W-F</i>	<i>Training team member to do more meetings without me</i>

My Action Plan: What are my Immediate Next Actions			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4

# 7

## SECTION

### Accountability, Mentorship and Follow-Up

Making the shifts to your responsibilities to achieve your vision requires diligence and consistent action. Others have made similar shifts as they create their own visions.

Most of us have informal mentors, people we admire or emulate, often without their knowledge. We rarely engage them in discussions about how they achieve things that seem impossible to us.

A formal mentor relationship can provide you with all the benefits you probably have experienced with informal mentors — and many more. A formal mentor can help you navigate the changes by offering insights, observations, feedback, ideas, and encouragement to move forward efficiently and effectively.

The mentors you select should be genuinely interested in supporting your growth and willing to meet with you formally or informally at least twice a year. They should be open to understanding your vision and action plan, providing constructive feedback on your ideas and concerns, and sharing their insights and experiences to help guide your development.

Not everyone you approach to be a mentor may be able or willing to take on this role. They might have demanding schedules or be focused on stepping back from active involvement in their profession.

If you want to engage a mentor, you must also be prepared to approach the relationship with clear goals and a willingness to take initiative. On the next page, list three to five candidates you think could be good mentors for you. Then, list why they would be a good fit. In the third column, write what you hope to learn or the specific feedback you seek from that person.

***“Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans.” – Peter F. Drucker***

Mentor Candidates (Identify 3-5)		
Candidate Name	Why a Fit?	What You Hope to Learn

## Final Reflections

Now that you have completed this process, it's time to take a few minutes to reflect on whether each component seems likely to help you reach your vision for your future.

**If it does, great. Get started on it!**

**If it does not, make the appropriate adjustments.**

No plan should be written in stone. Changes are not just common, but should be expected.

As your goals and circumstances evolve, revisit these sections to refine your development plan. Use it as a living document to stay aligned with your vision for success.

***"Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." – Warren Buffett***



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