

Making Your Case For Training



A Guide For Nonprofit Professionals

Identify the skills you want to strengthen, connect them to your current challenges, and show how training will benefit your role and your organization. Prepare to ask for support (from your supervisor, HR, or funders) for leadership training or other professional development opportunities.

How to Use this Worksheet?

This worksheet is there to help you understand what are the skill areas you need to improve and articulate to your team leader why they should invest in your learning. To use this worksheet optimally, follow the steps:

- 1.** Identify 2–3 top skills you want to improve. Take a look at the Skill GAP to Value Table if you need inspiration.
- 2.** Fill in your own challenges and expected outcomes on page 3.
- 3.** Use this as talking points for a conversation with your supervisor, or attach it to a professional development request.

SKILL AREA	CURRENT CHALLENGE OR PAIN POINT	VALUE TO YOU
Communication & Feedback	I avoid difficult conversations with staff or peers.	I'll learn structured ways to give feedback.
Financial Literacy	I struggle to read and explain budget documents.	I'll feel more confident managing project budgets.
Evaluation & Outcomes	I'm unsure how to show that our work is making a difference.	I'll be able to develop KPIs that are relevant to our proposal.
Leading Meetings	Team meetings often feel unstructured and inefficient.	I'll learn to design and facilitate focused meetings.
Understanding Governance	I'm unclear on board vs. staff responsibilities or how decisions are made.	I'll gain clarity on how and where decisions are made
Project Management	Deadlines sometimes slip, and I lack a clear tracking system.	I'll learn tools to plan, prioritize, and manage scope.
Team Motivation	Morale is low, and it's hard to keep people focused and engaged.	I'll gain tools for motivation and recognition.
Budget for Grant Design	Our budgets get cut or rejected in grants; we don't tell our story well.	I'll be able to avoid the common mistakes when building a budget
Strategic Thinking	I focus on day-to-day tasks and struggle to step back.	I'll practice tools to think long-term and systemically.
Delegation & Workload	I tend to take on too much of myself, which can lead to exhaustion.	I'll be able to delegate more confidently and clearly.

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Step 1: Identify a Skill Area You Want to Strengthen

Skill I want to develop:

Examples: Delegation, Budgeting, Strategic Thinking, Communication, etc.

Step 2: Describe the Challenge You're Facing

What challenge or gap are you experiencing in your role right now?

Example: I often end up doing too much myself, and I'm unsure how to delegate tasks to my team.

Step 3: What Would You Gain from Improving This Skill?

How would this help you feel more confident, capable, or effective in your work?

Example: I would feel more in control of my workload and more confident involving others in key tasks.

Step 4: How Would This Help Your Team or Organization?

What is the broader value of you developing this skill?

Example: My team would feel more trusted and engaged, and we'd meet our deadlines more reliably.

Optional Prompts to Help You Prepare Your Ask:

- Have I seen this skill gap affect a real project or team dynamic?
- What would success look like if I built this skill?
- Can I connect this development to our team goals, strategy, or upcoming funding cycle?
- Is there a good moment to ask? (e.g. performance review, grant writing, new program)