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# Managing your Competencies

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## Personal Development Plan

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Roel Grit, Roelie Guit en Nico van der Sijde

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Third Edition



Noordhoff Uitgevers



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Personal Development Plan

**Roel Grit**

**Roelie Guit**

**Nico van der Sijde**

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Third edition

Noordhoff Uitgevers Groningen/Houten

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# Introduction

In higher education so-called competency-orientated teaching has become an important objective. The book *Managing your Competencies* is a workbook with assignments aimed at helping students in higher education institutions to gain insight into the development of their own competencies. A competency is a combination of knowledge, skills and attitude needed for proper functioning in a given professional situation.

Although during each training course different competencies are developed, the book *Managing your Competencies* can be used for various courses within higher education, from technical and teacher training colleges to art schools and information technology courses.

In many studies, students are required to set up a so-called personal development plan (PDP). A PDP is a tool that enables students to monitor their own development and to make adjustments where necessary. The aim of this book is to help students to arrive independently at a PDP through assignments and exercises. The PDP contains an inventory of the competencies already achieved by the student and describes competencies still to be achieved. If a PDP is properly set up and executed, competencies will have been acquired that the student must possess as a beginning professional. We have consciously chosen not to write a book of written exercises. That is why via a website an accompanying program is available, containing the PDP Toolbox. The PDP Toolbox enables a student to maintain a so-called portfolio. The use of the Toolbox is not compulsory. The exercises can also be done on paper.

The second edition of *Managing your Competencies* has been further improved, based on users' research and practical experience. Apart from a number of textual adaptations, a number of new subjects have been added and the description of some concepts has been refined. The number of assignments in the book has also been expanded, giving the student a choice of which ones to do.

A new section on motivation, focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, has been included. Furthermore, there is a new section on application and experiential learning styles. The second edition also contains new concepts such as being proactive, personal targets and the personal mission. Moreover, there is not only a new section relating to time management and the setting of priorities, but also one on the implementation of the Deming Cycle, 'plan, do, act, check' in relation to realizing one's personal targets. In order to compare the higher learning courses in different countries, an international set of so-called Dublin descriptors

has been established. These are discussed in a separate section. Last but not least, there is a new section on competencies relating to being a member of a group.

This third edition has a number of improvements in the text and a more modern layout in colour. There is also a new section about the inquiring student.

The book is supported by extra information via the website [www.managingyourcompetencies.noordhoff.nl](http://www.managingyourcompetencies.noordhoff.nl). This makes it possible for us to disseminate the information simply and to keep it up to date.

In this book we have often used the term 'teacher' where 'mentor,' 'instructor,' 'study guide' or 'coach' could also have been used. Moreover, for better readability, we consistently use 'he' where 'she' could also have been used.

Because this book is a student workbook we have not striven for a comprehensive scientific explanation of a number of definitions.

While the assignments in this book were largely written by the authors, in some sections we have used the many assignments available in literature. Existing ideas and assignments have been incorporated in a modified form. In some cases we have taken over in their entirety exercises written by others.

The first edition of *Managing your Competencies* was developed within the technical and economics departments of the former Hogeschool Drenthe in Emmen, which is now called Stenden University of Applied Sciences. The authors have comprehensively tested the exercises in this book in conjunction with students of the aforementioned departments. We would like to thank all students who helped test the material.

On the occasion of this third edition we would also like to thank our colleagues at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences and the Stenden University of Applied Sciences for inspirational teaching environments. This book could not have been written without the many discussions we have had with colleagues in various work groups about competency-oriented teaching.

June 2011  
Roel Grit, Emmen  
Roelie Guit, Paterswolde  
Nico van der Sijde, Groningen

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# Study Guide

As a student you develop in a dynamic world which is constantly changing. New developments follow each other in rapid succession. This means you must keep on learning continually to keep your knowledge up to date. The current motto is 'A lifetime of learning.' This is why it is important in your studies to learn those things that you need to function properly in your profession, and that you keep excess baggage to an absolute minimum.

To function properly as an employee within an organisation, you must perform the required tasks of your job correctly. In other words, you must possess the correct competencies to execute your tasks properly. If you do not possess these competencies you are incompetent. Companies look for competent employees, or train existing staff to become more competent.

So what must you learn for a future profession? To establish that, you must firstly know what you can already do, what your own possibilities are, and what you will have to learn and be able to do for your future career. You will have to make up the difference between what you can do already and what you must be able to do through learning.

If you know which competencies you possess; and which competencies you want or will have to acquire for your future job, you can set up a so-called personal development plan (PDP) to achieve your goals.

The assignments and exercises in this book will enable you to set up your PDP almost independently. Preferably, you will do the exercises throughout the entire period of your training course. Because the PDP is not static, you will do some exercises at the outset of your training course and others after an internship. Some assignments will have to be done more than once. This means the book is useful from the first to the last year of higher education training. Once you have correctly done the assignments, you will be fully prepared for the labour market.

Competency management takes time, but you will get full benefits from it because you will learn to work effectively. Carrying out the assignments and keeping up your personal development plan will take on average about one hour per week.

The book is arranged as follows: Chapter 1 describes what competencies are and what competency management is. Chapter 2 provides you with assignments to further assess who you are. You will discover how others look at you, and which things are important to you. Chapter 3 teaches you where your individual qualities lie and which qualities need improving. Chapter 4 shows you how you operate within a group. Chapter 5 contains exercises and assignments to help you investigate your future labour market.

Chapter 6 differs in character. It provides you with a number of tools to help you carry out your assignments. It also serves as a reference section for now and for later, when you will be operating in the labour market.

Some assignments can be done individually, others in a group. Which assignments you should do and which you should not is a thing best discussed with your teacher/tutor. Appendix 7 indicates which of the assignments in this book are most useful at certain points in your education, and how much time they will take.

The exercises do not have to be followed in the order given in the book. Choose those that appeal to you most at a given moment. The assignments must be executed individually, but help from your friends, family, fellow students and teachers may sometimes be necessary. They may give you valuable advice and may be capable of judging your current performance.

In order not to interrupt the flow of this book, we have added a number of appendices at the back. These form an essential part of the text and assignments.

### **The accompanying website and the PDP Toolbox**

The accompanying website contains a number of check lists plus the PDP Toolbox. This software provides you among other things with tools for setting up your personality profile, a simple way of determining what you spend your time on, your personal list of activities and the competencies acquired, and also the results of the completed assignments. Of course, all the information in the Toolbox can be printed out.

Although the use of the PDP Toolbox is not compulsory, it is strongly advised. Not only is it more enjoyable than working on paper, but it is also good for keeping everything together neatly. The advantage for your teacher is that he receives everybody's assignments and exercises in the same format, enabling him to review your PDP better and faster. It can also allow him to view your electronic PDP on his personal computer (see Appendix 1).

Note: if you do not use the Toolbox, it is imperative for you to set up a personal file in the form of a folder in which you keep the results of your completed assignments. Always be sure to keep the results of your assignments; it is very useful to compare them with earlier or later answers. If you do use the PDP Toolbox, your data will be saved automatically.

PDP Toolbox 1.0 with the book Managing Your Competencies ISBN 90 01 50000 5

File Help

Vincent Pascal Grit (200401234) Group B4A

Assignments Profile Actions Competencies Archive Study planning Time registration

Assignments from the book Managing Your Competencies

All assignments: Open Completed By date of change

#	Assignment	When	Changed	Completed	Type	Starte
1.1	Getting to know the PDP Toolbox	Start of studies			Individually	
1.2	Description of competencies	Start/more often			Individually	29/11/05
1.3	Recording the study planning and assessments	Continually	29/11/05		Individually	29/11/05
1.4	Gathering documents and proofs	Continually			Individually	
2.1	Steps in self-reflection	Start of studies			Individually	
2.2	Three phases in your life	Start of studies			Individually	
2.3	Who do I prefer, who do I dislike?	Start of studies	29/11/05		Individually	29/11/05
2.4	My shining example	Start/more often	29/11/05		Individually	29/11/05
2.5	Questions to friends and acquaintances	Start of studies			Individually	
2.6	Core qualities	Start/more often			Individually	
2.8	Personal standards and values	Start/more often			Individually	
2.11	Improving PDP action points and logbook	Continually			Individually	
3.1	Zero measurement	Start of studies			Individually	
3.2	Self-reflection halfway through the first year	Start of studies			Individually	
3.3	Introvert or extrovert, thinking or feeling?	Second year onward			Individually	
3.4	Which colour are you?	Second year onward			Individually	
3.5	Compare response behaviour with basic behaviour	First year onward			Individually	
3.6	Where does my time go?	First or second year			Individually	
3.7	Interviewing an intern	Second or third year			In pairs	
3.8	Preparing for your internship	Second or third year			In pairs	
3.9	Self-assessment after a learning-work experience	Second or third year			Individually	

Time registration and hours spent

Date	Activity	Hours
Su 27/11/05	Cooking	1.0
Fr 12/03/04	Exams	5.0
Fr 12/03/04	Sleep	4.0
Sa 31/01/04	Shopping	2.2
Th 1/01/04	Music making	22.0
Th 1/01/04	Overige	3.0
We 31/12/03	Going out	4.2
Mo 29/12/03	Cooking	6.2
Mo 29/12/03	Overige	4.4

Hours per sort of activity

Study at home  
Sleep  
Shopping

Personality profile of Vincent Pascal Grit

Naam Address Various Password Photo

First name: Vincent  
Christian name: Vincent Pascal  
Inscription:  
Surname: Grit  
(Student) number: 200401234

My hobbies

- Playing piano
- Playing drums
- Going out
- Play in a band

Print? Help

PDP Toolbox 1.0 with Managing Your Competencies (Noordhoff Uitgevers)

File Help

Assignments Profile Action Competencies Archive Study planning Time registration

Assignments from the book Managing Your Competencies

All assignments: Open Completed By date of change

#	Assignment	When	Changed	Completed	Type	Starte
1.1	Getting to know the PDP Toolbox	Start of studies			Individually	
1.2	Description of competencies	Start/more often			Individually	29/11/05
1.3	Recording the study planning and assessments	Continually	29/11/05		Individually	29/11/05
1.4	Gathering documents and proofs	Continually			Individually	
2.1	Steps in self-reflection	Start of studies			Individually	
2.2	Three phases in your life	Start of studies			Individually	
2.3	Who do I prefer, who do I dislike?	Start of studies	29/11/05		Individually	29/11/05
2.4	My shining example	Start/more often	29/11/05		Individually	29/11/05
2.5	Questions to friends and acquaintances	Start of studies			Individually	
2.6	Core qualities	Start/more often			Individually	
2.8	Personal standards and values	Start/more often			Individually	
2.11	Improving PDP action points and logbook	Continually			Individually	
3.1	Zero measurement	Start of studies			Individually	
3.2	Self-reflection halfway through the first year	Start of studies			Individually	
3.3	Introvert or extrovert, thinking or feeling?	Second year onward			Individually	
3.4	Which colour are you?	Second year onward			Individually	
3.5	Compare response behaviour with basic behaviour	First year onward			Individually	
3.6	Where does my time go?	First or second year			Individually	
3.7	Interviewing an intern	Second or third year			In pairs	
3.8	Preparing for your internship	Second or third year			In pairs	
3.9	Self-assessment after a learning-work experience	Second or third year			Individually	

Help Do assignment

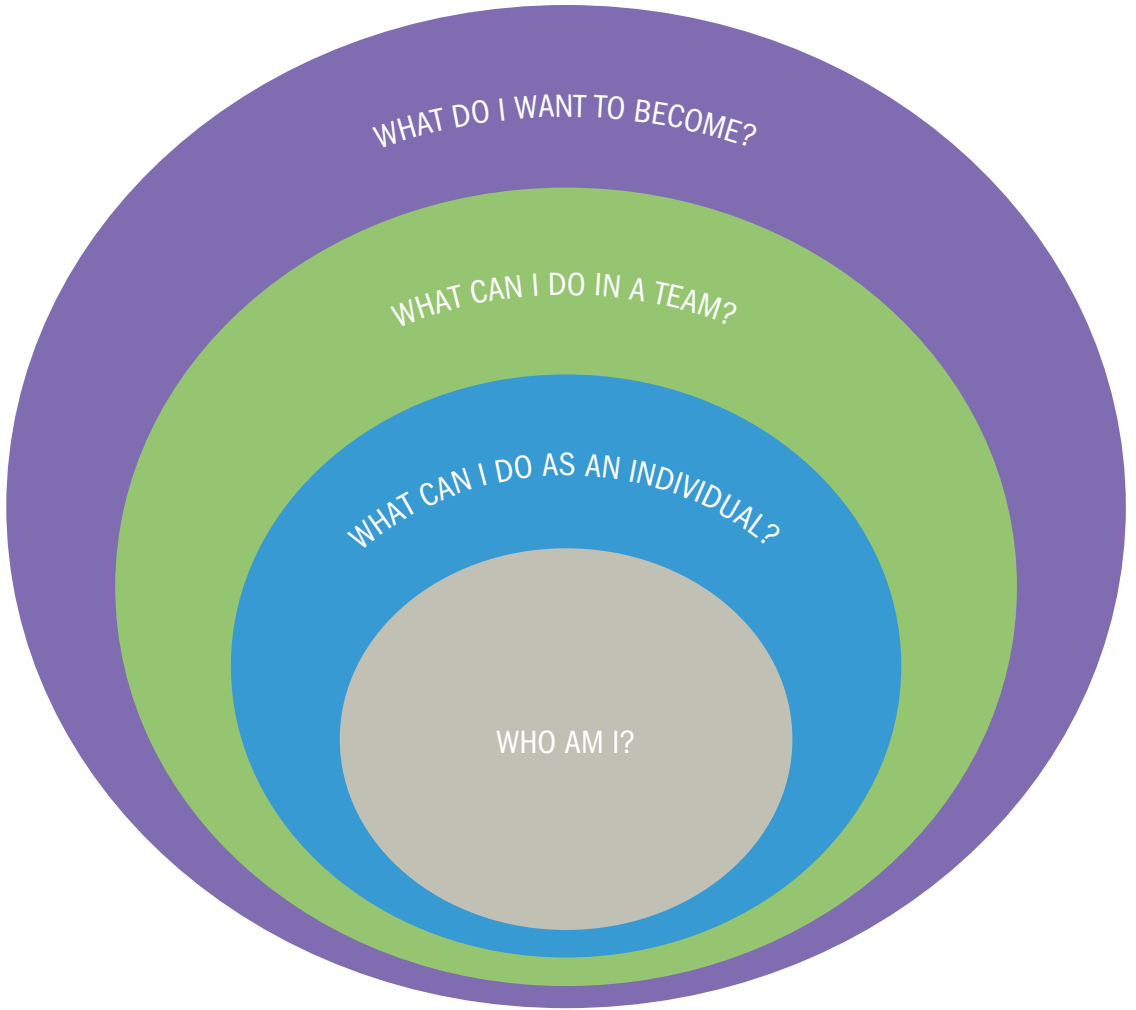
The PDP Toolbox offers the following possibilities:

- You can keep a record in it of the assignments in this book.
- You can enter your personality profile in the program with, among other things, your strong and weak points, your targets and your values and standards.
- You can also enter the competencies you already possess, and the ones you want to acquire.
- With the PDP Toolbox you can also register the marks you have obtained for exams, papers, reports and projects.
- You can enter your PDP list of action points. In effect, this is your personal development plan. With PDP action points you register what you want to work on and what your progress is.
- For the time management division, there is a help program enabling you to keep track easily of the way you spend your time.
- You can print out your data.
- By using a password, you can secure all your data.
- You will find it easy to copy your data onto a CD or diskette. You can hand this to your teacher and discuss the contents with him using the PDP Toolbox on his computer.
- You can use the Toolbox as an electronic portfolio. Traditionally, a portfolio is a file in which you store documents such as reports as proof of certain skills or competencies. Since these documents are often generated in programs such as MS Word and MS Excel, you can also use a so-called electronic portfolio. The PDP Toolbox is admirably equipped for these possibilities.

Appendix 1, 'Website [www.managingyourcompetencies.noordhoff.nl](http://www.managingyourcompetencies.noordhoff.nl)' contains an explanation of how to install the PDP Toolbox.

Have fun with this book, and good luck with managing your competencies!





MANAGING YOUR COMPETENCIES

# 1

# What is competency management?

- 1.1 Competencies for your profession
- 1.2 Competency management: how does it work?
- 1.3 Testing your competencies
- 1.4 The PDP Toolbox as electronic portfolio

In this chapter we explain what competencies are and what competency management entails. If you know what your current competencies are, and you also know which competencies you need for your training and career in later life, you can establish which competencies you still want or need to develop. Using a personal development plan (PDP), you can systematically work on competencies that are important to you. This chapter also informs you how you can test whether you have already acquired certain competencies. With the software program accompanying this book you can easily keep a record of the progress of your own competency management.

## 1.1 Competencies for your profession

What exactly is a competency? The term can be defined as follows:

A competency is a combination of knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviour needed for proper functioning in a given professional situation.

*Knowledge* is what you know: for example, the theoretical part in your study books.

*Skills* are the things you can do: the practical application of knowledge, putting things into practice.

*Attitude* is about what you really want: your personal motives and preferences, that which motivates you, and which you find worth the effort.

*Behaviour* is your way of doing things: for example, how an advisor goes about his professional work. But it also concerns the *behavioural result*: the end results and products you provide. Of course, the latter is extremely important: to function well means producing results. Behaviour is also about how you are perceived by others.

By competencies we mean the simultaneous combination of all these aspects. They represent a combination of *knowing, ability, wanting and doing*.

### Professional aptitude

In brief, a competency is a professional aptitude. Thus, a nurse must be able to inoculate a crying child. The nurse must be aware of the components of the medicine (knowledge), he should know how to inject (skills) and he should be able to put the crying child at ease (behaviour). Without these competencies he cannot function: he will be incompetent, that is, unsuitable and incompetent as a nurse.

During your training you will develop your personal competencies by means of competency management. What does that entail?

Competency management is the systematic development of your personal competencies.

Someone engaged in competency management continually and systematically researches which aspects he is sufficiently competent in and which competencies he must develop further. He keeps a close check on his own development. He not only constantly pays attention to what the profession demands of him, but also (and more importantly) how he can exploit his unique talents to the utmost. Nowadays, everybody, including you, needs to engage in competency management. This is because after you have completed your education you will want to have a job you like and in which you excel. You will want a job that is suitable for you. This means that throughout the course of your education you will have to work on your competencies.

In the past, this was not deemed necessary. Training was primarily focused on theoretical knowledge because companies looked primarily for knowledge and education in their employees. Nowadays, however, companies and educational institutes want competent employees or students, so they



ask for more than mere knowledge. This is why the modern higher education student works on integrated case studies and practical experience projects. As such, you are expected to work systematically on the development of your competencies for the full duration of your education. Competency management is more than just passing exams. To fully and systematically develop competencies you must constantly monitor your knowledge, attitude and behaviour. Besides that, you must constantly reflect on what you know, what you can do, what you want, and what you are doing.

You can identify your inherent personality traits by answering the following questions:

- 1 Who am I?
- 2 What can I do already?
- 3 Where will I fit in?
- 4 What do I want to become?
- 5 What do I still have to do?

These questions will be covered in more detail in the following sections. First of all, we would like to go further into the matter of competency at the hand of an example. As we stated before, a competency is a combination of knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviour needed for proper functioning in a given professional situation. A dietician, for example, must be able to persuade an obese and headstrong patient to follow a healthy diet and to take more exercise. But how can he manage that? Which combination of knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviour does the dietician need to help a patient like this?

**Professional  
situation**

The dietician needs the following to help this patient:

- *Knowledge*. The dietician must know what constitutes obesity. He also needs to know which diets and eating patterns are effective. He also needs to keep up with the professional literature, so that he knows about the latest insights in nutrition and so on.
- *Skills*. The dietician must be able to handle a measuring device for fat content, for example. But he must also have communication skills:
  - He must be able to listen well and to ask pertinent questions (otherwise he cannot discover all the symptoms).
  - He must present bad news in a reassuring way: not too reassuring (because that is misleading), but not too forceful either (for that could induce panic in the patient).
  - He must be able to explain things clearly and give reasons (otherwise the headstrong patient will not believe him and consequently will not follow the diet or do the exercise).
- *Attitude*. Every profession has its own standards and values. In this case, a caring attitude is called for. A dietician who does not think a caring attitude is important (because it is not a part of his standards and values) will not pay proper attention to his headstrong patient. Patience is also needed: a dietician must not only *be able* to listen (see *skills*) but he must also *want* to listen.
- *Behaviour*. In order to convince the patient the dietician must demonstrate professional behaviour and must also radiate calm and conviction. But he must also *show* his knowledge, skills and behaviour in a concrete way in order to gain a positive result.

A dietician will hopefully engage in competency management during his studies. He will constantly investigate whether he possesses enough knowledge, whether his skills are properly developed, whether his attitude (motivation, disposition, values) fits his future profession. He will also reflect on his behaviour: is my way of acting correct: am I getting enough results? This investigation is always very personal: no student has exactly the same level of knowledge, skills and attitude as his fellow students. Thus, student X may possess a lot of medical knowledge but relatively fewer communication skills, whilst student Y possesses plenty of communication skills but relatively less medical knowledge. Student X may also be very patient, whilst Y is more impatient but also more dynamic. This means that X will have to manage his competencies differently from Y.

### Description of a competency

A competency consists of:

- A result that has to be reached or a product which must be delivered.
- A description of the quality of the result or product.
- A professional situation in which the competency must be applied.

Applying this to the competency of our dietician, the dietician must be able to persuade an obese and headstrong patient (professional situation) to follow a diet and take more exercise.

The following are also examples of competencies:

- In bad weather (situation), a pilot must be able to land a plane (result) safely (quality).
- After a series of lectures (situation), a maths teacher must be able to write a representative (quality) exam for a student (product) based on a chapter in a book.
- In building a bridge (situation), an engineer must be able to design a safe bridge (task) that will not collapse even under the most extreme weather conditions (quality).

## 1.2 Competency management: how does it work?

How should you tackle your competency management? We will now deal with the five questions to which you have to find your own answers. All those questions deal with a particular aspect of the competency and to the relationship between that competency and the future profession.

### Attitude Personality traits

To answer the question 'Who am I?' requires that you investigate your attitude, your personality traits and your talents. 'Attitude' is a combination of values, standards, opinions, motives, convictions, wishes and feelings. 'Motivation' is a part of your attitude. Attitude is crucial to a competency because an unmotivated person will, in general, perform poorly. Therefore a dietician who does not want to be helpful or who does not want to listen will most likely not be a very good dietician, even if he possesses the necessary medical knowledge and skills.

Of course, your innate skills and personality traits also determine who you are. And your competencies are strongly influenced by your talents. That is

why you have to reflect deeply on the question of whether you possess the necessary talents and qualities for a particular profession. But the question 'Who am I?' revolves mainly around what you actually do with those talents and qualities, because without motivation and the proper attitude, talents are completely useless. Of course, while the talent of soccer player Wesley Snijder is innate, his attitude is important too: he always wants to score goals, which is a good attitude for a forward. Without that attitude he would score fewer goals, despite his talent. Furthermore, he would train less intensively. Football manager Alex Ferguson obviously possesses the talent befitting a coach, but his attitude is important too: his standards, values and motives centre on the view that 'everyone must strive to get the most out of himself.' Not a bad attitude for a coach!

The question 'Who am I?' therefore relates to talents but mainly attitude and motivational traits. You can discover who you are by doing the assignments, sometimes helped by people in your environment, such as friends, relatives or fellow students. Of course, a lot will be familiar to you already, but other things may be new to you. In any case, it is useful to investigate to what extent your attitude and personality traits are suited to the professional competencies needed. A soccer player must utilise his talent by training hard, but first he has to discover that he has that talent. A shy student who wants to become a salesperson must compensate for his shyness, but he must first recognise that shyness in himself.

To answer the question 'What can I do already?' requires that you investigate your knowledge and skills. Do you already possess enough of the knowledge needed for certain professional situations? Do you know enough? And how about your skills? What are your strongest points? What are your weaker points? Remember: skills without knowledge lack depth, and knowledge not coupled with skills has insufficient practical value. It is the combination that really matters.

**Knowledge  
Skills**

Of course, the question of 'Where do I fit in?' is directly linked to the previous question. But this question mainly relates to the kind of profession you are attracted to, and not concrete professions per se. Therefore, it concerns the criteria your future profession has to meet, or as you see it, as well as in which situation you will work most efficiently. A 'practical man' will not want a profession in which he is formulating policies behind his desk: he wants to tackle things. One person functions well in a purely formal and businesslike work environment, another in an informal and friendly work environment. One person requires strong leadership and clear-cut assignments whilst another needs freedom and creativity.

**Kind of  
profession**

To answer the question 'What do I want to become?' requires that you investigate which professions are most suited to your attitude, knowledge and skills. Making choices can be difficult, especially if you do not know what there is to choose from. This book and the exercises in it will help you to make these choices so that later you find a suitable profession, one that ties in with your competencies. This is why the question 'What do I want to become?' is important for your competency management.

**Professions**

## Points for improvement

To answer the question ‘What do I still have to do?’ requires that you investigate what needs improving – your points for improvement – especially in relation to your knowledge and skills. In addressing the question ‘What can I do already?’ you have investigated your strong and weak points. The weak points need to be improved, especially if they are required for your future profession. Some assignments contain instructions for formulating study targets. These primarily relate to knowledge and skills because attitude is more difficult to change.

## Personal Development Plan

You will have to deal with these five questions all through your training. In effect, in this way you will be making a PDP, a personal development plan, for the full course of your studies. You begin with it in your first year, and in the final year you will have completed your PDP.

Let us now talk about your studies: once you have a job, you will often be working on a different PDP. Many companies and institutions encourage this. To reiterate, the PDP is your plan. The P of ‘personal’ is very important. During your studies you are laying down the foundation for your career and life. For a company, a diploma and list of results are not sufficient. Those in charge will want to know who you are, what you can do, and if you fit in with them. They will want to get to know the individual behind the diploma. Of course, the goal of your studies is fixed. The course itself will determine which competencies must be attained for the final exams. But you yourself determine its individual content. You decide how to attain those competencies, and you decide which parts of it suit you best. You are the one who personalises your diploma.

## Personality profile

With the PDP you will be setting up your own personality profile. You will do that for your studies, for your future sphere of employment, but most of all for yourself. You are not on your own. This book will help you with it through assignments; your teachers will assist you with the assignments, and so on.

## 1.3 Testing your competencies

As you complete the assignments in this book, your PDP will be tested, and at regular intervals. In fact, all the assignments are small tests. You should view these tests as instruments, as a means to progress. Without this type of instrument you would have no grip on your PDP. With the assignments you continually record where you are in your personal development, and you do this for your teachers though mainly for yourself. You will also record on a continual basis what remains to be done. What you will be doing is essentially engaging in competency management.

You will test the progress of your competencies in various ways:

- *By reflection.* You will think about your strong and weak points, and about your standards and values.
- *Through tests.* You will do a number of tests – this book contains a fair number of them – that give you an impression of your competencies, and you will analyse what the test results mean for your competency management.

- *Through feedback.* You will listen to the opinion of others about your performance (i.e. your competencies), and you will consider what those opinions mean for your competency management.
- *Through research.* You will investigate which competencies are important to your future sphere of employment and whether they suit you or not.

We have previously stated that behaviour is also a determining factor in your competencies: your professional performance, but especially the results you attain. Anyone who does not come up with results is obviously incompetent. That is why getting results is part of the process of testing your competencies. The results will later count as pieces of evidence and may include test results as well as products (which includes research papers), testimonials, assessments by fellow students and test results. Part of competency management is the gathering of pieces of evidence and updating the results to show others what your strong points are. A handy way of doing this is by means of your portfolio (see the following section).

## 1.4 The PDP Toolbox as electronic portfolio

The folder in which an artist keeps his works is called a portfolio. He uses it to show others what he has done: his portfolio contains evidence of his abilities. The portfolio of paintings shows he is a competent painter (depending, of course, on whether the paintings are actually any good). The term 'portfolio' was transferred to education from the art and advertising world; with a portfolio a student can prove what he can do. As a student you will have to keep all sorts of documents as proof of attaining certain competencies.

### Portfolio

You will have to assemble your own portfolio showing what you can do and what you have attained so far. The portfolio will also contain feedback from fellow students and a description of your study goals: it will therefore also reflect your development and what you still have to do in order to develop further.

As well as that you should use your creativity to give your PDP a personal character. A photograph of an attentive audience during a presentation that you give can convey much more than a written description of the captive audience.

A portfolio can be a real folder with papers, reports, minutes testimonials, written assessments by fellow students or teachers and so on. But it is also possible to use an electronic portfolio. After all, you will often generate documents in programs such as MS Word and MS Excel.

### Electronic portfolio

The PDP Toolbox enables you – through the Archive section – to store your electronic documents in an orderly fashion on your hard drive. You can simply select files you want to save in the Toolbox from the program.

**ASSIGNMENT 1.1**

## Introducing the PDP Toolbox

In this assignment you will become acquainted with the program PDP Toolbox, which is on the website accompanying this book. You can use it to record everything related to your PDP Toolbox. In the study guide and Appendix 1 you will find information about installing and working with the PDP Toolbox.

- a Read Appendix 1 carefully. Install the PDP Toolbox according to the instructions in the appendix. After installing it, check the various functions of the program.
- b Go to the Personality Profile section and enter:
  - Your personal data
  - Your preparatory training
  - Your hobbies and interests
  - Your part-time job(s) (if any)

**ASSIGNMENT 1.2**

## Description of competencies

- a Study Section 1.2 and describe three competencies required by a profession fitting your education.
- b For every competency, state under point a which knowledge, skill and attitude you must have in order to acquire this competency. Also indicate which results must be attained.
- c Study Section 1.2 and describe three competencies you will attain through your training.
- d For every competency, state under point c which knowledge, skills and attitude you must have for acquiring the competency.

Make a report of this assignment in your PDP Toolbox in the Assignments section.

**ASSIGNMENT 1.3**

## Which competencies will you need to have mastered within the near future?

- a Describe the competencies which are crucial to the next few months of your education.
- b Indicate what you will have to know, what you can do and what you must do. Also indicate the appropriate attitude for that.
- c Indicate how you (or your project group) are going to tackle this.

Write a report on this assignment in your PDP Toolbox in the Assignments section.

**ASSIGNMENT 1.4**

## Recording your study timetabling and assessments

During your training, teachers or external examiners will assess your results: for example, by means of exams and papers. You will find it easy to plan exams and the like in your PDP Toolbox and record the results. The following assignments are best done quarterly or mid-term.

- a Make a schedule of the exams and so on that you want to complete in your current year or term. Enter your schedule in the study planning section of the PDP Toolbox.
- b Afterwards, enter your results in the PDP Toolbox.

**ASSIGNMENT 1.5**

## Gathering documents and evidence

During your studies you will write papers, reports and so on in programs such as MS Word and MS Excel. Often you will want to or will be required to save these documents. The PDP Toolbox enables you – through the Archive section – to store all your electronic documents systematically on your hard drive. From the Toolbox you can simply select a file that you want to save. After that a copy of the file will be saved with the other data in your PDP Toolbox.

Gather the important electronic documents you have produced so far and save them with the Toolbox.

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