

# Statement of Personal Development

**Word Count:** 1096

## Overview

After achieving ACII and Chartered Insurance Practitioner status, it was always my intention to continue with professional developments. At the time I was working for XYZ. Within the company there was only one person who had successfully attained FCII status. I saw this as a challenge but also an opportunity to enhance my career prospects. I also chose the Fellowship programme because of its flexible structure which would enable me to meet the demands of a busy job and raising a family at the same time as learning.

My Fellowship plan was essentially to take bite sized chunks, aiming to achieve one objective at a time. This was done mainly with family life in mind. I agreed with my employers that I would base my Major Achievement on a work project which I had been chosen to lead. I did not however foresee some of the significant changes my life would experience soon thereafter which are outlined later in this paper. I subsequently changed from a Project to a Dissertation as my Major Achievement. At the time the need to do so was very disappointing but with the benefit of hindsight, it was a blessing in disguise.

## Fellowship Plan

At the time of submitting my Plan, the work project I was leading was well underway. Because of this, the target dates for completion of the various objectives were set perhaps somewhat optimistically as follows:

Enrolment – 01/02/13

Submission of Business Ethics Programme (BEP) – 01/08/13

Completion of Major Achievement – 01/02/14

Completion of SPD – 01/08/14

Having completed the BEP in the first half of 2013, I struggled somewhat with the next phase which was the Major Achievement. As I was compiling my project report, my role with my then employers changed. My workload increased significantly and I was required to spend 3 days away from home most weeks. Our third child was born in March 2014. My wife and I also renovated and moved into our new home in the second half of 2014.

By late 2014 I had made the decision to look for alternative employment. I subsequently joined my current employers ABCs in May 2015. This resulted in my quest for Fellowship status being reinvigorated.

### **Changes to Fellowship plan**

As I had departed from XYZ, I felt it was no longer possible nor appropriate to utilise the work project as the subject for my Major Achievement project paper. This was despite having already partially completed the project paper. I was therefore back to square one. In late 2015 I subsequently changed from a Project to a Dissertation. The Dissertation topic was (and still is) a subject in which I had a genuine personal interest but also experience. I also felt that the research and work required for the Dissertation would benefit me professionally given its practical use and implications.

### **Self-Learning and Awareness**

I have genuinely found the Fellowship Programme to be a journey of discovery. I have certainly gained specific technical knowledge but beyond that, I have learned a huge amount about myself. I have learned that when I suffer a setback I tend to retreat and disengage for a time but then come back even stronger. I stop, take stock and then re-engage more determined than before. This happened at least twice during this process, once when I had to start again on a new Major Achievement and the second being when the initial submission of my Dissertation was not accepted and required further work. On both occasions I was deeply disappointed and even disheartened. My mind was however made up that I would complete the programme. I could have simply decided that I “had too much on” and not continued. It took me a while to get going again after the delays/setbacks but I never considered giving up, it was always going to happen, it was just a matter of when.

Participation in the FCII and completion of the BEP in particular, has also copper fastened some of my previously held beliefs and shaped me as a person and my outlook on life, both from a professional but also a personal perspective.

I have also gained a new sense of self confidence. This has largely arisen from the technical research and interviews carried out with senior legal practitioners. Through this experience and the additional knowledge gained came increased confidence and this discovery is something that will stay with me going forward.

### **Key skills and knowledge acquired**

The BEP was a game changer for me. Whilst the Ethical Decision Model is a most useful tool which I use frequently, I found the overall concept and theme running through Elaine Sternberg's book "Just Business" to be hugely enlightening. The BEP enabled me to see everyday business ethical situations much more clearly. I have no hesitation in saying that the BEP helped me to form a view and ultimately make the decision that the organisation I was working for at the time was not for me in the longer term.

The CPD planning and recording requirement resulted in my attendance at far more CII approved CPD lectures as opposed to the likes of completing online courses. This has provided me with knowledge and experience of a far broader range of topics and is something I intend to continue with going forward.

Other than what I have learned about myself as a person, the main skills and additional knowledge I believe I have gained from this experience are time-management and how to conduct effective research. These skills have already enabled me to produce technical articles for my employers for both internal and external publication, whilst at the same time balancing this with my regular day to day duties.

### **Intentions for the future**

Learning never stops and continuing professional development is a must. In this regard and in line with my work as a casualty loss adjuster, I am currently leaning towards a more claims specific focus, possibly a CILA qualification.

Overall however my intention is to use the knowledge gained from this process to mentor and assist others. I have already spoken to brokers, insurers and also a council member from my local insurance institute in relation to the topic of my Dissertation and the possibility of providing presentations and/or workshops. I am also currently in discussions with my employers about a mentoring role within the organisation. This I feel would be of benefit to not only my co-workers but myself also. I firmly believe we can all learn something new every day.