Unit 1: Self-Directed Learning Plan (SDLP)

Check your Course Syllabus under Course Home to determine when your SDLP Assignment is due. The SDLP Assignment submission may vary from one MSM course to another. All the MSM courses will feature a SDLP.

Learning gains significance when it is related directly to your specific situation and goals. Your Self-Directed Learning Plan (SDLP) will help you identify and target the competencies you need to reach your professional objectives and also help you organize your Kaplan MSM learning experience to address your career objectives.

The SDLP is a living document that will serve as a map of your progress throughout the Kaplan MSM program. You will identify your career goal and target development areas during GM500. At the beginning of each subsequent course, you will evaluate the course learning experience for relevance to your career goal and development areas. At the end of each course, you will reflect on how the course experience contributed to your professional development. The SDLP documents provide the history of your professional growth in the Kaplan MSM program.

This core document is one that you will be adding to throughout your MSM program so be sure to denote with each entry, which course you are writing about. It will be a complete record of each course you took and how it contributed to accomplishing your professional objective. I look forward to learning about your professional goal and how I can help you achieve it in this course.

We encourage you to continue to improve in your development areas throughout the program. The SDLP is your personal development plan that you may manage in a way that most benefits you. It may be stored in a folder on your personal PC, but it should also be in your Program Portfolio. You will share it with each of your faculty so they can get to know your professional aspirations and assist your development. You may also wish to share it with your mentor(s) and career specialist.

Please visit the Career Resource site to take advantage of Kaplan University’s Career Development tools

https://kucampus.kaplan.edu/UniversityInfo/CareerResources/CareerDevelopmentTrack/Step1PlanYourCareer.aspx

First: Begin by reviewing, completing, or revising your summary of your 3–5 year professional goal on the first page. As you continue through the MSM program you will be reviewing these goals to be sure they are still realistic and relevant.

State your goal with enough detail so your professors will understand the nature of the responsibilities associated with your objective.

If you are not sure of your goal, here is one suggestion.

• Think of someone in a job that interests you. Find out a bit about their responsibilities and use that information to begin your SDLP. Since this is your personal document, you can adjust your goal as you become clearer about the profession you are attracted to. In fact, I hope your goal is modified
due to your learning in the Kaplan MSM Program!

**Second: Add to the categories — Areas to Develop and Strengths to Leverage.**

Complete the Step 1 (Column 1) for both Areas to Develop and Strengths to Leverage. These will likely not change much from course to course once they have been identified, but additional strengths and areas to develop may surface as you go through your program and learn more.

You will have many tools to help you complete this step including the Kaplan Career site, which you will use as a first step in GM 500. In GM 502 and GM 503 you will incorporate additional resources, such as your Insights Profile.

Your Strengths to Leverage are the skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics in which you excel, that motivate you, and are required by your professional objective.

- **HINT:** Strong interpersonal skills can help you succeed even though you still have areas to improve upon. Thus, strengths in the interpersonal arena (e.g., approachability) would be important to leverage.

Your Areas to Develop are undeveloped skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics you need to be able to be successful in your target career.

**Third: Set your personal course outcomes.**

How do you anticipate this course helping you take the next step with each Area to Develop and Strength to Leverage? At the beginning of the course, explore the course description (given in the Course Syllabus), course outcomes (in the Course Syllabus), unit themes and outcomes, and complete Step 2: Course Learning Goals (Column 2) of your SDLP. Identify ways the course will help you take the next step with your Areas of Development and Strengths to Leverage.

Not all courses will directly impact your Strengths to Leverage and your Areas of Development. I encourage you to reflect earnestly about how the course content and experience might serve your goals, as well as about what you might proactively do in the course to develop in your target areas.

**Fourth: Assess your personal course outcomes.**

At the end of the course, evaluate your personal course outcomes in Column 2. Enter your assessment in Step 3: Course Outcomes and Assessment (Column 3).

This Assignment will be graded based on evidence of thoughtful reflection and integration of the course to your Professional Goal, Areas to Develop, and Strengths to Leverage.

*The SDLP template and sample SDLP are located in the class.*
*Reminder — You will be uploading your completed SDLP along with other pertinent Assignments to your Program Portfolio, located in your Optimal Resume account. If you do not have an Optimal Resume account, click here. If you require additional information on creating your Optimal Resume account or your Program Portfolio, you can visit the “Program Portfolio” area under your Course Home for helpful documents.

SDLP

I look forward to learning about your professional goals and how I can help you achieve them in this course. To prepare your Self-Directed Learning Plan (SDLP) for my review, complete Steps 1 and 2 for both Strengths to Leverage and Areas to Develop.

Think of the SDLP as a living document that will serve as a roadmap for your graduate educational journey. You will be using the SDLP document that you started in previous classes and continue working with it in this course. Follow the directions provided within the document and save the document as GM501_SDLP_First_Lastname.

It is important to remember that the more detail you put into this document, the more valuable it will be to you during this course and in your future career. This Assignment will be graded in Unit 5 based on evidence of thoughtful development of your SDLP and the information you have inserted in all three steps for Strengths to Leverage and Areas to Develop.

Directions for Submitting Your SDLP

Save your updated SDLP in a location and with a name that you will remember. Submit your SDLP to the Unit 5: SDLP Dropbox.