

Final Development Plan

Student Name

MGT 500 – Leadership and Managerial Development

Instructor Name

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Part 1 of Development Plan

My career aspirations have been high since I was young, however I didn't figure out the path I would like to take until my senior year of high school. I was tossing around the idea of becoming a math teacher since I really enjoyed working with numbers but once I met with my guidance counselor, she convinced me to try something else. Instead of going along the teacher route (since it was a known fact at the time that jobs were sparse) she suggested accounting. I had never really thought of it before and it sounded so boring but I figured I would look into it. I signed up for accounting as an elective course during my last year in high school and I absolutely loved it. It involved numbers, some serious organizational skills, everything I enjoyed, and then I made my decision to pursue it as a career.

Once I graduated high school I really wanted to attend St. Joseph's college. They had a great accounting program and I had heard exceptional things about the school. However, since I knew I was going to be taking out my college loans on my own it was just too much money for me to feel comfortable with. Instead of enrolling at St. Joes I started out my college career at Suffolk County Community College. This was probably the best decision I have ever made! I was entered into the Honors Program at SCCC, I joined the Business and Accounting Club, and I was accepted into the International Business Honor Society. I received such a great education and my teachers were extremely knowledgeable and helpful. On top of that I saved A TON of money earning my associates degree.

Once I earned my associates degree and graduated Suffolk County Community College I was back on track with my plan of going to St. Joes. It was the only school that I had applied to

in order to continue on with my education. This brings me to where I am at now, currently in my second year at St. Joseph's college, still an undergrad, enrolled in the B.S./M.B.A graduate program, starting to complete a few of my graduate classes early in order to graduate with my next two degrees as quickly as possible!

My goal is to graduate St. Joseph's College with my B.S./M.B.A in accounting and take the C.P.A test so I can become a certified public accountant. Right now I am thinking that I would like to go into the taxation part of accounting however I am still slightly up in the air on that. I still have decent amount of accounting courses to complete and who knows if I will end up liking a different area of accounting better. I enjoyed taking the course that covered governmental accounting, but as of right now my plan is tax accounting. I feel that this choice will suit my lifestyle throughout the future. Personally, I am not one of those people who base my whole future around my career. My career will be something that I enjoy doing that will support me financially and still be flexible enough for me to have a family. I figure that if the day comes where I plan to have children I will hopefully be able to stay home with them and do tax returns out of an office in my home for some extra money during tax season.

Until the time for a family comes, I would like to make the absolute most out of my career while I can! Upon graduating I plan on moving directly to New York City, not only to be in the action packed business world but also for dance. Who says you can't be an accountant and a dancer? I currently travel back and forth to Manhattan a few times a week for dance. Dancing on a professional team has kept my "dance dream" alive while I continue to go to school to work on my "accounting dream". While both are equally important to me in their own ways I hope to make the most of my life while I'm still young. If that means working all day at an accounting

firm and then heading straight to dance rehearsal, that is exactly what I will do! You are only young once, and pretty soon I'll be doing tax returns out of my house raising a family.

I tend to put a lot on my plate but I always find a way to get it all done, and my dual career goals are no different. Professional Dancer/Accountant has a nice ring to it. But in order to get where I want to be, there are definitely a lot of things I still need to learn. I plan on applying myself whole heartedly to this graduate program and take the most knowledge away from it as possible. I have a feeling this development plan will help me stay on track and give me the skills needed to succeed past the four walls of a classroom and transition smoothly into the workplace.

Part 2 of Development Plan

It was slightly difficult to complete this assignment, simply because I do not currently have a job that requires all of these skills. I am a part time dance teacher and my boss at work has not seen me in the situations essential to answer the questionnaire accurately. Along with teaching dance, I dance on a professional dance team; however my coach has not seen me in enough of these scenarios either. I would have loved to ask some of my college professors to fill out these questionnaires but by taking this course over the summer online, I didn't have access to the professors like I would during the spring or fall semester on campus. Instead I opted for the next best three people I could think of, my mom being the first. My mom is my go-to person when I need someone to proofread any of my assignments, listens to a presentation or speech, or check my problems for any errors. She is also the person I am around most and who I tell all my problems so I figured if anyone knows how I handle situations, it is 100% my mom. Second, I asked my boyfriend of three years. If anyone knows me second best, it is him. Once I have asked

my mom to proofread or listen or help correct things he is the one who gets stuck proofreading, listening, and helping next. He is also usually around while I'm finishing up school work so he has firsthand information on how I handle myself with these types of things. Not only does he know how I handle my school work, but after being together for three years he has a pretty good idea of how I handle most other situations as well. This brings me to my third external assessor, my best friend. My friend and I have been in class together since the third grade. Growing up all through grade school, middle school, and high school and even continuing to be best friends well into college, he has been the third person in my life who has good insight to all the areas covered by the questionnaire.

Efficiency Orientation

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3.75 | 3 | 3.5 | 2.75 |

I feel when faced with a task, I always strive to complete it better than I have in the past or better than I had originally thought I could. I like to be proud of whatever it is I complete, when I look at the final product I never like thinking I could have done it better or differently. If that is ever the case and I am faced with something similar again, I will always try to exceed or outperform my previous standard of excellence. I feel my efficiency orientation is very good, even though everything could always use some sort of improvement, I feel I am on a good track with this ability.

Planning

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3.6 | 4 | 3.8 | 2.8 |

When it comes to planning, I feel like I am a planning master. I LOVE planning things out simply because it helps give me peace of mind and I feel much more at ease when I have a plan in my head. I set daily goals each morning in a note on my phone in order of importance so I can make sure everything gets done in order of priority. Along with daily goals I also have weekly goals, which are things I would like to accomplish by the end of the week. I think my self-assessment as well as most of my external assessments is accurate when it comes to my strengths with this ability.

Initiative

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2 | 1.6 | 2 | 3 |

It is pretty obvious that my initiative needs some improvement. I find it difficult sometimes to take action first, and seize opportunities. Usually my mom or my boyfriend will convince me to do something instead of me deciding to act on an opportunity myself. I usually only do the things that I am instructed or required to do. I don't normally go the extra mile to do anything that isn't necessary unless I have to. I can see where this could be a big problem which is why initiative is one of the main abilities that I would like to work on developing more. My assessors as well as myself all seem to recognize this.

Attention to Detail

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3.5 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

Back to something I am good at! I think my career choice of pursuing accounting is partially related to the strength I have in this ability. I always like to give careful consideration before I decide to do something. I weigh all the pros and cons before I make my official judgement. I feel I exhibit this ability most in my school work because I proof read my assignments multiple times before handing them in and I constantly go back, edit, and redo parts to make sure it is exactly the way I want it and done to my best ability.

Self-Control

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1.67 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 3.6 |

My assessors went a little easy on my when it comes to this ability. Although it is still apparent that my self-control needs some work I believe it needs more work than they seem to. Unless of course they were trying refrain from hurting my feelings too much by giving me a zero. I absolutely do not think I remain calm in stressful settings especially not when I am being criticized. When things get too stressful I easily become overwhelmed and let my emotions get the best of me, which I know is horrible. I also hate being told I did not do something correct or that I am bad at something. Part of that is because I strive to do everything the best that I can, and when I am unable to, I feel upset that I didn't succeed. I also have a hard time taking

criticism constructively although I do try; most of the time I take it too personally and my feeling get hurt. This is an ability that is extremely high on my list of things I need to improve!

Adaptability

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |

Even though I get stressed and emotional easily, I feel that I am always able to change a plan, behavior, or approach to one that is more appropriate in response to a major change in a situation or changing circumstances. I can't even count how many times things have not gone according to plans, but I always manage to find a way to get it done one way or another. This is an extremely important ability not just in school or work but also in life. I have found out that almost NOTHING goes exactly according to how you imagined it (as sad as that may seem) but there is always another way, you just have to look harder to find it. I believe my assessors agree with my opinion of this ability being one of my stronger ones.

Empathy

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3.75 | 3.75 | 3.5 | 4 |

I find myself to be extremely empathetic and my scores show that my assessors think that as well. I understand the strengths and limitations of others ESPECIALLY my students at the dance studio. I know what they're are capable of and how far I can push them without them

getting overwhelmed. A majority of the time I understand the reasons for others' behavior because I consistently try to put myself in the other person's shoes before I make any judgements. It is also important to me to be able to accurately read, or interprets the moods, feelings, or non-verbal behavior of others, whether it is my family, my boyfriend, my friends, or my students. I can quickly pick up on a change in someone's behavior and am able to tell what kind of mood that person is in sometimes before they even speak to me just by their body language. And I have been told multiple times that I am a great listener. I think it is because I love listening to others more than I love starting my own conversations and thinking of what to talk about. Listening is much more easy and comfortable for me which is why I think I've gotten better at it.

Persuasiveness

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 1.8 |

When I think of “persuasiveness” I don't think of myself at all. However, somehow I do conform to a few points listed under what makes someone persuasive. I do give directions or orders based on the rules, and procedures, and I do understand the importance of my image and reputation, and the image or reputation of my organization (job/college). On the other hand I don't believe I explicitly express a need or desire to persuade others. And I also don't think that I attempt to convince others to do something they aren't already willing to do themselves. This ability is 50/50 for me, but I don't necessarily think it is super important for me to have a high

score with this competency because I don't see a huge significance on how it will affect my accounting career.

Networking

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 2.3 |

This is another one that is 50/50 for me. I definitely will try to build a relationship with someone that might be useful in the present or in the future to accomplish a task (mostly with school and with dance). If I know someone might be of use to me in the future with either a dance opportunity or with help in an area of schooling I will try to form some sort of relationship with that person. I am good at making the initial relationship but I am pretty terrible at maintaining them. Even though my assessors have given a decent score, this is an area that I would like to put some effort into developing as well.

Conflict Management

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3.67 | 3.6 | 3 | 4 |

I absolutely hate conflict. If I can avoid it in any way possible I most likely will (unless there is no way to avoid it). And if conflict happens to arise, I am the first to try and resolve it. The way to go about solving it is by involving everyone involved and discuss a possible solution that will please everyone. My boyfriend calls me the compromise queen because if there is ever

anything him and I disagree on (or my friends and I disagree on) I am quick to come up with suitable compromise. I am always willing to sacrifice a little to prevent or resolve a conflict. I am happy with my level of conflict management and don't think it something I need to focus too much energy on developing.

Self-Confidence

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3 | 3 | 3.5 | 2.5 |

I agree the most with external assessor 3. I *sometimes* present myself, verbally or non-verbally, in an assured, forceful, impressive, and unhesitating manner. And I *sometimes* exhibit confidence that I am capable of doing an outstanding job, and likely to succeed. But often times I question myself, I am never fully 100% confident because I am always convinced there are things I can improve more. Even though my scores are fine, I would like to develop this ability a little further. (See what I mean)

Group Management

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2.6 | 3 | 3 | 3.4 |

I was unsure about this, which is why my self-assessment score is lower than my external assessor scores. But according to them I must act in a way to promote commitment to a team, task, or shared goal through friendly, personal contact. They also must think that I usually

involve all parties concerned in openly resolving conflicts (which I can say I do agree with). I don't know if it is because I don't work with groups on a daily basis, I usually prefer to work alone on something. But I will say on the rare occasion that I am working in a group for something, I do work well with others.

Developing Others

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3 | 4 | 3.75 | 2.75 |

With my job teaching at the dance studio, I can't afford to be slacking in this area or else I will let my students down. I must always provide them with information, resources, and opportunities to help them improve their skills. I always invite parents to discuss any problems they feel their child is having and will suggest ways of improving their performance. It is also critical to tell my students that can accomplish anything they set their mind to. If I am not showing them encouragement and support they will not push themselves in the classroom and will feel discouraged. I can undoubtedly say I have developed a huge strength in this ability over the years that I have been teaching.

Cultural Awareness

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 4 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 4 |

I see huge benefits from being culturally aware. It will only make life easier once you are open minded to other people's perspectives of a situation or issue. They might see a solution to a problem that you have never thought of before. I always say two heads are better than one. If I'm having a problem figuring something out, I am always ready for advice from others because when you are looking at something from one view point you could be missing the big picture.

Systems Thinking

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 4 | 4 | 3.5 | 4 |

As far as systems thinking goes, I believe I try to integrate reason and intuition when faced with a challenge. Whenever I set a goal, I stay committed to that goal until the final result is reached. I also understand the importance of feedback so that you can work on improving things.

Pattern Recognition

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 3.5 | 3.25 | 3.25 | 3 |

I'm not sure if this is something "number crunchers" do, but I have always found myself trying to identify a pattern in an assortment of information. If there is a pattern in something I will usually pick up on it even if it is small. I also will always try to connect things to something I have already experienced. I love comparing scenarios; if even one thing is the same to

something else I will reference that experience in my head. I also ALWAYS use analogies to help explain things better when I am talking to someone. Mostly with my boyfriend and my mom, because sometimes I talk about things they aren't familiar with so if I can relate it in an analogy, usually helps them understand better.

Oral Communication

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2.8 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 2.6 |

In order for me to teach my classes well at the dance studio, I do need to have some strength in oral communication but I will admit it has never been one my strong suits. I have improved a little but I still have some work to do. I try to present thing in the most organized way possible and I try to convey it in a way that is suitable for each of my different audiences (my different age levels of students). I also do my best to speak clearly and convincingly to others, I used to be horrible at this but through my experience teaching I feel it has improved slightly. I would like to be able to develop this skill further.

Using Technology

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 1.3 | 0.6 | 0 |

Okay I'll be honest, I'm terrible at this. I should be better at using technology than I currently am. I know how to use Microsoft Word very well, power point a little, and Excel a

little also. But I should realistically be way better at this than I am. I am good at these few things mostly because that is all I am required to do. My technical skills don't go much further past these programs and it is definitely something that is important in my career path which is why I know I need to work on this.

Quantitative Analysis

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

I'm sure it is obvious by the zero I gave myself on my self-assessment that I know I am under developed in this area. I've never really had to use statistical models to analyze data and interpret its meaning; nor have I ever really has to use quantitative methods in the diagnosis and operations of various functions of management. I'm sure with more experience in this area I will be able to develop it more.

Written Communication

| Self-Assessment | External Assessor 1 | External Assessor 2 | External Assessor 3 |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2.8 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3 |

When writing any assignment for school, or writing any type of professional letter, document, presentation, etc. I try to use an engaging style appropriate for the audience and present it in a well-organized way. I always try to use facts and outside information to help support what I am saying to reinforce it in an accurate way. I also like to double and triple check

my work for proper word usage/grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence and paragraph structure.

Overall I think there are definitely some areas where I can use improvement (some more than others) but have a pretty good feeling about where I stand right now and hopefully I am able to bring up those areas in which I am lacking upon the completion of this graduate program.

Part 3 of Development Plan

All twenty of the managerial abilities are important, but the importance of each of them to my specific career and future might be much different than someone else. My career path of becoming a Certified Public Accountant involves different strengths as opposed to someone perusing a career in elementary education. While all abilities are vital, some are of higher important than others in respect to my future occupation.

Efficiency Orientation is of high importance to me because while accountants have a lot on their plate, they should always be striving to do better. They must be efficient in their work and produce the most accurate financial statements. If they make some errors, you better believe they will learn from those mistakes and out-do themselves the next time around. You have to do the best work to be the best accountant you can be, no one will hire you if you keep making errors. Efficiency orientation is extremely important to me and my future.

Planning is of medium importance because in order to get things done in a timely manner there must be some plans in place to get it all done. Accountants often work with deadlines, they have until a certain date to get their work done (especially dealing with taxes during tax season).

Whatever they are working on should be planned out in order to get it done on time along with any other projects they are currently working on. If they fail to plan, they will fail to succeed.

Initiative is of medium importance to my job and future. Most of the time an accountant will be given a set of instructions about what they have to do and given a time frame to do it in. However, certain circumstances will involve taking initiative to go above and beyond and do something extra that was not required.

Attention to Detail is of high importance to a career in accounting because there are so many different aspects to a financial statement or tax return. Most of them require multiple schedules to be completed and information from those schedules are used to complete the final product. With a multitude of documents and calculations, it is very easy to make a mistake or look over something. These forms must be double checked and triple checked for accuracy in order to catch a small mistake that could lead to your final calculations being extremely wrong. Attention to detail is exceptionally crucial to be a successful accountant.

Self-control is of low importance in this career because most of the time an accountant is working and calculating and completing schedules on his/her own. I think this type of ability is more important in a career where you are in constant interaction with others and working consistently in large groups. It is easy to get worked up when you are constantly dealing with other people. When you are mostly working with numbers there aren't a lot of situations that require this ability.

Adaptability is of medium importance because while working on a project, you may be hit all of a sudden with new information by either your boss or your client that completely changes the way you need to fill out your reports. If this happens unexpectedly, it is important to

be able to process the new information and continue to finish the project with a new plan of action.

Empathy is another ability that is of low importance here. While it is an important ability to have in life, its relevance to a career in accounting is low compared to other abilities. I don't necessarily think an accountant will be required to accurately read the moods, feelings, or non-verbal behavior of others on a daily basis. There may be circumstances where you are required to be empathetic however I don't believe it is of extremely high importance compared to something like attention to detail.

Persuasiveness is another ability that I feel is of low importance. Like I previously mentioned, accountants mostly work with numbers, software programs, and documents. Everything is pretty much cut and dry. You calculate a number, plug it in according to information you are given and so on and so forth. It is hard to think of situations an accountant would be faced with that would require them to persuade others.

Networking is of high importance to a career in accounting as well as any other business oriented career in my opinion. Now that I think about it, there really isn't a career that networking wouldn't be important to. Building relationships with others will always be a useful ability because you never know what that relationship could lead to. They may be able to help with a promotion, a new job opportunity, new clients, etc. There is the old saying, "It's not about what you know, it's about who you know" and I think this has proven time and time again to be true.

Conflict management is of low importance to a career in accounting. It is not necessarily in the daily job description of an accountant to stimulate individuals or groups toward resolution

of a conflict. This ability seems more along the lines of a manager's job description. If someone in the workplace has a conflict that needs resolving, it would be up to someone higher up to make sure the conflict is resolved and all parties are content. This ability is of extremely low importance to a future as an accountant.

Self-confidence is of medium importance because when dealing with a client you must portray yourself in a way that they trust you to handle their finances. If you come across as unsure and insecure about your abilities to a potential client, they most likely will not hire you. Trusting someone to handle all of your finances is a huge deal, clients only want the most competent and skilled accountants to work for them. If an accountant exhibits confidence that he/she is capable of doing an outstanding job, and likely to succeed they have a better chance at doing well in this career.

Group management is similar to conflict management in my opinion which is why I feel it is of low importance. Again, it seems like an ability that is used more by management. Most of the time there will be someone in charge of a group or team effort; it is up to that person to manage the group effectively. An accountant in my opinion will not be in charge of managing groups most of them therefore, it is not an ability that is not of significant importance.

Developing Others is also of low importance to accountants. It's true that they may provide others with information, tools, other resources, or opportunities to help them get their job done or to improve their abilities. But accountants will not be giving promotions to other workers unless you are the owner of the accounting firm. Explicitly telling another person that he/she can accomplish an objective and providing encouragement and support are managerial abilities. Developing others is low on the scale of importance to my future career and a CPA.

Cultural Awareness once again is another ability that I don't believe will be used regularly in my future career. This is of low importance because while it is good to have different opinions and ideas circulating in the workplace, accountants aren't exactly coming up with creative commercials, inventing the next iPhone app, or having meetings on how to market new products. It is a pretty straight forward job and doesn't leave a lot of room for creativity. In a job where there is room for new ideas and imagination cultural awareness would be an imperative skill to have, however not so much in accounting. It would not hurt to have it, but I don't believe it is of extremely high importance here.

Systems Thinking, on the other hand, is of medium importance because it will be used considerably. Being able to see organizations as open-systems and to be able to recognize interrelationships and dependencies is important. You must be able to see the information your client has given you and figure out how to take it all in and process it correctly. You must be committed to the goal, with a vision beyond your own self-interests, you must always think of what's in the best interest of the client.

Pattern Recognition is of extremely high importance to this career. In order to be successful, you must be able to identify a pattern in an assortment of information, unorganized, or seemingly random data. You may be faced with slews and slews of numbers, receipts, files, and documents from a client. It is up to you to make sense of the mess they give you, organize it all, and use it to complete the job. If you sense something fishy going on with their finances, even if it is a small pattern, you should be able to pick up on it. You don't want to have clients misreporting their financial situation.

Oral Communication is of medium importance because you should be able to express to your client exactly what you plan on doing, and once you have finished the job you should be able to explain to them exactly what you did. People are very concerned when it comes to their finances, and you should be able to explain everything in detail to them in a way that they will best understand you.

Using technology is of medium importance as well because even though in school we do a lot of our accounting work by hand, once you work in a firm a lot of it is done using software programs. In order to be successful you must know how to use these different programs and be efficient in them. Aside from these programs you must also know how to use the internet and many other platforms to complete projects, spreadsheets for finance, research, and statistical, accounting or forecasting analysis.

Quantitative analysis is also of medium importance because this ability relates to various functions of the job like financial analysis, market research, and statistical process control. Some of these are more important to accounting than others, that's why quantitative analysis is of medium importance.

Written Communication, last but not least, is also of medium importance to a career in accounting because along with oral communication you should be able to explain, describe, or tell your clients information regarding the work you are doing for them by letter, report, or written document. You must also be able to use factual information or quantitative data accurately and appropriately for the audience (your clients). In order to be a professional in this field you should always present a document using proper word usage/grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence and paragraph structure of the language of audience.

While every ability is important in one way or another, certain skills are more essential than others depending on the field of work you plan to pursue. My career in accounting may have different abilities of high and low significance compared to someone in the management field. While all abilities should be developed it's important to realize the areas you may be lacking in, that are of high importance to your career and work on those abilities first.

Part 4 of Development Plan

After reviewing each ability and fully understanding the importance of each to my career path, I made a list of the ones that I believed were vital to pursuing a profession as an accountant. Upon averaging out all three external assessments along with my self-assessment, I also made a list of abilities that I need to develop a little better. Combining the abilities that are important to my future and the abilities that I need to work on, I made a separate list of abilities that are of high priority to develop throughout this graduate program. This list consists of initiative, networking, oral communication, using technology, and quantitative analysis.

When it comes to initiative, I sometimes slack on pushing myself to go the extra mile. If I have a set of instructions, I will follow those instructions to the final sentence, but most of the time I will not go beyond that. If there is an opportunity that comes my way, I sometimes will be too lazy to act on it and my mom or boyfriend will usually end up pushing me to take the opportunity. I am not really a leader, I am more of a follower in the sense that I don't like being the one to take action first. There are multiple reasons why I know I am lacking in the skill, and my evaluators seemed to agree with me on this based on their assessments.

Currently, in my first graduate class, I am trying to take initiative by getting my work done as early in the week as I can and being very on top of all my assignments. I am also trying my best to use a lot of outside information that relates to what I'm working on. Normally, I am good about doing my school work however, since this class is in the graduate program it is up to me to take initiative and take my work to the next level. Aside from school I also dance a lot, I travel back and forth to Manhattan on Wednesday nights for practice. I have told myself for over a year now that I should try going to the city more than one night a week to take some other dance classes that are challenging for me in order to become a better dancer and get more practice in areas that I find difficult. That has been my goal for some time now, and I always say I am going to do it but end up being too lazy. Now, after trying to build up my initiative skills, I have decided to actually stick to my word on this. For the last three Tuesdays I have gone to the city to take a class that has been extremely challenging for me and I am already starting to see some improvement just from adding the one extra night a week!

The next area I chose to have a high priority for development is networking. I am usually always able to build a relationship with someone that might be useful in the present or in the future. I recognize when there is an importance to build a relationship and I am always good about starting one, the problem usually occurs when it comes to maintaining them. I have a hard time following up and continuing the relationship after some time passes. It usually doesn't leave a huge impression if you meet with someone one or two times. You will have more success when you continue to follow up with emails, meetings or even just text messages. I would also like to broaden my networking by branching out to all aspects of my life which includes school, accounting, and dance.

Recently a dance opportunity has presented itself to me and instead of being lazy and not acting on it; I am working on my initiative and actually pursuing it. Along with working on this ability I thought that it would also be a great opportunity to work on my networking ability as well. I am working on building and maintaining a good relationship with the two dancers who presented the opportunity to me because they are extremely talented and have many connections. I am also working on building and maintaining relationships with the other dancers that are capitalizing on this opportunity along with me. If all goes well this could lead to a big increase in my networking ability in the dance world. I am hoping that once the fall semester starts and I am back on campus in the classroom setting I will be able to work on my networking in the school aspect of my life as well.

The next ability that is high on my list for improving is oral communication. I have definitely improved with my oral communication skills since high school; however I think I still have a long way to go. In high school I was so nervous to talk in front of people, just the thought of it would make me red and my hands would start to shake. I purposely took “Speech and Debate” as an elective during my senior year of high school to help me get over this fear. It’s funny because I could dance on stage in front of thousands of people but when it comes to speaking, forget it! The first speech I had to give in the class was a complete nightmare, I was as red as a tomato and my voice was shaking and I kept messing up on the easiest words. It was probably painful to watch. Then, throughout the class it started becoming a little easier. Once I got a job teaching dance this skill had improved greatly. I was able to speak in front of my classes with ease and teach without being self-conscious. Now it comes very easy to me and I am able to teach huge classes with ease. I thought I had conquered my fear completely but boy was I wrong. I didn’t even realize I still had the fear until I had to give a speech in college. Turns out I

am no longer nervous when speaking in front of children, but when it comes to people my age or older, that fear is still there. It seems weird because you think it wouldn't make a difference but I guess it does to me.

In order for me to conquer this, it would probably be best to practice as much as I can. This includes asking a lot of questions in class, volunteering to share my answers or read my paper out loud, or giving speeches in front of my classes. Practice makes perfect and I think that is why teaching is so easy for me now. After teaching 10-15 dance classes per week for the last few years, I am consistently faced with opportunities to practice. If I could translate this skill into my professional world with school and eventually a career in accounting I think it will be extremely beneficial. Who wants to be nervous when giving a presentation anyway? The more I practice this skill, the better I will become at it.

Using technology is another ability that is of high priority for me to work on. I should definitely be way better with this skill however I was never really good on computers. I really just know the basics! Obviously internet being the first because I use it the most, second would be Microsoft Word because I also use that very often. Next, I would say I am familiar with Power Point but I haven't really made that many power points during my time in school. Next is Excel which I have probably only used a handful of times! I know it sounds horrible because how can an accounting major not know how to use Excel? To be honest it just seems intimidating to me. I tried taking a computer class in college where we covered all three: Microsoft Word, Power Point, and Excel. I did learn a lot however I feel that way too much time was spent on Word and not enough on Excel. I already know how to do a lot with writing documents and putting headings on papers and changing the font and colors and so on. My

problem is that I don't really know how to use excel and I need to figure it out! I would have gotten more out of the class if equal time was spent working on each program.

In order for me to improve on this skill, I think I need to force myself to go on Excel more even if it's for something as simple as doing my accounting homework. I usually always do my accounting homework by hand with pencil on those big sheets of green accounting paper with columns. Instead of staying in my comfort zone, I will try switching to doing all of my homework on excel. This fall semester coming up will be my starting point for this change and hopefully by the end of the semester I will be much more comfortable using this program. Other than those main programs I would love to learn how to use Quick Books, which I know is used a lot in the business world. People don't really use it in school as much as they do on the job, however I would really like to be prepared before I land a job so I feel more comfortable once I start. I'm sure I could download the program and try practicing it on my own, I might be able to figure out some things that way. I could also try to look on YouTube and see if there are instructional videos on how to use Quick Books. This would also require me to work on my initiative ability, so I'd be killing two birds with one stone here!

Next is the trickiest ability in my opinion, quantitative analysis. The definition is to derive meaning from the use of arithmetic and mathematical symbols, methods, and theories. But if were being honest here, I don't even know how to go about doing something like this or learning how to do it. I can't think of an opportunity right now for me to be able to practice this ability and use statistical models to analyze data and interpret its meaning. I feel like this ability is very limited to a specific field of work and I don't even know if accounting would be the right field to use this. I can see how it is important to a job that deals with finance because one of the bullets listed was: Uses quantitative methods in the diagnosis and operations of various functions

of management (e.g. financial analysis, market research, statistical process control, etc). I think this might be a skill that I will develop after already being an accountant for a while.

While all of the abilities are important, some relate to your career path more than others. It is important to know which of these hold more value to your future than others and to know what areas you need to work on more. Having a good understanding of where you stand with your abilities is one step in the right direction to be an outstanding professional in your chosen field of work. The next step is having a strategic plan to work on your areas of weakness and implement your plan into your daily life.

Part 5 of Development Plan

The MBTI Assessment results were very interesting, in the best way possible! I felt my results describe me perfectly and to my surprise they were much more accurate than I had expected. My personality type is ISFJ, which means I prefer introversion over extroversion, sensing over intuition, feeling over thinking, and judging over perceiving. Preferring introversion means I tend to focus on the inner world and get energy through reflecting on information, ideas, and/or concepts. By preferring sensing, it means I notice and trust facts, details, and present realities. By preferring feeling, I make decisions using person-centered values to achieve harmony. And finally, since I prefer judging, I tend to be organized and orderly and to make decisions quickly.

I feel as though my personality type has helped me stay focused and driven throughout my life. For example, if I am faced with a problem I use my introversion to think it over and

reflect on the situation long and hard so I can come up with the best possible solution or even multiple solutions in case one doesn't necessarily work out. Also, when I am dealing with any type of situation I use sensing to help guide me through it as well. I love when I have cold hard facts and details, I hate when things are muddy and unclear. And if things do happen to be unclear I dive in until I can make sense of it all. Facts and details put my mind at ease so I can focus better on the task or situation at hand. When dealing with other people, whether it's family, friends, coworkers, class mates, my students at work or anyone for that matter I always use feeling. I am extremely empathetic and I always strive to help others and make sure everyone in each situation is as happy as possible. I always look for compromises or different solutions and this aspect of my life has helped me avoid conflict. Conflict is usually never good and is a hindrance to any goal that is being accomplished. By using feeling and being aware of others emotions to try to achieve harmony, it has helped me build strong relationships with those around me. And last but not least, judging has also helped me stay focused and I feel that this is the reason I am so organized. I cannot function when my life is in chaos; I need to organize everything the best I can to help me get through everything I need to do, especially since I always put a lot on my plate. Some people think you should just focus on one thing at a time but I disagree, if I have organization in my life I am able to take on multiple tasks or goals at once. My preference of judging is what gets me through my everyday life and is what makes me able to do all of the things that I do.

Even though I do believe that my ISFJ personality type has been an asset to my life, there is always ways to improve the way you handle things. When it comes to communicating instead of diving head first into a project, I could try to make social interactions first and become familiar with the people I am working with instead of just familiarizing myself the task at hand.

Also, instead of quietly observing, which is something I tend to do, I could try to pay attention to the approach of the people I am working with and try to match how they are acting so we stay on the same page. Also, since I tend to be very agreeable when seeking harmony and avoiding conflict, it may come across to others that I have no real opinion. I should try exercising my voice in certain scenarios and not be so afraid of differing opinions.

When it comes to problem solving and decision making there are different styles of how people approach these issues. My style is empathetic and compassionate. This style means that I tend to trust the feeling preference and readily make decisions based on my system of values. I recognize logical cause-and-effect factors but see them as secondary. I seek to create and maintain harmony through my decisions. I am seen as sensitive and tactful and am sometimes seen as too kind and considerate. In order for me to improve my approach I should try asking myself questions that relate to the personality types I don't prefer using like thinking and intuition. Some intuitive questions I could ask myself are: What does this mean? What else can we come up with? How is it all interconnected? What is a new way to do this? Since intuition is not my trait of preference, asking myself these questions and thinking hard about the answers will help me solve problems differently than I am used to. Some thinking questions I could ask myself are: What are the pros and cons? What are the logical consequences? What's wrong with this? By using thinking and intuition which I normally tend not to use, I will broaden my ability to solve problems and make decisions.

When dealing with change I can be a little resistant at times. Don't get me wrong, I definitely think change is necessary every so often but I have a hard time committing to something when I don't know for sure what the outcome will be. To help improve the way I manage change, I should start by accepting that the impact of some changes can't be

demonstrated in advance. Sometimes I won't be able to see an example of how the change will work, and I should exercise acknowledging that. Part of my personality is that I am a huge planner! I feel that if you fail to plan, then you should plan to fail. So, if a change was being implemented I will most likely want to plan as far in advance as possible for those changes. Instead of trying to plan everything out so nice and neat, I should allow for the unexpected in the long-range plan, because the unexpected will probably happen! Instead of worrying about every single detail, I should prepare for the event that circumstances may require carefully developed steps to be changed in the moment.

When dealing with managing conflict and working in groups there are also some things I could improve. I tend to discuss the conflict and my emotional reactions to it immediately. While this may be the way I choose to deal with it, it may not be the same way others do. I should make myself aware that even though others may not speak up immediately, they may still feel strongly about the issue. Also, since I like avoiding conflict I usually try to create harmony by accommodating different views. Instead of always being extremely accommodating I should try letting people know when an issue is really important to me and what I want; I may be giving in too often. Going along with my love of planning, I believe conflicts can be avoided by starting work on projects early. The early bird catches the worm! Instead of expecting everyone to be on the same page as me, I should make allowances for people for whom starting early isn't comfortable or effective.

Overall, my ISFJ personality type has contributed positively to my life but a person should never stop growing and learning! There is always more than one way to approach a situation and by using some traits that aren't necessarily my first preference, I will be able to handle situations better and with new insight that I haven't had in the past. My MBTI results

really opened my eyes to things I didn't even know about myself. I will continue to reference these results long into the future because they will definitely help me manage situations that I might not handle in the best way.

Part 6 of Development Plan

The five abilities that have a high level of priority for future development are: initiative, networking, oral communication, using technology, and quantitative analysis. While all abilities have importance and should be worked on, these were the ones that I feel are most important for me to get up to par with the other abilities. Not only should you work on these professional skills in school and in the work place, there are also many ways to incorporate them into your day to day life.

The first ability to develop for myself would be initiative. I often have a hard time taking initiative and putting myself out there. I am a reserved person and I don't feel that I have the drive to really use my resources the way I could. Some ways I could integrate using initiative in my daily life would be to make small goals for myself each week that step outside my comfort zone and will force me to take initiative in one way or another. After looking over the curriculum for the accounting graduate program there were a few courses that seemed like they held opportunities to develop initiative. These courses were, MGT 690 Integrative Analysis in Management and MGT 665 Financial Accounting Theory and Research. Both of these courses have an opportunity to create and execute independent, work-related research projects. The in depth research that needs to be done individually will take a lot of initiative to buckle down and go out of the way to do the research and collect information. Aside from school work I have also

been trying to use more initiative when it comes to dance. I have always wanted to go to the city and take more classes with some of the best choreographers in New York; however I have always used an excuse not to go or been too lazy. Over the past month I have gone to the city one extra day a week (besides my regular rehearsal days) and taken more classes. I hope to keep this up and be able to use my initiative and not get into my lazy habits.

The next ability to develop is networking. I try to make connections and relationships with people I meet, however I have a hard time following up and continuing the relationship. It is easy to meet someone once and develop a connection but it is often difficult to maintain it when you don't see that person often. One way I can work on my networking skills is to go to different meetings and workshops and take the numbers and emails of everyone I talk to because you never know when you might need it. After looking over the courses in the program I believe I will be able to develop my networking skills best in two courses: MGT 530 Management Information Systems and MGT 550 Strategic Human Resources Management. These courses focus on how managers can work to solve issues and make decisions. When solving issues I would imagine that some brainstorming and team work will take place. It is a good way to work on the ability of networking while you are working together with others. Aside from school work I can try to develop this ability when it comes to dance. I often meet other dancers when I am taking class in the city or if I am at an audition. It is so easy to meet some new people in these situations, I should just make it a priority to get their phone numbers and keep in contact with them after the class or audition is over. Some of these dancers have good connections and it would be a valuable tool to have to be able to make and keep relationships with them.

The next ability to work on is oral communication. I have gotten so good at speaking in front of my students but I have still not mastered speaking in front of my peers and superiors. For

some reason there is a big difference between these two for me, and all of a sudden when I am speaking in front of people my own age and not my students, I see a decrease in this ability. In order for me to conquer this, it would probably be best to practice as much as I can. This includes asking a lot of questions in class, volunteering to share my answers or read my paper out loud, or giving speeches in front of my classes. After looking at the classes required to complete my graduate program I decided that all of the courses will allow me to practice this ability, particularly the management courses. In the management courses it is all about making decisions, solving problems, acting as a manager, and dealing with all managerial aspects of the business world. As a manager you need to feel comfortable and confident speaking in front of others and make sure you express yourself in the right manner. I feel that all of these courses will give me the opportunity to practice this in one way or another. Aside from school I can practice this ability on my dance team. When my coach asks me to choreograph a routine or lead a practice or a game in the event of her absence this gives me the chance to speak in front of my team and work on my oral communication.

The next two abilities are slightly similar in my opinion, and they are quantitative analysis and using technology. When it comes to using technology I am only familiar with the basics, like Internet Explorer, Microsoft Word, Power Point and a little bit of Excel. I know I should be better at this ability but I am only familiar with the software programs that I use the most. Quantitative analysis is a little confusing for me because the definition is to derive meaning from the use of arithmetic and mathematical symbols, methods, and theories. Now I don't really do these sorts of things a lot which is why this is an ability that needs some work. In order for me to develop these I think I would just need some more practice and maybe go to a few computer classes that cover these topics. I took COM 150 in college and it covered the three

programs I mentioned above however it focused mostly on Microsoft Word which I am already familiar with. I wish the class would have covered Excel in a little more detail as I am not so familiar with that one. After looking over the courses I decided the two that would be best for me to develop these skills would be MGT 610 Statistical Applications in Research and Management 662 Corporate Financial Management. In MGT 610 some of the topics include probability, sampling techniques, multiple regression, time series analysis, statistical quality control methods, test of hypothesis and design of experiments. These topics will help be develop my quantitative analysis ability. Also, MGT 662 focuses on capital budgeting and project management, portfolio theory and valuation, capital structure and dividend policy, working capital analysis and the link between risk and return. I feel in this course we will be using some Excel spreadsheets and possibly other computer programs to collect and compare all of the data which will help me work on my using technology ability. Aside from school, I could try to use excel to write out my weekly planners, budget my money, and organize things in my own life which would give me some experience and knowledge of the program.

Altogether I feel that a lot of the courses listed in the curriculum for my graduate program will assist me in developing these five abilities, along with the other fifteen. I hope to increase my performance in these five by the time a graduate and even though I only listed a few courses that will help develop them, I believe all twelve of the courses will play a role in that. Aside from school there are also numerous things I can translate to other things in my life that will help me work on my abilities as well.

Over the last eight short weeks of this intense course, I have learned a lot. The countless readings and evaluations have taught me more about who I am and where I'm going. Since I began college I have always known I wanted to be an accountant but I have always considered myself a student, thinking that those days were so far ahead of me. Now as the ultimate goal is getting closer, it's important to realize the steps necessary to make the complete transformation. It doesn't only include finishing the courses required and graduating with good grades. There is a lot to realize about yourself and how to implement different things in your life to take you from a student to someone who can actually be successful in the professional world.

Now, even though there is a lot I have learned it doesn't mean that I am a changed woman after these past two months. A lot of the ways I will develop myself are long term changes, and the process of growing and learning will really never end. The evaluations helped put into perspective what I am good at now and what I am not so good at. The areas that need some work will not get better overnight. I must slowly incorporate ways to practice these abilities into my daily life whether its dealing with situations at work or in my personal life, practice will make perfect. And there might not necessarily be opportunities for me to practice every day, but hopefully when certain events arise I will be better prepared to handle them in a different way thanks to the things I have learned in this course. Even adding some things to my daily or weekly routine will help. Initiative has been my main focus throughout the course, it is one of my weaker abilities and I plan to really strengthen this ability the best I can because I know how important it is. If I can slowly work on this and start to see improvement, I am already on my way to being more prepared for my future.

As far as feedback goes, it is not easy being criticized. Even though the evaluations we did required three people close to you to evaluate your performance as well as yourself, it was extremely helpful. While tallying up the points I received it was a little disheartening to see I had not received a 4 on everything (in a perfect world, maybe). But even though it wasn't a flawless score like we all would probably hope for, it did really help put some things into perspective. It highlighted some weak areas that I subconsciously knew I had, but didn't want to admit to. The evaluations forced me to focus in on these areas and really come up with ideas to improve them. I appreciated the feedback once I saw how it would help me and I plan to continue to ask for feedback in the future. While it might not always be the easiest to hear since everyone wants to perform at their best all the time, it can really be beneficial to you, your school work, your job, or anything else in your life. Throughout the rest of this program I plan to seek my professors' feedback for these classes as well as my undergraduate classes. It used to be easier in grade school when progress reports were handed out with personal messages and feedback however that isn't how it is in college. We simply get a grade at the end of a semester with no real personal feedback for the most part. A way for me to do this in my upcoming semesters would be to email my professors half way into the semester asking for some feedback on what they think I could improve.

Aside from school, I can also incorporate feedback into my personal life. I could ask my mom for feedback on what I could do differently to help her around the house. She has a lot on her plate and does so much for me, I'm sure she would appreciate it if I asked for some feedback on what I could do to be a bigger help. I could also ask my boyfriend for feedback. No relationship is perfect and it takes a lot of compromising and understanding each other to be successful. I could ask him for some feedback to see if there are things that I do that he doesn't

necessarily like that I might not be aware of. There could also be things that he really enjoys and I could work on doing these things more. Feedback is not only useful in the professional world. It could also help strengthen your personal relationships. Not only could I use feedback in my personal life, I could also implement my plans for developing my abilities like initiative, oral communication, and networking. These abilities can be practiced at any time, and if I rely on only developing them at school or work I would be doing myself a disadvantage. By seeking opportunities to practice these abilities in all aspects of my life I might start seeing some results quicker.

The permanent changes in my behavior that will help me maintain my competency development are my daily, weekly, and monthly goals. I have always made little “to-do lists” that help me get some things done but now I realized there is even more that I could do. Instead of just making these lists I could also make daily, weekly, monthly, even yearly goals! This will insure that I maintain what I have learned in this course and continue learning and growing and implementing most, if not all, of the abilities into my life. Of course there will be times where I drop the ball and I might even have periods where I slip back into my lazy routines, but it’s important not to let these slip ups discourage me from my ultimate goals. An example I could use is my dedication to the gym. I try to stay as consistent as possible but it is not always that easy. School, work, homework, stress and a million other things can get in the way. I may be consistent for a few months but then I might have a month where I barely go at all and start eating bad and not making healthy decisions. It happens, but the best thing to do is realize you have gotten off track and get right back on! I plan to apply this same approach that I use when it comes to being healthy and going to the gym, to everything I have learned throughout this course and my plan for development.

There are so many things I have learned in this course but there are a few things that stand out the most to me. First would be the evaluations we had to complete with the external assessors and tallying up all our results to see how we were performing. This was an eye opening exercise because even though I might have had a small voice inside my head saying there are some things I need to work on, this evaluation confirmed that. It was a good thing to be forced to focus in on these areas and really think about what I could do to improve them. The next thing that really stood out to me was the questionnaire we took online that provided us results about our personalities. Discovering that I have an ISFJ personality type was very interesting and I thoroughly enjoyed reading my results. I felt they were very accurate and I know I will be referencing those results for a long time to come. The last thing I really loved from this course was the Personal Mastery article where certain things were discussed like personal vision, the concept of creative tension, and the concept of structural conflict. This article really hit home because I've felt an internal struggle for a while about the future and this article addressed all of these concerns that I felt. It was extremely refreshing to read and I learned a lot about myself through the article, also that the feelings I was having were perfectly normal and there are ways to overcome them. Overall, there is so much I have taken from the last eight weeks and learned about myself, I am extremely excited to see where I am by the end of this program.

Part 8 of Development Plan

At my job, in school, or with anything in life it is important to make ethical decisions as a part of your social responsibility. Everyone has certain obligations in their lives where they are faced with decisions to make. How you react to these decisions and the actions you choose to

take will impact your social responsibility. The exact definition of social responsibility is an ethical framework and suggests that an entity, be it an organization or individual, has an obligation to act for the benefit of society at large. Social responsibility is a duty every individual has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystems.

At the dance studio there are certain obligations that I hold as a teacher, this includes showing up to work every day with a positive attitude, helping the children understand what they are learning, pushing and challenging them so they will grow as dancers, and being a good role model for everyone in my classes. Some ethical obligations that I hold as a dance teacher are treating every child with respect, treating every parent with respect, giving each child a fair chance, and giving them the best dance education I can. When it comes to our dance competition team that I help teach, it is my ethical responsibility not to share choreography with other studios, not copy choreography from other studios, or solicit students from other studios. These are some of my ethical and social responsibilities of this job, and maybe it's possible to get away with some of these things, but it isn't the right thing to do. I try my best to live up to these expectations every day I am at work.

At school I also have some of these obligations and even though they are slightly different than the ones I have at work, I must still do my best to uphold my ethical and social responsibility. Every day I should show up prepared and ready to learn, I should have the proper material with me; I should pay close attention to the professor, study hard, and do all of the homework. Aside from these things, I should also do my own homework without copying or plagiarizing, complete my own tests without cheating, refrain from using my cell phone and talking during class, and be friendly and helpful to my classmates. These are my ethical and social responsibilities as a student and I try my best to uphold these every day.

Throughout my future I will probably have a few different jobs that will also have their fair share of responsibilities for me as an employee, or a manager, or whatever position I am in. Who knows what my social and ethical responsibilities will be in the future, but it is important to always do the right thing. When it comes to your professional life or your personal life, everyone is faced with ethical decisions; it is how you react to them that will determine how successful you become. Liars and cheaters don't get very far in life, doing the right thing is what will get you far.