

**Distance Learning Joint Strategic Leadership 2011 Deliverable
Personal Development Plan Guidance
(October 2011)**

"Failing to plan is planning to fail" A. Lakein

"A plan is a path of steps untaken" D. Smellie

"If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else." Yogi Berra

Congratulations on making it to the final core course! The deliverable for Joint Strategic Leadership (JSL) is a Personal Development Plan (PDP) which begins with your Senior Leadership Philosophy. Your PDP must follow this guidance to receive credit. It will be evaluated by your O-6 (or O-6 equivalent) mentor and is a pass/fail deliverable.

Background

The overall objective of the PDP is to encourage reflection and to think critically about your personal and professional future. This document provides some background and basic guidance. While we have established some minimum content, you should not feel constrained on what you add to your plan. Your PDP is unique and tailored to your life and career. It should be about 5-8 pages in length and drafted during the JSL course.

Inherent in the name is the word *plan*. This indicates the document should be detailed, forward-looking, objective-driven and achievable. We do not want this to be a document created solely for the completion of AWC that never gets used. You'll begin this plan by drafting your senior leadership philosophy. This should take into account a bigger area of influence and demonstrate how you hope to make other leaders be successful. This philosophy will paint a picture of the ideal senior leader you will strive to be. Throughout the year, we will add videos of AWC speakers sharing their leadership philosophy so you can see more examples.

The next step is data gathering and self-reflection. The greatest resource you take into any situation is yourself. Research has shown the most effective senior leaders are those who are more aware of their own competencies and impact on people. Be sure to include personal health and fitness in your assessment and goals. Also, include any "360-type" feedback you may have participated in or received. The last portion of the PDP looks at training needs and requirements. It asks for developmental preferences which can link to your Airmen Development Plan (for Air Force personnel) or other career development tools for your service/affiliation. These two areas can also be discussion topics with your mentor. Your mentor should be involved in this process.

Submission:

You are expected to discuss the PDP with your mentor. Once they are satisfied with the product they need to attach your PDP (which includes your Strategic Leadership Philosophy) to an email stating:

"I am Lt Col (Your Name Here)'s mentor. I have discussed his/her personal development plan in detail including the sections on self-assessment, personal goals, professional goals, professional development, reflection and critical thinking as listed in the Personal Development Plan guide. We have also discussed his/her strategic leadership philosophy and his/her transition to senior leadership roles. Based on the written personal development plan and our related conversations, I recommend passing Lt Col (Your Name Here) on the personal development plan portion of the Joint Strategic Leadership course."

They must include a full signature block with rank or grade and must send the email to Air War College Student Operations at: awc.dl@maxwell.af.mil

Section I (Senior Leadership Philosophy)

The purpose of a senior leader philosophy is to take time to reflect about who you want to be as a senior leader, what you value, and what you will tell those you lead about your priorities. Some elements of a leader's philosophy might include, but are not limited to: what you deem to be important (what you value), what you expect from those you will lead, the ethical climate you expect in your organization and what you consider important for "success." Consider this product a working "draft" of your senior leader or personal philosophy; continue to refine your philosophy throughout the remainder of your career. The specific requirements for this section of your PDP is to write a two-to-three page senior leader philosophy paper, in essay format, and be prepared to discuss your philosophy with your mentor.

Section II (Self-Assessment and Goals)

With your senior leadership philosophy in mind as your concept of the ideal leader you'd like to be, select from the topics covered in the JSL lessons to evaluate your strongest and weakest areas. Create a plan to develop *both* your strengths and your weaknesses. You should use examples from the JSL course materials to support your plan, including specific examples supporting your analysis of your current abilities and your detailed plans to strengthen each area. Also describe your specific plan to further develop both of these areas in your subordinates.

Self-Assessment

- My two or three best leadership skills/attributes and why I believe this
- My two or three leadership skills/traits I need to improve and why I believe this

Personal Goals (near-, mid- and long-term; minimum of two for each timeframe)

- Support needed and potential barriers for each goal

Professional Goals (near-, mid-, and long-term; minimum of two for each timeframe)

- Support needed and potential barriers for each goal

How you'll get there: Training opportunities/requirements, development preferences (future jobs or positions), personal/professional reading goals and why. (If you would like additional references, please consult the following links: Air Force Chief of Staff Reading Program

<http://www.af.mil/information/csafreading/index.asp> and Airmen Development Plan (ADP) via the Air Force Portal <https://w20.afpc.randolph.af.mil/AFPCSecureNet20/PKI/MainMenu1.aspx>)

Requirement

- Cover all areas described above
- Format: MS Word, 8 ½ x 11-inch paper, 1-inch margins, single spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, Filename: PDP_SIS username (e.g. PDP_sme11234d.doc)
- Mentor review

Remember, no plan survives contact with the enemy (Helmuth von Moltke)... in your case the enemy will be: lack of time, life distractions, competing priorities, and procrastination.