

FOCUS ON PER

PO 7: MANAGE ONGOING ACTIVITIES IN YOUR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

Whatever your level of seniority, it is your responsibility to ensure that you effectively manage your day-to-day activities. Your career will progress faster and more in line with your long-term objectives if you can demonstrate an ability to plan ahead without needing your hand held at every step of the way.

Most good employers will, of course, provide relevant training and coaching – but it's how you stand on your own two feet that will mark you out from your peers. That includes identifying and mitigating risk, working with (or delegating to) others, and setting and meeting the expectations of everyone you deal with, from colleagues to customers, from senior management to suppliers. You'll also need to encourage innovation, in yourself and in others, as well as being on top of relevant business processes for your team's function.

There are a number of ways in which you can show how well you manage activities in your areas of responsibility:

- ▣ Identify relevant people within your team to whom you can delegate work, explaining your requirements patiently and clearly, reviewing progress on a timely basis and providing meaningful feedback
- ▣ Think outside the box – set time aside to consider potential innovative solutions or improvements, such as:
 - Ending existing duplications in business processes

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- Creating or updating system or process manuals
- Sharing tips or specialist know-how with colleagues
- ▣ Monitor feedback of those with whom you liaise – demonstrating listening skills, considering both negative and positive responses and taking appropriate next steps
- ▣ Explain where you have recommended your own approach to managing ongoing activities to others and why? (This might be as informal as impulsively – and successfully – coaching a more junior colleague, or in a more official capacity as part of a supervisory role.)
- ▣ How does your approach to managing your activities contribute to organisation performance? (Consider the tasks you perform in the widest possible context – including where they sit between colleagues who might deal with documents or process components before or after you, and how your work might impact on outcomes such as efficiency, profitability, transparency or social sustainability.)

Remember – effective management of your own ongoing responsibilities requires a firm grip on the bigger picture. That means understanding how your role and that of your team fit within not just an organisational context but in wider political, economic, social, and technological realms. A professional accountant must also be able to apply their intelligence to support other functions within the business.

The next step is to answer the challenge questions for this objective in the trainee development matrix (TDM):

- ▣ Describe how you have managed the ongoing (business as usual) activities in your role. (A good way to look at this is to imagine interviewing someone for your own job – how would you explain the responsibilities from the perspective of doing it in the very best way possible?)

This performance objective is linked to Paper F1, *Accountant in Business*, and Paper P3, *Business Analysis*