



Competencies for

Living, Learning and Working Well:

Toolkit for Post-Secondary Students

2021

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Introduction

Are you ready for what's next for you when it comes to school, work and life in general? What strengths do you already have? What knowledge, skills and attitudes are most important for you to develop in order to build the life you want to live?

The world is changing. So too are the competencies Atlantic Canadians need to successfully manage learning, work and transitions. This toolkit was developed to help you inventory your existing competencies and to identify areas that, with some development, could help you to thrive in the face of technological, global and regional changes.

This toolkit outlines 18 competencies that are foundational to successful living, learning and working. Developed to support lifelong career development, these competencies cluster into 3 general categories: **thinking**, **connecting** with others and **managing** yourself, learning, money and work.

This toolkit will help you to:

- understand the 18 competencies
- assess yourself on each of them
- read about Atlantic Canadians like you who are using these competencies to achieve their goals
- identify specific ways that you already can and do demonstrate each competency
- recognize competencies you want to further develop
- design a realistic plan to strengthen competencies identified as priorities for development.

You have unique gifts – knowledge, skills and attitudes that make you uniquely who you are. As an Atlantic Canadian you have something important to offer your community and your world. We hope that this toolkit helps you to know your own leading edge, build key competencies and be ready to create your preferred future.

Getting Started

This toolkit is not designed to be worked through all at once. You'll get the most out of it by:

- Familiarizing yourself with the *Competency Profile at a Glance* (p. 3)
- Choosing **2-3** specific competencies (e.g., Global Citizenship and Work Ethic) to start with
- Using the *Self-Assessment & Reflection* (p. 4) to prioritize areas for development
- Reviewing the detailed descriptions of your priority competencies
- Reading stories of Atlantic Canadians that illustrate your priority competencies
- Reflecting on how well you've demonstrated specific competencies
- Identifying a plan for going forward
- Planning to revisit this toolkit regularly as your competencies and new priorities emerge

Acknowledgements

The Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) contracted with the Canadian Career Development Foundation to develop a framework containing competencies to help Atlantic Canadians to navigate and propel learning, work and transitions throughout their lives.

In creating this toolkit, we wanted to be sure that it reflects the rich diversity of people living in Atlantic Canada and the realities of our region. With this in mind, we met with and integrated the perspectives of many people across the Atlantic Provinces, including youth and young adults, employers, educators and counsellors in high school and post-secondary settings, youth service providers and provincial government representatives. We especially wanted to hear and include the perspectives of those from Indigenous communities, LGBTQ+, immigrants, newcomers and refugees, Black Nova Scotians, persons with a disability and those living in poverty. Throughout the toolkit, vignettes (testimonials) have been developed based on those consultations and incorporate the preferred pronouns he, she and they to reflect the diversity of Atlantic Canadians.

We want to thank all who so actively shaped and contributed significantly to this framework, toolkit and the accompanying guides for families, educators and employers.

Competency Profile at a Glance

The career development competencies introduced in this toolkit can and will be developed as you progress in work, life and learning.

This framework includes competencies (what you know, can do and show others) that help you to navigate and propel learning, work and transitions across the lifespan. Together, these competencies contribute to your lifelong career development – your capacity to know yourself, be aware of educational and labour market opportunities, make informed decisions, access and maintain work, balance life roles and, with resilience, manage transitions and unexpected events. Although these are all individual competencies, recognize that they are developed and nurtured in context, through partnerships with educators, employers, parents and community members.

The framework is clustered into three categories: **thinking**, **connecting** and **managing**.



Self-Assessment & Reflection

As you begin to consider your strengths and opportunities for development, you may find this assessment helpful. Review each statement and circle your current competency level on a scale of 1-4. If you're struggling to self-assess, you may want to check out a more detailed description of each competency area (starting on page 14 of this toolkit). You can also talk about your ratings with someone you trust as this can sometimes help to confirm your own self-assessment. Your ratings don't have to be perfect; the self-assessment is meant as a starting point for reflection and development.

For each competency area, record your total score and circle either **Area for Development** or **Area of Strength** based on your score. You can also revisit this assessment throughout your career journey to track your progress and development.

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Thinking

Self-Awareness	I engage in realistic self-appraisal: I know what I'm good at, care about and like to do; I know my limitations	1	2	3	4
	I am confident and positive about my identity	1	2	3	4
	I identify skills, interests, talents and attitudes that I have developed through diverse life/work/learning experiences	1	2	3	4
	I envision myself in the future and I take responsibility for getting there	1	2	3	4
	I describe necessary education/training and/or other experiences to prepare for my preferred future	1	2	3	4
	I invite, evaluate, reflect upon, and, when appropriate, integrate feedback from multiple sources	1	2	3	4
	I initiate discussions with others to expand my thinking on my preferred future	1	2	3	4
	I recognize the interconnectedness of my personal identity, life roles and community	1	2	3	4
	I confront my personal biases, recognizing their impact on myself and others	1	2	3	4
	I recognize how my feelings, thoughts and actions influence each other	1	2	3	4
	I recognize when I am <i>not</i> ready for work, school or additional responsibilities	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 33 / Area of Strength = 33 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Problem Solving	I understand that problems may be simple or complex	1	2	3	4
	I determine the specific problem that I need to solve	1	2	3	4
	I explore and integrate various sources of information (e.g., people, online, my past experiences) to identify possible solutions, taking into consideration multiple perspectives	1	2	3	4
	I analyze information to assess its credibility and accuracy	1	2	3	4
	I examine the pros, cons, ethics and impact on others of potential solutions	1	2	3	4
	I try out solutions; reflect on how they work and how my approach might be improved next time	1	2	3	4
	I apply learning from one situation to other situations	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 21 / Area of Strength = 21 and over

Creativity and Innovation	I understand what it means to be creative and innovative	1	2	3	4
	I use my imagination and curiosity to look for new ways to think, do things and tackle problems	1	2	3	4
	I stretch beyond my comfort zone in imagining what's possible	1	2	3	4
	I persist through challenges and learn from mistakes	1	2	3	4
	I critically reflect on and refine creative and innovative works and processes	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 15 / Area of Strength = 15 and over

Entrepreneurial Mindset	I recognize that an entrepreneurial mindset involves embracing change, being resilient and demonstrating grit	1	2	3	4
	I find ways to incorporate an entrepreneurial mindset into my learning, work and life	1	2	3	4
	I take calculated risks, validating ideas and accepting constructive feedback	1	2	3	4
	I reflect on, and learn from, successes, mistakes and failures	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 12 / Area of Strength = 12 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Critical Thinking	I reflect on my beliefs and values, and how they shape how I think and reason	1	2	3	4
	I analyze information to assess its credibility and accuracy	1	2	3	4
	I understand logical connections between ideas, information and arguments	1	2	3	4
	I recognize that various points of view may or may not be valid	1	2	3	4
	I ask questions that clarify various points of view	1	2	3	4
	I detect inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning	1	2	3	4
	I evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs	1	2	3	4
	I draw conclusions based on thorough analysis	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 24 / Area of Strength = 24 and over

Decision Making	I examine how I make decisions	1	2	3	4
	I understand ethical considerations when making decisions	1	2	3	4
	I recognize the influence of personal qualities, culture and context in making informed career, life and educational decisions	1	2	3	4
	I make an informed decision by evaluating ideas, solutions and opportunities	1	2	3	4
	I take responsibility for my actions and decisions	1	2	3	4
	I reflect on and refine my own decision-making process	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 18 / Area of Strength = 18 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Connecting

Social Awareness	I demonstrate acceptance of and respect for diverse ways of thinking and being	1	2	3	4
	I show understanding of, and empathy, for others	1	2	3	4
	I understand and value Indigenous traditions and knowledge, including the belief in the interconnectedness of everything	1	2	3	4
	I understand, value and take pride in the contributions of diverse cultural, ethnic and linguistic groups, including my own, to Canada	1	2	3	4
	I understand how culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, language, national origin, race, ethnicity and religion affect personal identity and influence lives and opportunities	1	2	3	4
	I recognize that privilege, prejudice and oppression are widespread and damaging	1	2	3	4
	I promote and demonstrate fairness, social justice, human rights, equity and respect for all	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 21 / Area of Strength = 21 and over

Social Support	I establish, maintain and nurture a supportive network of healthy relationships	1	2	3	4
	I seek support from others (e.g., friends, family, Elders, teachers, role models, mentors, coaches)	1	2	3	4
	I support others' learning by being a positive and encouraging role model, mentor, coach or tutor	1	2	3	4
	I identify and seek appropriate support to address harassment, bullying and mistreatment in all its forms	1	2	3	4
	I take appropriate steps to support others who are struggling with physical, emotional, mental, environmental, social and/or spiritual challenges	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 15 / Area of Strength = 15 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Communication	I recognize non-verbal communication cues in myself and others, including tone of voice, facial expressions, posture and use of hands	1	2	3	4
	I respectfully consider the ideas, thoughts and feelings of others through listening, reading, and viewing	1	2	3	4
	I know and ask for what I want in a reasonable and specific way	1	2	3	4
	I clearly express my ideas, thoughts and feelings through speaking, listening, writing, reading, viewing and other ways of representing	1	2	3	4
	I communicate clearly and confidently in public	1	2	3	4
	I recognize and respect that there are many languages used in Canada	1	2	3	4
	I continuously improve and refine my English and/or French language skills	1	2	3	4
	I communicate respectfully and effectively across linguistic and cultural differences	1	2	3	4
	I recognize the advantages of being multi-lingual, continuing to practice languages to stay fluent	1	2	3	4
	I communicate using different forms of media	1	2	3	4
	I tailor communication, considering my purpose and audience	1	2	3	4
	I recognize that accepted terminology shifts over time	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 36 / Area of Strength = 36 and over

Collaboration	I interact respectfully and purposefully with others, as part of a team/group in formal and informal environments	1	2	3	4
	I clearly share my own beliefs and values while respecting and appreciating those that differ	1	2	3	4
	I celebrate the benefits of working with others, recognizing the value of collaboration	1	2	3	4
	I understand and respect others' needs	1	2	3	4
	I recognize privilege and challenge discriminatory behaviour in myself and others	1	2	3	4
	I compromise in working towards common goals	1	2	3	4
	I constructively negotiate and resolve conflicts with others, acknowledging and addressing biases	1	2	3	4
	I am prepared to reassess my position based on new information and/or the input of others	1	2	3	4
	I engage in collaboration using a variety of media/tools	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 27 / Area of Strength = 27 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Global Citizenship	I volunteer, participate in and contribute to community-building activities and projects, locally, regionally, nationally and/or internationally	1	2	3	4
	I take environmental and social responsibility to make my learning or work environments, community and the world better	1	2	3	4
	I recognize the political, environmental, economic and social realities of living in a global world	1	2	3	4
	I engage with diverse cultures, places, experiences and people to learn about the world	1	2	3	4
	I use a global perspective to create opportunities and address challenges	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 15 / Area of Strength = 15 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Managing

Self-Management	I identify and manage my emotions and actions	1	2	3	4
	I am adaptable, open to and ready for change	1	2	3	4
	I develop strategies to effectively manage transitions within learning, home, support communities, work and life	1	2	3	4
	I engage in self-advocacy by understanding my own needs for accommodations and requesting them as necessary	1	2	3	4
	I anticipate and prepare for challenges and potential barriers (e.g., transportation, finances, personal or family responsibilities, health, criminal record checks)	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 15 / Area of Strength = 15 and over

Wellness	I recognize that <i>everyone</i> faces challenges	1	2	3	4
	I care for my physical, emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual wellbeing, seeking help when needed	1	2	3	4
	I am resilient and persistent when faced with biases, disappointments, setbacks and pressure from others, understanding that they are a normal part of life	1	2	3	4
	I recognize that managing life transitions includes challenges, new learning, and sometimes, culture shock	1	2	3	4
	I follow appropriate health and safety policies and procedures	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 15 / Area of Strength = 15 and over

Lifelong Learning	I approach every experience as a learning opportunity	1	2	3	4
	I continue to learn throughout my life	1	2	3	4
	I learn from diverse people and develop cross-cultural and cross-generational understanding	1	2	3	4
	I am open to feedback and see mistakes as opportunities for learning	1	2	3	4
	I use effective strategies to support lifelong learning	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 15 / Area of Strength = 15 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Career Transition	I understand and leverage the influence of family, friends, culture, government policies and regional economic development on my career exploration and choices	1	2	3	4
	I use a variety of strategies and sources of information to explore options for learning and work	1	2	3	4
	I identify possible career paths through research (e.g., print, participation, online)	1	2	3	4
	I actively pursue and engage in work experience (e.g., job shadowing, co-ops, internships, youth apprenticeship, volunteering)	1	2	3	4
	I embrace opportunities to get, combine or create work (e.g., apprenticeship, part-time, full-time, self-employment, “gigs” and contracts)	1	2	3	4
	I recognize what impacts, and is impacted by, seasonal work	1	2	3	4
	I examine how rural and regional economies can impact career opportunities and decisions	1	2	3	4
	I create my own personal marketing strategy (e.g., write targeted resumés and cover letters, interview with confidence)	1	2	3	4
	I gather and evaluate detailed information resulting from my career exploration process	1	2	3	4
	I discuss, share and evaluate my career options with others	1	2	3	4
	I explain my reasons for choosing a career pathway based on who I am, the opportunities I have explored, and labour market information	1	2	3	4
	I am resilient and able to maneuver through transitions, always having a Plan B (and C and D...)	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 36 / Area of Strength = 36 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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Work Ethic	I understand what is meant by, and demonstrate, integrity	1	2	3	4
	I am loyal, dependable and accountable so that others can count on me	1	2	3	4
	I prioritize commitments	1	2	3	4
	I observe, support and model expected attitudes and behaviours	1	2	3	4
	I meet or exceed reasonable expectations by doing the best I can in school, extracurricular activities, volunteering and work	1	2	3	4
	I show and take initiative when appropriate	1	2	3	4
	I respect those with whom I live, learn and/or work	1	2	3	4
	I demonstrate leadership skills	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 24 / Area of Strength = 24 and over

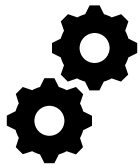
Financial Literacy	I understand what is meant by financial literacy and its importance	1	2	3	4
	I recognize that financial literacy is a lifelong endeavor	1	2	3	4
	I identify the costs and funding sources associated with various education and career pathways	1	2	3	4
	I develop a personal financial plan to support the achievement of education, life and career goals and set short- and long-term financial goals to support making healthy financial decisions that lead to financial security (e.g., saving and investing money, debt financing and sources, contractual obligations)	1	2	3	4
	I know how to develop and manage a budget	1	2	3	4
	I know how to keep personal information safe and secure, to prevent and protect against fraud and financial abuse	1	2	3	4
	I maintain financial records, as required, to assist with calculating, submitting and supporting reports (e.g., income tax, loan applications, requests for financial assistance)	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 21 / Area of Strength = 21 and over

1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Usually	4 Always
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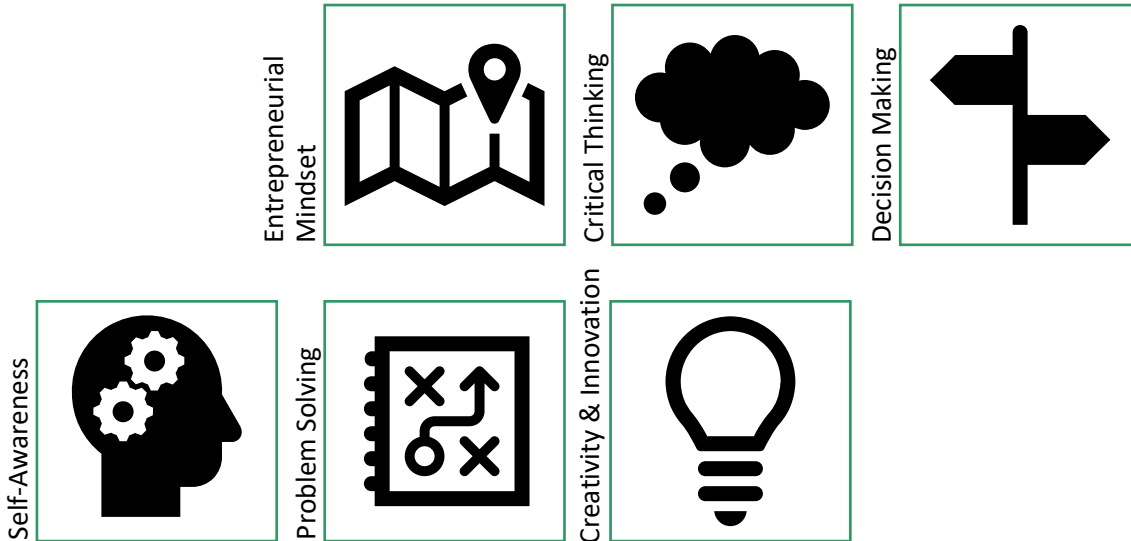
Technological Fluency	I use technology in a respectful, legal, safe and ethical way	1	2	3	4
	I access and critically evaluate online information and resources	1	2	3	4
	I manage social media presence responsibly and safely	1	2	3	4
	I create a positive digital footprint, recognizing the permanence of online data	1	2	3	4
	I recognize the benefits, limitations and challenges of using technologies	1	2	3	4
	TOTAL				

Area for Development = Less than 15 / Area of Strength = 15 and over



Thinking

This cluster of competencies relates to how you engage in self-reflection, think, make decisions and develop creative approaches to solving problems. It includes:



In the following pages, you will see how each of these competencies are used at school, at work and in other life roles. For each competency, you will have a chance to reflect on how you have already used it effectively and how you might like to strengthen it in the future.



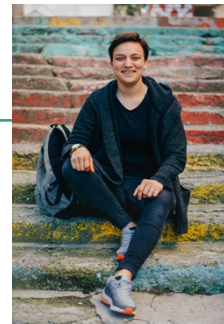
Self-Awareness

Recognize and articulate personal strengths, limitations, goals, biases and emotions and assess personal readiness for responsibilities and challenges in diverse life roles.

You can demonstrate your **self-awareness** through:

- Engaging in realistic self-appraisal (i.e., knowing what you're good at, care about and like to do; and knowing your limitations)
- Being confident and positive about your identity
- Identifying the skills, interests, talents and attitudes that you develop through diverse life/work/learning experiences
- Envisioning yourself in the future and taking responsibility for getting there
- Describing necessary education/training and/or other experiences to prepare for your preferred future
- Inviting, evaluating, reflecting upon, and, when appropriate, integrating feedback from multiple sources
- Initiating discussions with others to expand your thinking on your preferred future
- Recognizing the interconnectedness of your personal identity, life roles and community
- Confronting your personal biases, recognizing their impact on self and others
- Recognizing how your feelings, thoughts and actions influence each other
- Recognizing when you are not ready for work, school or additional responsibilities

Jas, in second year of a Bachelor of Engineering program, regularly invites feedback, carefully evaluates it and recognizes the value of multiple perspectives. Through courses, a co-op term and a part-time job, Jas has formed a realistic picture of their personal strengths and limitations. Based on personal experience and discussions on campus, Jas knows that not all employers are equal in terms of their policies and practices regarding gender identity and embracing diversity. Although this won't be their only criteria in choosing which organizations to apply to, Jas does not want to work somewhere that harassment or bullying is tolerated so will carefully consider this when researching job options.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were self-aware. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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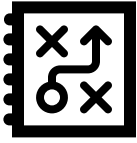
Reflect on a time that you wished you had been more self-aware. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **self-awareness** is:

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Problem Solving

Use a range of sources to gather, evaluate, organize and effectively use information to solve problems.

You can demonstrate your **problem solving** through:

- Understanding that problems may be simple or complex
- Determining the specific problem that you need to solve
- Exploring and integrating various sources of information (e.g., people, online, your past experience) to identify possible solutions, taking into consideration multiple perspectives
- Analyzing information to assess its credibility and accuracy
- Examining the pros, cons, ethics and impact on others of potential solutions
- Trying out solutions; reflecting on how they work and how your approach might be improved next time
- Applying learning from one situation to other situations

Selena has almost completed the coursework for her bachelor's degree in social work. Generally, Selena welcomes group projects; however, for the first time in 4 years, the group she has been placed in for her final assignment just isn't working out. The other members of her group all seem to have good reasons for not being able to do their part.

Together, the group has discussed several possibilities including submitting the project late (which would result in an automatic loss of grades), submitting an incomplete project on time, or having Selena do almost all of the work. None of these seem like great options.

Selena approaches the instructor to explain the situation and suggest a few possible ways forward. If an extension is not possible, Selena has decided to ask if she could submit an independent assignment or supplement the group assignment. If the instructor does not agree, she has decided to do the best she can to move the group project forward on schedule, recognizing that not all problems have perfect solutions.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were an effective problem solver. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

Reflect on a time that you wished you had been a more effective problem solver. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

Going forward, my plan to enhance my **problem solving** is:



Creativity and Innovation

Actively engage in, and demonstrate openness to and respect for imaginative, creative and innovative approaches.

You can demonstrate your **creativity and innovation** through:

- Understanding what it means to be creative and innovative
- Using your imagination and curiosity to look for new ways to think, do things and tackle problems
- Stretching beyond your comfort zone in imagining what's possible
- Persisting through challenges and learning from mistakes
- Critically reflecting on and refining creative and innovative works and processes

Ivana is nearing the end of her carpentry apprenticeship. She has enjoyed most components of her program but her instructors and employers have all mentioned her special talent for home renovations, especially restoring heritage homes. Ivana always enjoyed history in school and likes how restoration work involves researching the types of materials and styles that fit with each project she is working on. Each new project brings problems to solve and Ivana thrives in the midst of unexpected challenges or “design flaws” when the architect’s renovation design doesn’t match the reality of how the house was originally constructed.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were creative or innovative. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had been more creative or innovative. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

--	--

Going forward, my plan to enhance my **creativity and innovation** is:

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Entrepreneurial Mindset

Embrace the qualities of an entrepreneurial mindset in learning, work and life.

You can demonstrate your **entrepreneurial mindset** through:

- Recognizing that an entrepreneurial mindset involves embracing change, being resilient and demonstrating grit
- Finding ways to incorporate an entrepreneurial mindset into your learning, work and life
- Taking calculated risks, validating ideas and accepting constructive feedback
- Reflecting on, and learning from, successes, mistakes and failures

Khalid's first foray into business was having a stand at the weekend Farmer's Market when he was still in high school. Profits from this, and other entrepreneurial projects, helped pay his college tuition. Khalid has decided that he really doesn't want one full-time job when he graduates. He prefers having income from multiple sources and finds that having lots of variety in his work keeps him energized and constantly learning and growing. In one of his businesses, Khalid now supplies local restaurants with the baked goods that he also still sells at the Farmer's Market. He works part-time for his uncle's business, managing social media marketing there. He occasionally helps small businesses set up websites and their social media strategies. This work comes mostly from referrals but he sees potential in expanding this after graduation.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were entrepreneurial. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had been more entrepreneurial. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **entrepreneurial mindset** is:

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Critical Thinking

Think clearly and rationally about what to do and what to believe.

You can demonstrate your **critical thinking** through:

- Reflecting on your beliefs and values, and how they shape how you think and reason
- Analyzing information to assess its credibility and accuracy
- Understanding logical connections between ideas, information and arguments
- Recognizing that various points of view may or may not be valid
- Asking questions that clarify various points of view
- Detecting inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning
- Evaluating evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs
- Drawing conclusions based on thorough analysis

Jonah is working towards a business management diploma (with a marketing specialization) at his local community college. He has always been good at analyzing information but his courses are making him aware of how marketing strategies can have negative impacts, shaping buying behaviours without buyers ever knowing how they've been influenced. Jonah can see that marketing is a powerful tool and, on reflection, recognizes the disconnect between his personal values and some of the marketing strategies he is studying. He isn't keen on using marketing to manipulate people or influence them to purchase beyond their means. Jonah decides to seek out opportunities with organizations that are committed to social responsibility as he wants his marketing expertise to contribute to positive changes.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were a critical thinker. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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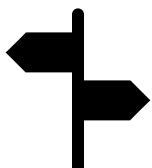
Reflect on a time that you wished you had been a better critical thinker. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **critical thinking** is:

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Decision Making

Make decisions, evaluate outcomes, be accountable for choices and reflect on how personal priorities, beliefs and culture influence decisions.

You can demonstrate your **decision making** through:

- Examining how you make decisions
- Understanding ethical considerations when making decisions
- Recognizing the influence of personal qualities, culture and context in making informed career, life and educational decisions
- Making an informed decision by evaluating ideas, solutions and opportunities
- Taking responsibility for your actions and decisions
- Reflecting on and refining your own decision-making process

Maddy is in university on a soccer scholarship. She took general studies courses in the first couple of years but now needs to choose a major. As an athlete, Maddy is very used to working with coaches so it makes sense to her to access the career coaching offered by the university. The career coach helps Maddy brainstorm several possibilities that could fit with her personality, values and strengths. Then they work together to compare each of the options to the realities of Maddy's busy training and game schedule. Maddy realizes that the options with work terms that overlap with soccer season aren't a good fit right now, so she eliminates them. She narrows her list to three majors that really interest her and then asks her friends and family what they think. She also talks to students in each of the three programs and, with the help of her career coach, does some research about predicted job openings, salaries and working conditions. One of the majors stands out from the rest – everyone can see her doing that kind of work, it pays well and it seems like there is a growing need for graduates from that program.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were an effective decision maker. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had been a more effective decision maker. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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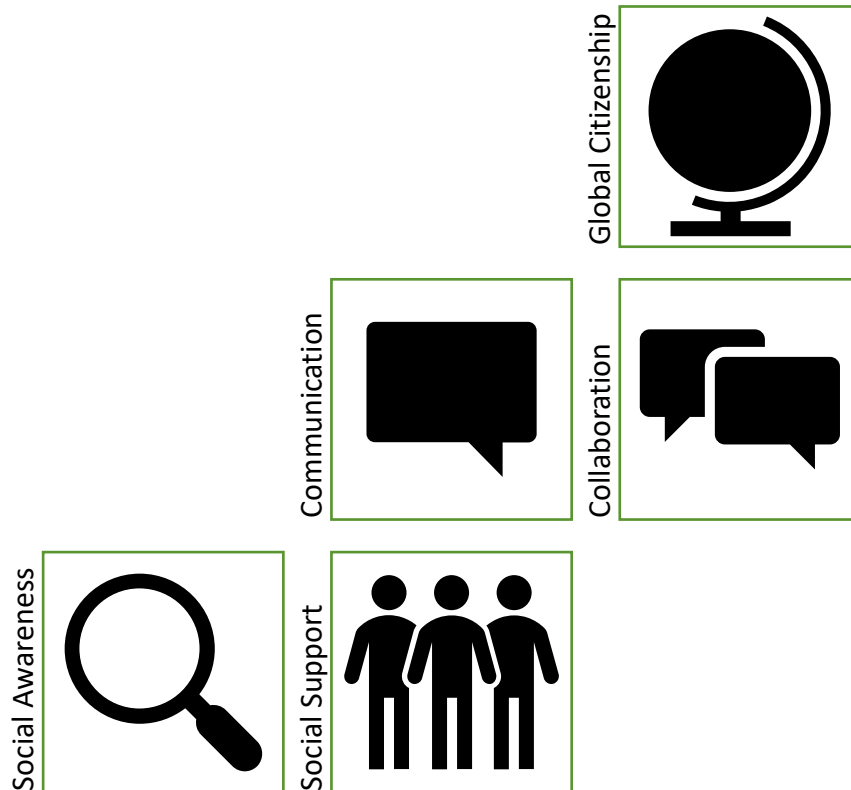
Going forward, my plan to enhance my **decision making** is:

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CONNECTING

This cluster of competencies supports relationships with others. It includes:



In the following pages, you will see how each of these competencies are used at school, at work and in other life roles. For each competency, you will have a chance to reflect on how you have already used it effectively and how you might like to strengthen it in the future.



Social Awareness

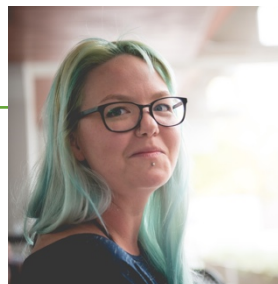
Demonstrate interactions with others that show respect for, openness to and appreciation of diversity.

You can demonstrate your **social awareness** through:

- Demonstrating acceptance of and respect for diverse ways of thinking and being
- Showing understanding of, and empathy for, others
- Understanding and valuing Indigenous traditions and knowledge, including the belief in the interconnectedness of everything
- Understanding, valuing and taking pride in the contributions of diverse cultural, ethnic and linguistic groups, including your own, to Canada
- Understanding how culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, language, national origin, race, ethnicity and religion affect personal identity and influence lives and opportunities
- Recognizing that privilege, prejudice and oppression are widespread and damaging
- Promoting and demonstrating fairness, social justice, human rights, equity and respect for all

Samantha's interest in social justice began early and, in college, has intensified. She remains interested in working on the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action* and, as a result, has dedicated several of her school projects to researching and sharing information about specific problems and solutions. Through coursework and volunteer opportunities, Sam has also taken a special interest in newcomers to her region, especially refugees.

One of her instructors really helped to bring the concept of *privilege* to life for her; those discussions gave Sam a framework for understanding some of the inequities that have bothered her since she was young. Sam is currently grappling between feeling guilty for her own privilege and recognizing the voice it gives her to promote social justice and human rights. Sam can see so many issues that need attention and is trying to focus her energy on problems that are within her sphere of influence.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were socially aware. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

Reflect on a time that you wished you had been more socially aware. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

Going forward, my plan to enhance my **social awareness** is:



Social Support

Establish, maintain and call upon healthy supportive relationships as needed.

You can demonstrate your **social support** through:

- Establishing, maintaining and nurturing a supportive network of healthy relationships
- Seeking support from others (e.g., friends, family, Elders, teachers, role models, mentors, coaches)
- Supporting others' learning by being a positive and encouraging role model, mentor, coach or tutor
- Identifying and seeking appropriate support to address harassment, bullying and mistreatment in all its forms
- Taking appropriate steps to support others who are struggling with physical, emotional, mental, environmental, social and/or spiritual challenges

Dylan feels good about himself when he is able to help others. A few years after graduating from high school, he is now close to completing certification as an Automotive Service Technician. He coaches a soccer team and also helps out at the local ice rink in exchange for reduced fees for hockey.

Dylan knows that he can be overly influenced by his friends; there was a time in high school when he got into a pattern of staying up all night playing video games and came close to failing some courses. Then, soon after he began his apprenticeship, he started drinking too much after work and almost got fired. Through these experiences, he's learned that he needs to be careful about the friends he chooses and he's in a good place right now with healthy relationships.

One of the new apprentices at work is a bully. Although the bullying isn't directed at Dylan, it makes him uncomfortable. Dylan has reached out to the high school student who seems to be the latest target and, whenever possible, ensures that they are partnered to work together. He tries to be a good role model, but the new apprentice doesn't seem to care that his comments are hurtful. Dylan has asked his supervisor if they can go out together for coffee; he knows his supervisor has witnessed the bullying so he hopes that they can come up with a plan to make their workplace safe again for everyone.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you had supportive relationships. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had better social support. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **social support** is:

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Communication

Demonstrate effective and positive communication and social skills.

You can demonstrate your **communication** through:

- Recognizing non-verbal communication cues in yourself and others, including tone of voice, facial expressions, posture and use of hands
- Respectfully considering the ideas, thoughts and feelings of others through listening, reading, and viewing
- Knowing and asking for what you want in a reasonable and specific way
- Clearly expressing your ideas, thoughts and feelings through speaking, listening, writing, reading, viewing and other ways of representing
- Communicating clearly and confidently in public
- Recognizing and respecting that there are many languages used in Canada
- Continuously improving and refining English and/or French language skills
- Communicating respectfully and effectively across linguistic and cultural differences
- Recognizing the advantages of being multi-lingual, continuing to practice languages to stay fluent
- Communicating using different forms of media
- Tailoring communication, considering your purpose and audience
- Recognizing that accepted terminology shifts over time

When **Yara** first entered university, she planned to get a degree in English literature and history, thinking that eventually she might teach those subjects in high school. As a young child, Yara had loved learning about people and telling their stories. In university, Yara became involved with the Student Union and soon became the media liaison, writing press releases and being interviewed.

As Yara reflects on what she most enjoys, she realizes that she prefers being in the midst of today's action rather than reading and discussing English literature or studying historical events. She is fascinated with the work that her media contacts are doing and begins asking them more about how they got into it. Yara switches one of her minors to journalism. Doing this opens up a second option after she completes her bachelor's degree – she could either move on to a BEd to become a teacher or apply for a master's in journalism to prepare for a media career.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you communicated effectively. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

Reflect on a time that you wished you had communicated more effectively. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

Going forward, my plan to enhance my **communication** is:



Collaboration

Embrace the benefits of working together, resolve conflicts, accept personal responsibility for your own behaviour and, respecting diversity, negotiate acceptable compromises and solutions.

You can demonstrate your **collaboration** through:

- Interacting respectfully and purposefully with others, as part of a team/group in formal and informal environments
- Clearly sharing your own beliefs and values while respecting and appreciating those that differ
- Celebrating the benefits of working with others, recognizing the value of collaboration
- Understanding and respecting others' needs
- Recognizing privilege and challenging discriminatory behaviour in self and others
- Compromising in working towards common goals
- Constructively negotiating and resolving conflicts with others, acknowledging and addressing biases
- Being prepared to reassess your position based on new information and/or the input of others
- Engaging in collaboration using a variety of media/tools

Tyler lives in residence at university. He grew up living with extended family and enjoys having lots of people around him. Tyler loved his experience in residence as a first year student and, as soon as he was eligible, he applied for the residence life coordinator training. He plans to stay in residence until he graduates.

One of the things that Tyler learned from living in a big family, and then in residence, is that people have very different expectations and ideas about how to live and work together. Although he tries to respect others' needs, he has to admit that he doesn't always understand them! When he became a residence life coordinator, Tyler introduced an experiential workshop that helps everyone on a residence floor to learn about each other. This activity is fun and energizing; however, what's most important is that it has measurably reduced conflicts and contributed to a spirit of appreciation for individual differences.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you collaborated effectively. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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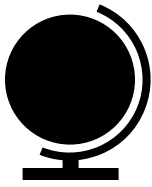
Reflect on a time that you wished you had collaborated more effectively. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **collaboration** is:

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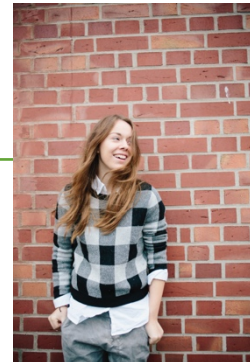
Global Citizenship

Actively participate in and contribute to local, regional, national and/or international initiatives.

You can demonstrate your **global citizenship** through:

- Volunteering, participating in and contributing to community-building activities and projects, locally, regionally, nationally and/or internationally
- Taking environmental and social responsibility to make your learning or work environments, community and the world better
- Recognizing the political, environmental, economic and social realities of living in a global world
- Engaging with diverse cultures, places, experiences and people to learn about the world
- Using a global perspective to create opportunities and address challenges

Alex has almost completed a bachelor's degree in International Development Studies (IDS); one of the highlights was a semester studying in Cuba and learning about the culture. Alex is now trying to decide between staying on at university to complete a master's degree in IDS, spending a year working on a community development project in Africa, or joining a community development project closer to home in the Atlantic region. Especially interesting is the work being done supporting economic development and sustainability of outports in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were an effective global citizen. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had been a more effective global citizen. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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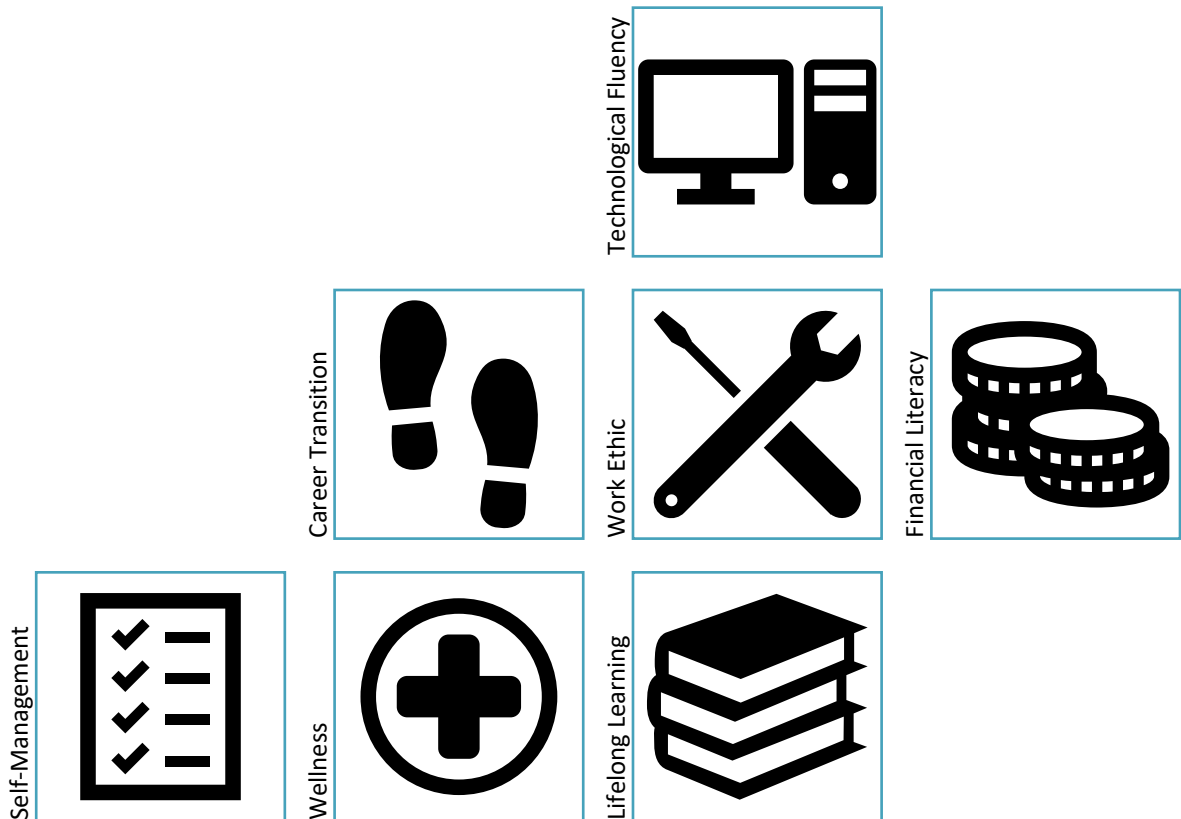
Going forward, my plan to enhance my **global citizenship** is:

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MANAGING

This cluster of competencies relates to how you take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and behaviours to maintain health and wellbeing and how you navigate school, work and other life responsibilities. It includes:



In the following pages, you will see how each of these competencies are used at school, at work and in other life roles. For each competency, you will have a chance to reflect on how you have already used it effectively and how you might like to strengthen it in the future.



Self-Management

Manage thoughts, emotions and behaviours in a variety of circumstances and, when appropriate, advocate effectively for self.

You can demonstrate your **self-management** through:

- Identifying and managing your emotions and actions
- Being adaptable, open to and ready for change
- Developing strategies to effectively manage transitions within learning, home, support communities, work and life
- Engaging in self-advocacy by understanding your own needs for accommodations and requesting them as necessary
- Anticipating and preparing for challenges and potential barriers (e.g., transportation, finances, personal or family responsibilities, health, criminal record checks)

Hai found the transition to university far less challenging than he'd expected, perhaps because he'd already taken a big leap in coming to Canada as an international student for his last 2 years of high school. However, in the beginning of his 3rd year, Hai's 2-year relationship ended and he found himself spiraling downward, feeling lonely and overwhelmed. He began skipping classes – something he'd never done before – and he handed in two of his mid-term assignments late, without any explanation.

One of Hai's professors notices a big change in Hai and sets up a meeting.

At first Hai is reluctant to share personal information with a professor but realizes he needs help to get his life back on track. The professor recommends that Hai see a medical doctor to ensure that he is physically okay. He also suggests a counsellor who helps Hai understand and process his grief and connects him with a peer support program.

One of the surprising things that Hai learns through this experience is the notion of self-advocacy. It had never crossed his mind to proactively reach out to an instructor to ask for an extension during times of crisis or emergency. The peer coach also helped Hai to make an integrated list of all of his remaining course activities and assignments. By scheduling everything in, Hai is able to keep moving forward with one project at a time. Gradually, he feels his life getting back on track and begins to feel less overwhelmed.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you effectively managed yourself. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had managed yourself more effectively. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **self-management** is:

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Wellness

Demonstrate personal resilience and the use of effective and safe self-care strategies in managing all dimensions of wellness throughout life transitions, including following health and safety policies.

You can demonstrate your **wellness** through:

- Recognizing that everyone faces challenges
- Caring for your physical, emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual wellbeing, seeking help when needed
- Being resilient and persistent when faced with biases, disappointments, setbacks and pressure from others, understanding that they are a normal part of life
- Recognizing that managing life transitions includes challenges, new learning, and sometimes, culture shock
- Following appropriate health and safety policies and procedures

Taylor has been struggling in college. Her dad left when she was 15 and then her mom died the following year. She stayed with her best friend's family until graduating from high school, but Taylor moved out on her own when her friend went away to university. For the past year, Taylor has been working part-time and taking a few general studies courses at college. However, she is finding it hard to get focused and, if she's honest, almost impossible to drag herself out of bed most days.

Taylor's best friend is concerned about some of Taylor's posts – they seem pretty dark. She tried texting but Taylor isn't responding. She phoned her mom, Mrs. K., who also hasn't heard from Taylor for a while. Concerned, they decide that her mom will stop by Taylor's place.

Taylor is in rough shape. She hasn't left home for the past couple of weeks, hasn't bathed and hasn't been eating much. There are several empty wine bottles in the living room and a half empty bottle of sleeping pills on the kitchen counter. When asked about them, Taylor says that she was working up the courage to take the rest of the pills.

Mrs. K. calls a counsellor she knows and drives Taylor in to see her that afternoon for an emergency intake session. Although Taylor doesn't feel like she has the energy to go, she remembers that counselling had been helpful in the past. She trusts Mrs. K. and knows she wants the best for her.

Together with the counsellor, they identify a residential support program where Taylor will be safe and supported to work through her grief, build her circle of allies and focus on regaining her health.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you effectively managed your wellness. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had more effectively managed your wellness. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **wellness** is:

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Lifelong Learning

Demonstrate the ability to be an independent learner, engaging in formal and informal learning to effectively navigate changes and transitions.

You can demonstrate your **lifelong learning** through:

- Approaching every experience as a learning opportunity
- Continuing to learn throughout your life
- Learning from diverse people and developing cross-cultural and cross-generational understanding
- Being open to feedback and seeing mistakes as opportunities for learning
- Using effective strategies to support lifelong learning

Brandon's family and friends weren't surprised when he told them that he was planning to continue in school, even after finishing his master's degree. Brandon had liked school since Kindergarten and, even on school breaks, was always reading a book or looking something up online.

Brandon really appreciates the idea of "two-eyed seeing" – a term introduced by a Mi'kmaq Elder to describe how to integrate Indigenous and Western world views and ways of knowing. He wants to extend the research from his master's thesis on ways to care for the environment that were informed by both science and his ancestors' long history of living in this region. He enjoys sharing what he learns with others; aside from working as a lab assistant at the university, Brandon facilitates weekend workshops and retreats for tourists visiting the region.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you were an effective learner. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

Reflect on a time that you wished you had been a more effective learner. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

Going forward, my plan to enhance my **lifelong learning** is:



Career Transition

Combine self-knowledge and educational/labour market information to make informed career decisions and to navigate career transitions in today's ever-changing labour market.

You can demonstrate your ability to navigate **career transitions** through:

- Understanding and leveraging the influence of family, friends, culture, government policies and regional economic development on your career exploration and choices
- Using a variety of strategies and sources of information to explore options for learning and work
- Identifying possible career paths through research (e.g., print, participation, online)
- Actively pursuing and engaging in work experience (e.g., job shadowing, co-ops, internships, youth apprenticeship, volunteering)
- Embracing opportunities to get, combine or create work (e.g., apprenticeship, part-time, full-time, self-employment, “gigs” and contracts)
- Recognizing what impacts, and is impacted by, seasonal work
- Examining how rural and regional economies can impact career opportunities and decisions
- Creating your own personal marketing strategy (e.g., write targeted resumés and cover letters, interview with confidence)
- Gathering and evaluating detailed information resulting from your career exploration process
- Discussing, sharing and evaluating your career options with others
- Explaining your reasons for choosing a career pathway based on who you are, the opportunities you have explored, and labour market information
- Being resilient and able to maneuver through transitions, always having a Plan B (and C and D...)

Natalie is grateful that her diploma program had an internship component. Within the first few days, she realized that the work isn't at all what she expected. Although she'd spoken to several people in the field before choosing her program, and they'd all told her how much they enjoyed the work, Natalie recognizes that it just isn't a fit for her. She manages to complete the internship but feedback from both her instructor and internship supervisor confirms her own assessment – this wasn't for her!

However, Natalie's internship supervisor is impressed with her as a person and sees a good overall fit with the company. The supervisor tells Natalie about an entry-level position in another part of the company. Natalie applies, is interviewed and is offered a job. She discusses the job offer with her instructor and internship supervisor. Both agreed that it seems like a wonderful opportunity for now and a chance to develop some valuable competencies. Natalie knows this is a growth industry and her internship supervisor agrees to be a mentor for her, helping her to plan for future career development within the organization.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you had an effective career transition. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

Reflect on a time that you wished you had a more effective career transition. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

Going forward, my plan to enhance future **career transitions** is:



Work Ethic

Understand, explain and demonstrate ethics and follow the expectations, rules and policies where you live, learn and/or work.

You can demonstrate your **work ethic** through:

- Understanding what is meant by, and demonstrating, integrity
- Being loyal, dependable and accountable so that others can count on you
- Prioritizing commitments
- Observing, supporting and modelling expected attitudes and behaviours
- Meeting or exceeding reasonable expectations by doing the best you can in school, extracurricular activities, volunteering and work
- Showing and taking initiative when appropriate
- Respecting those with whom you live, learn and/or work
- Demonstrating leadership skills

Kyle impressed the leaders of his community development internship. He can always be counted on to go above and beyond and seems to have an amazing ability to prioritize tasks, even when new ones were added to his to-do list every day. One of the things that Kyle's supervisor most appreciates is his willingness to take initiative when he is left on his own. Kyle makes some mistakes, of course, but is always willing to be accountable for his decisions and to learn from his mistakes.

As his gap year is coming to an end, Kyle begins to think seriously about his next steps. He worked part-time in high school and full-time, as a shift supervisor, during the first 6 months of his gap year. His manager would really like him to return after his internship ends and yet he'd always pictured himself getting a degree.

Kyle decides to return to work full-time and enroll in an online program that has a flexible schedule that can accommodate work. He applies for scholarships through his employer; if he is able to get that help with tuition and book costs, he hopes to eventually graduate debt-free and with several years of supervisory work experience as well.



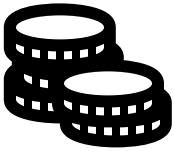
Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you demonstrated a good work ethic. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

Reflect on a time that you wished you had demonstrated a better work ethic. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

Going forward, my plan to enhance my **work ethic** is:



Financial Literacy

Demonstrate financial management knowledge, skills and awareness necessary to navigate school, work, transitions and other life responsibilities.

You can demonstrate your **financial literacy** through:

- Understanding what is meant by financial literacy and its importance
- Recognizing that financial literacy is a lifelong endeavour
- Identifying the costs and funding sources associated with various education and career pathways
- Developing a personal financial plan to support the achievement of education, life and career goals
- Evaluating and setting short- and long-term financial goals to support making healthy financial decisions that lead to financial security (e.g., saving and investing money, debt financing and sources, contractual obligations)
- Knowing how to develop and manage a budget
- Knowing how to keep personal information safe and secure, to prevent and protect against fraud and financial abuse
- Maintaining financial records, as required, to assist with calculating, submitting and supporting reports (e.g., income tax, loan applications, requests for financial assistance)

Alyssa is very pragmatic about the cost of education and the notion of “return on investment.” Her older sister and a couple of family friends completed degrees, ran up huge student loans and then couldn’t find work in their fields. She contrasted this to the information she’d read that people with education have higher lifetime earnings. It was hard to sort out myths from reality!

Alyssa does some research about occupations that are in demand (and predicted to be in demand in the future). She then does salary comparisons for those in-demand jobs, paying attention to entry-level salaries as well as salaries after 5 and 10 years in the field. Alyssa also speaks to people working in the jobs she is considering.

Through these interviews, Alyssa learns of one employer that was tired of waiting for graduates from the local college and is fast-tracking a group of students through a comparable certificate program in-house. The employer has converted a boardroom to a classroom and hired a qualified instructor. Although the students aren’t paid to attend the course, there are no tuition fees. Alyssa has been saving for school – her savings are enough to cover her living expenses for the 1-year program, so she can complete it debt-free and have a very good chance of a job at the end.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you handled your finances well. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

Reflect on a time that you wished you had been more effective with your finances. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

Going forward, my plan to enhance my **financial literacy** is:



Technological Fluency

Integrate and apply technologies to work with others, communicate, learn and solve problems; manage social media presence responsibly and safely.

You can demonstrate your **technological fluency** through:

- Using technology in a respectful, legal, safe and ethical way
- Accessing and critically evaluating online information and resources
- Managing social media presence responsibly and safely
- Creating a positive digital footprint, recognizing the permanence of online data
- Recognizing the benefits, limitations and challenges of using technologies

Brooke is fascinated with changing technologies. She likes to be the first of her friends to upgrade her phone and is constantly trying out new apps and wearable technology. In high school, she'd become interested in how to manage your social media presence and had written a regular newsletter column. That spun off into several consulting gigs with small businesses in her community, bringing in enough income to cover most of her university tuition fees.

Brooke's latest interest is "fake news" and how to combat it. She's working on an international research team through her university and, together, they've made some exciting progress developing and piloting a fake news detection app. Brooke isn't as interested in the policy pieces, although she recognizes that's important too. What she likes best is to work on coding, understand the inner workings of algorithms, and create user-friendly tools and blog posts on how to navigate the increasingly complex online world.



Reflect on your learning, work and/or life experiences to identify a time when you used technology effectively. Briefly describe it here:

What worked particularly well?

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Reflect on a time that you wished you had used technology more effectively. Briefly describe it here:

What would you do differently in the future?

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Going forward, my plan to enhance my **technological fluency** is:

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Competency Snapshot

Use this summary page to transfer your results from the Self-Assessment & Reflection activity (pages 4-13). When transferring your scores, indicate whether the score represented a strength (+) or an area for development (-). Use the action plan on the following page to prioritize learning activities that will build and strengthen your competencies.

Competencies		Score	+	-	Comments
Thinking	Self-Awareness				
	Problem Solving				
	Creativity and Innovation				
	Entrepreneurial Mindset				
	Critical Thinking				
	Decision Making				
Connecting	Social Awareness				
	Social Support				
	Communication				
	Collaboration				
	Global Citizenship				
Managing	Self-Management				
	Wellness				
	Lifelong Learning				
	Career Transition				
	Work Ethic				
	Financial Literacy				
	Technological Fluency				

Action Plan

Enhancing Strengths

Use this page to build an action plan for competency development. Start by identifying **3 Areas of Strength** which you'd like to further enhance. For each, identify specific goals, action steps and realistic dates for completion.

Competency:

Goal	Action Step	Completion Date

Competency:

Goal	Action Step	Completion Date

Competency:

Goal	Action Step	Completion Date

Focus Areas for Development

Next, consider **3 Areas for Development** to focus on. Just as you did for your strengths, identify specific goals, action steps and realistic dates for completion for each.

Competency:

Goal	Action Step	Completion Date

Competency:

Goal	Action Step	Completion Date

Competency:

Goal	Action Step	Completion Date

Consider what supports will help you to monitor your own progress and achieve your goals...and be sure to reward yourself when you get there!