

MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A. SELF-ASSESSMENT OF MANAGERIAL SKILLS

As a Community Medicine veterinarian at the San Francisco SPCA, I play a key role in leading a team of medical and administrative staff to deliver veterinary services through both the spay/neuter and community clinics. My work focuses on increasing access to care for underserved communities, requiring not only clinical expertise but also strong collaboration, communication, and leadership. Although I do not hold a formal managerial title, I take on daily leadership responsibilities by guiding workflows, supporting team members, and contributing to patient care decisions. Prior to this course, I had not received formal management training, making this experience essential for my development.

One of my key strengths is my ability to build trust and foster psychological safety within my team. Through my reflections on team dynamics, I recognized that vulnerability-based trust is essential in creating an environment where team members feel comfortable speaking up and sharing concerns. This is particularly important in a clinical setting, where open communication directly impacts patient safety and outcomes. I have also developed strong communication skills, including active listening and approachability, which help promote collaboration and teamwork.

Another key strength is my strong alignment with the organization's mission. I am highly motivated by the impact of my work and the ability to support underserved populations, which reflects strong intrinsic motivation. This sense of purpose drives my engagement and commitment to both patient care and team collaboration. I also recognize that my behavior sets the tone for the team, and I strive to model professionalism, compassion, and commitment to our mission in my daily work. By demonstrating these values consistently, I help reinforce a culture that prioritizes high-quality care, teamwork, and dedication to serving the community. In addition, I demonstrate leadership through influence rather than formal authority by guiding clinical decision-making and supporting team members, reflecting an understanding that effective leadership is built on trust, expertise, and strong relationships.

I have also developed the ability to balance detail-oriented clinical work with increasing awareness of broader organizational goals. My role requires a high level of focus on clinical tasks and efficiency, and I have become increasingly aware of how these daily operations connect to broader organizational goals. I am developing a more intentional approach to stepping back from task-focused work to contribute to strategic discussions related to workflow improvement, efficiency, and expanding access to care at a systems level. This awareness allows me to not only support immediate clinical needs but also think more proactively about long-term impact and program development.

Despite these strengths, I have identified several key areas for growth that will be critical for my continued development as a manager. One significant area for improvement is my ability to deliver consistent and constructive feedback. While I am effective at providing positive reinforcement, I tend to hesitate when delivering corrective or developmental feedback to avoid conflict. This tendency can limit opportunities for team growth and accountability. I recognize that effective managers must provide timely, specific, and balanced feedback that supports both performance improvement and professional development. Strengthening my ability to “challenge directly while caring personally” will be essential for fostering accountability and continuous improvement within my team.

Another important area for growth is communicating with clarity and intentionality. Although communication is generally a strength, I sometimes assume others understand my intent without confirming comprehension. Additionally, as English is not my first language, I may occasionally find it challenging to clearly express complex ideas in high-stress situations. These gaps can lead to miscommunication or misalignment. To improve, I will focus on checking for understanding, adapting my communication to different contexts and individuals, and using a combination of verbal, non-verbal, and visual strategies to ensure clarity.

Supporting my team through change is another critical development area. In a high-volume clinical environment, changes in workflow, expectations, or organizational priorities can create uncertainty and resistance. I have observed that I sometimes underestimate the level of communication and support required during transitions. Moving forward, I need to be more proactive in clearly communicating the purpose behind changes, addressing concerns early, and creating space for open dialogue. Strengthening this skill will allow me to better guide my team through change while maintaining trust, engagement, and alignment with organizational goals.

Additionally, I recognize the importance of strengthening my ability to manage team dynamics and boundaries effectively. I have observed that team members often confide in me and seek support, which reflects trust but can also lead to overinvolvement in workplace challenges or “drama.” I need to further develop my ability to set appropriate boundaries, redirect conversations toward solutions, and coach team members to take ownership of their concerns. This will allow me to support the team more effectively while maintaining focus on productive problem-solving and minimizing unnecessary stress.

Finally, I aim to continue developing my ability to lead with intention rather than assumption. This includes being more proactive in defining roles, clarifying expectations, and addressing small issues before they escalate. I have recognized that delays in addressing concerns or unclear communication can negatively impact team dynamics and workflow. By becoming more consistent and intentional in these areas, I can strengthen team efficiency, accountability, and overall performance.

Overall, this course has reinforced that leadership is not only defined by formal authority, but by consistent actions, communication, and the ability to influence and support others. It has provided me with a deeper understanding of my strengths while also highlighting critical areas for growth. By focusing on improving feedback delivery, communication clarity, change management, structured team development, and accountability, I will be better prepared to transition into a formal management role and effectively support my team in delivering high-quality care and expanding access to veterinary services.

B. SMART GOALS

- **Goal 1: Strengthening Feedback and Accountability**

I will improve my ability to deliver constructive feedback and strengthen accountability by conducting weekly 15-minute one-on-one meetings with each team member over the next 3 months, during which I will provide at least one piece of specific constructive feedback and collaboratively set one measurable performance goal per meeting, and follow up on progress in subsequent sessions.

- **Goal 2: Improving Communication and Team Alignment**

I will improve communication clarity and team alignment by setting clear expectations and priorities with my team at the beginning of each week and conducting a brief debrief at the end of each week over the next 3 months to review outcomes, identify communication gaps, and improve workflow consistency. I will measure progress by tracking recurring issues identified during debriefs and observing improvements in role clarity, reduced miscommunication, and more consistent workflow execution over time.

C. ACTION PLAN

To achieve my SMART goals, I will implement a structured and intentional action plan focused on improving feedback delivery, accountability, communication clarity, and team alignment. This plan integrates course concepts and managerial tools while remaining realistic within the demands of a high-volume clinical environment. By focusing on consistent behaviors, structured communication, and ongoing evaluation, I will be able to create sustainable improvements in both my managerial effectiveness and overall team performance.

1. Anticipated Obstacles and Strategies to Address Them

One potential challenge is time management in a high-volume clinical environment, which may make it difficult to consistently prioritize one-on-one meetings and weekly team discussions. To address this, I will schedule these activities in advance and integrate them into my workflow as essential responsibilities.¹

Another anticipated obstacle is discomfort with delivering constructive feedback, as I tend to avoid conflict, which may limit my ability to provide direct and actionable input. To address this, I will use a structured feedback approach by describing the situation, explaining its impact, and offering clear next steps, while inviting the team member's perspective and confirming understanding. Additionally, I will remind myself that providing feedback is an ethical responsibility in a clinical environment where performance directly affects patient outcomes.²

Another challenge may be variability in team engagement, as staff may feel rushed or not immediately see the value of structured discussions. To address this, I will foster a psychologically safe environment by encouraging participation, actively listening, and reinforcing the purpose of these conversations. I will also track my consistency weekly to ensure follow-through and adjust my approach as needed.³

2. Action Plan for Goal 1: Strengthening Feedback and Accountability

¹ Balancing the Big Picture & Day to Day Tool

² Providing Feedback: A Manager's Conversation Guide

³ Team Dynamics & Organizational Health Tool

To improve my ability to deliver constructive feedback and strengthen accountability, I will implement weekly 15-minute one-on-one meetings with each team member, scheduling them in advance and integrating them into my clinical workflow as a consistent management practice. To ensure these meetings are effective and not perceived as an additional burden, I will keep them focused, structured, and purposeful.

a) Leading Effective Meetings

To ensure meetings are efficient and purposeful, I will structure each one-on-one with a clear agenda focused on feedback, progress review, and goal setting. Each meeting will begin by setting expectations for the discussion and end with clearly defined next steps. I will keep meetings time-bound and focused to maintain engagement and ensure they consistently produce actionable outcomes. Keeping meetings structured and time-bound will help maintain engagement and prevent them from becoming unproductive or burdensome.⁴

b) Delivering Constructive Feedback

During each meeting, I will provide at least one piece of specific, constructive feedback using a structured feedback conversation model to ensure clarity, effectiveness, and psychological safety. This process will include:

- Setting the intention of the conversation to support development
- Checking for readiness to ensure the team member is receptive
- Describing the specific situation or behavior observed
- Explaining the impact on the team, workflow, or patient care
- Providing clear and actionable suggestions for improvement
- Inviting the team member's perspective to encourage dialogue and ownership
- Confirming understanding and next steps to ensure alignment

This approach will allow me to deliver feedback that is timely, specific, and focused on behaviors while maintaining a supportive and collaborative environment.²

c) Strengthening Accountability through Performance Management and Delegation

I will reinforce accountability by consistently reviewing progress on previously established goals and collaboratively setting one measurable goal for the following week during each meeting, ensuring that expectations are clearly defined and progress is continuously monitored.⁵

To maintain ownership, I will apply the "Who's Got the Monkey?" principle by guiding team members to identify solutions, define next steps, and take responsibility for implementation rather than assuming ownership of their challenges. I will also establish clear follow-up points to monitor progress and reinforce accountability over time.⁶

d) Monitoring Progress and Measuring Success

To evaluate effectiveness, I will track completion of weekly one-on-one meetings, document feedback provided and goals established, and monitor follow-through on commitments. I will also identify recurring patterns in performance and areas for improvement to adjust my approach over time. This process reflects a structured and

⁴ Leading Effective Meetings Tool

⁵ Performance Reviews, Goal setting & Discipline Tool

⁶ Time Management: Who's Got the Monkey? Tool

ongoing approach to planning and improvement, where actions are implemented, evaluated, and refined based on outcomes to support continuous development and team performance.⁷

3. Action Plan for Goal 2: Improving Communication and Team Alignment

To improve communication clarity and team alignment, I will implement a structured weekly process that includes setting clear expectations at the beginning of each week and conducting a brief debrief at the end of the week to review outcomes and identify opportunities for improvement.

a) Setting Clear Expectations and Priorities

At the beginning of each week, I will communicate clear priorities, expectations, and workflow goals to the team. This will include defining key objectives, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and addressing any anticipated challenges. I will also confirm understanding by asking clarifying questions and encouraging team input to ensure alignment and reduce miscommunication. Establishing clear expectations will help create consistency, prevent confusion, and support overall team performance.⁸

b) Strengthening Communication through Structured Team Discussions

To improve communication effectiveness, I will create consistent opportunities for team discussion at both the beginning and end of each week. During these discussions, I will encourage participation, actively listen to team members, and ensure that communication remains clear, concise, and focused on shared goals. This approach will support collaboration, improve information flow, and strengthen overall team alignment.³

c) Supporting Team Alignment and Continuous Improvement

At the end of each week, I will conduct a brief team debrief to review what worked well, identify challenges, and address any communication gaps or workflow issues. I will use these discussions to identify recurring patterns and implement adjustments for future workflows. By consistently reviewing outcomes and making improvements, I will create a feedback loop that supports team learning and continuous improvement.⁷

d) Monitoring Progress and Measuring Success

To evaluate effectiveness, I will track completion of weekly planning and debrief sessions, document recurring communication issues, and observe improvements in role clarity, reduced miscommunication, and overall workflow consistency. This ongoing evaluation process will allow me to adjust my approach as needed and ensure sustained improvement over time.⁷

⁷ Planning & Program Development Tool

⁸ Setting Expectations & Monitoring Progress

D. PERSONAL REFLECTION

Overall, I am confident that I will be able to achieve my goals because they are realistic, directly aligned with my current responsibilities, and integrated into my daily workflow. As identified in my self-assessment, I already demonstrate strong communication, trust-building, and commitment to my team, which provides a solid foundation for developing more advanced managerial skills. By focusing on consistent practices such as structured feedback and clear communication, I believe these goals are attainable and sustainable over time.

One of my main sources of motivation is my strong connection to the organization's mission and my desire to improve both team performance and patient care. Knowing that more effective communication and accountability can directly impact team efficiency and clinical outcomes reinforces the importance of this development. I am also motivated by my personal growth as a leader and my goal of transitioning into a more formal management role. To support this, I will track my progress and reflect regularly on my implementation of these strategies, using small improvements in team engagement, communication clarity, and accountability as indicators of success. Recognizing these improvements will help maintain my motivation, while balancing daily responsibilities with long-term development will allow me to sustain these practices over time.

I will celebrate success by acknowledging both individual and team progress, including improved follow-through, clearer communication, and increased engagement. Recognizing these improvements will not only reinforce my own development but also contribute to a positive and motivating team environment. Ultimately, this process will support my growth as a more effective and intentional leader.