

CFABI5

Develop networks to provide access to business information, support and resources



Overview

This is about the development and use of personal contacts and networks to help you provide a wide range of information, support and resources that are likely to be relevant to different clients' business needs. For example, getting advice from experts, or putting people in touch with other businesses that have had similar concerns. It includes considering how you contribute to the networks to make you a valued person to work with.

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Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
- P1 actively seek opportunities to make new contacts using formal and informal techniques
 - P2 contribute to your network contacts in a way that builds their confidence in you
 - P3 ask contacts for information, advice and further contacts that will benefit your clients
 - P4 make sure your network contacts understand your needs for information, resources and further contacts
 - P5 evaluate how new contacts can add value to the service provided to particular clients now and in the future
 - P6 make sure that your relationships with contacts follow any guidelines set by your organisation
 - P7 establish boundaries of confidentiality between yourself and members of your personal networks
 - P8 encourage clients to use your contacts and networks to increase the business opportunities open to them
 - P9 keep up to date with your networks and contacts, and identify improved ways of using them
 - P10 use business contacts to improve the quality of the business information service you provide
 - P11 monitor the information and support given by other organisations to see if they can improve the business support services you provide
 - P12 identify ways to improve the quality of information you get from contacts and network organisations
 - P13 review the opportunities, costs and benefits of new contacts and networks

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Communication and interpersonal skills

- K1 how to listen and question
- K2 how to exchange information
- K3 the importance of maintaining client confidentiality
- K4 your colleagues' and contacts' interests, skills and preferred ways of working with you

Networking

- K5 how to build personal contacts and form networks:
 - K5.1 formally (for example, by joining specialist groups or associations, business networking organisations or by contact with other local, regional, national or international business support services); and
 - K5.2 informally (for example, at a conference or through an on-line chat room)
- K6 how to identify where local networking opportunities exist and where there are gaps
- K7 how to identify people and organisations that have the potential to benefit you and your clients
- K8 how to maintain network contacts (for example, by informing them of business opportunities, referring them to other contacts, exchanging business information and ideas)

Providing support services

- K9 the guidelines for providing support services set by your organisation or professional body about:
 - K9.1 maintaining confidentiality in different working environments;
 - K9.2 ethics, values and professional standards;
 - K9.3 equal opportunities, diversity and social inclusion; and
 - K9.4 using information management systems

Evaluating networks

- K10 how to formally and informally monitor your own personal conduct
- K11 how to compare the service provided by others
- K12 the way your organisation networks with other organisations

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Additional Information

Behaviours

1. Engender co-operation by considering the perspective of others
2. Build and maintain rapport over sustained periods
3. Invite a two-way exchange of information and feedback with others

Links to other NOS

There are other NOS suites which you may want to refer to if you would like to develop your knowledge and abilities to a greater depth in certain topics covered by the Business Information standards. For this unit they are:

Ento Advice and Guidance units:

1. AG18 Operate within networks

Those in a supervisory role may wish to refer to the Managements Standards Centre Management and Leadership unit:

2. A3. Develop your personal networks

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