Stretch Assignments for Targeted Development

STRATEGIC: Develop competencies related to expanding one’s awareness of organizational functions and strategy.

- Competencies: Coping with ambiguous situations, gaining a strategic perspective, influencing others, working with customers, problem solving.
  - Spend 3 days with clients and report back (presentation or written report)
  - Conduct a customer-needs analysis
  - Write a policy statement
  - Interview external stakeholders about their opinions of the organization
  - Analyze and compare a competitor’s product or service
  - Put together a presentation for a senior employee (i.e., supervisor or manager)
  - Evaluate a training program
  - Join a cross-functional team
  - Join work on a project that has been unsuccessful
  - Put together a task-force to solve a tough problem
  - Monitor a new product or service through its entire life cycle

INTERPERSONAL: Develop competencies that increase one’s effectiveness to work with and manage other employees or teams

- Competencies: Communication, listening, managing conflict, managing relationships, teamwork, negotiation, trust, approachability, delegation, leadership.
  - Lead a team meeting
  - Become a mentor to a new employee
  - Train a new employee in a particular skill
  - Represent team concerns to supervisor
  - Join a team that’s dealing with conflict
  - Negotiate a new customer contract
  - Take responsibility in resolving a team conflict
  - Troubleshoot a performance issue
  - Become a campus recruiter
  - Interview customers and report back
  - Work with a peer on a developmental opportunity
  - Delegate 2 tasks to a peer and ask him/her to delegate 2 to you

PERSONAL: Develop competencies to meet personal developmental, growth, or learning goals. In the absence of such goals, this sheet can also be used to explore and discuss areas of growth

- Competencies: Organizing, planning, intellectual acumen, creativity, composure, time management, work/life balance, decision quality, customer service.
  - Help launch a new product or service
  - Re-launch a product or service that previously failed
  - Learn a new tool, process, or approach and give a presentation on it
  - Work with someone from another department on a tough issue
  - Handle a difficult negotiation with an internal or external client
  - Take on a project that others have failed in
  - Write a press release
  - Teach a seminar on an unfamiliar topic
  - Create a customer satisfaction survey
  - Take on a task that you do not like to do
  - Take on an employee’s tasks who is on vacation
  - Conduct interviews with employees on their work/life balance experience & present findings

Sources and Extended Reads:
- Yost & Plunkett (2009). Real Time Leadership Development