

## Module 11. Productivity.

Introduction Video Transcript	<p>Hi! Welcome to Module 10 – Initiative.</p> <p>Do you do things without being asked or do you solve problems that others may not have noticed needed solving, or do you go out of your way to continue learning and growing while not required from outside?</p> <p>If your answer to any of these questions is “Yes,” it means you are an initiative taker.</p>
	<p><b><u>What Is Initiative?</u></b></p> <p>Initiative is the ability to start projects, define goals, and make plans on one’s own. Initiative skills also refer to your ability to assess a situation and take action without direction from someone else. Initiative is a self-management skill, and purposeful self-management can help you set goals independently and direct the trajectory of your career.</p> <p>In other words, initiative is the ability to take advantage of the opportunities in front of you. It is about stepping up and going beyond your typical duties. When you take charge of situations before others do, this is a great indicator of your initiative skills. Generally, people may not want to step out of their comfort zone, but usually, you will be rewarded for doing so. Initiative can also be defined as the skill to think outside the box, prepare for success, and capitalize on opportunities. Initiative is making changes to take a step forward and being persistent.</p> <p>Initiative generally involves the following subskills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) setting goals,</li><li>(b) being confident,</li><li>(c) being decisive,</li><li>(d) showing professionalism,</li><li>(e) having adaptability, and</li><li>(f) problem-solving.</li></ul> <p><b><u>Examples of Initiative</u></b></p> <p>When you show initiative, you do things without being told; you find out what you need to know; you keep going when things get tough; and you spot and take advantage of opportunities that others pass by. You act, instead of reacting.</p> <p>Here are some sample behaviors you might use to define and</p>

understand initiative:

- You are able to make plans on your own.
- You are fully aware of your goals and understand what is required to complete a task or create a product.
- You are able to start projects without being told to do so.
- You are able to manage your schedules effectively so that you can spare to start your own initiatives.
- You are able to stay focused on a task and work towards a specific end goal.
- You are organized.
- You are able to find solutions to problems without having all the resources you need.
- You are able to see a needs and take action to fill those needs in ways that others cannot.

### **Importance of Initiative**

Most of us have seen initiative in action. Maybe you've seen a young manager who fills her boss's shoes when she's sick and the rest of the team is unsure what to do; or perhaps you've seen a team member proposing a process improvement plan to the executive board. Do you take initiative like these examples? That is, do you make things happen for yourself and for your team? Or do you wait for someone else to tell you what to do?

### ***Why Is Initiative Necessary?***

In simple terms, initiative is necessary because it has become increasingly important in today's workplace. Organizations want employees who can think on their feet and take action without waiting for someone to tell them what to do. After all, this type of flexibility and courage is what pushes teams and organizations to innovate, and to overcome competition.

Taking the initiative in life has many advantages. Anyone can do it for themselves, and it's a good thing to do. Make sure you take the initiative for yourself since only you can. Individuals who take the initiative exhibit self-control in both their personal and professional life. Since no one will give you opportunities if you don't earn them, taking action will have a significant impact on your life. It might make you feel better about yourself personally and help you feel more self-assured. In the workplace, it might assist you in obtaining the desired promotion. It will encourage better things in all facets of your life.

### ***Why People Do Not Take Initiative***

Not everyone knows how to or feels comfortable taking the initiative. It requires cerebral development and physical strength to accomplish. Some people have logic that is limited. These people are only able to see what they already know. They fail to grasp the advantages of taking charge. Usually, the person has never given it any thought. Additionally, people lack the competence to take the initiative. Some people lack the expertise to take the initiative for a more difficult work outside of their broad knowledge. Another common reason why people don't take initiative is that they prefer to follow through on their plans rather than innovate. These people don't care about any new tasks; they only pay attention to their own work. Last but not least, some people are too busy to take the initiative. They already have too much on their plates, and they are unable to handle any more labor.

### ***Make Initiative a Priority***

We have a responsibility to prioritize initiative in both our professional and personal lives. We must first comprehend initiative and its advantages before prioritizing it. We can advance once we have this understanding. We must keep an eye out for opportunities if we want to make initiative a priority. We need to be mindful of where we are and what can be a great opportunity to do something. If you notice that your supervisor needs assistance in your professional life, provide it! Display your drive by being active. When you can, go the additional mile! Your initiative will be noticed, and you will be rewarded favorably.

### ***Developing Initiative Skills***

Initiative skills allow you to engage effectively with the world around us and motivate us to pursue our desired goals. People with skills of initiative tend to accept responsibility for their attitudes and behavior and gain the trust of others. In order to develop initiative skills, you can follow the steps given below:

#### 1. Use a planner

Utilizing a planner is one technique to enhance your initiative. This might assist you in maintaining organization and focus on your objectives, both personal and professional. The ability to see what chores need to be accomplished and when they are due makes planners useful tools for time management.

#### 2. Set goals

Setting goals is another technique to enhance your initiative. You can keep yourself motivated and focused on what has to be done by having clear goals in mind. When setting goals, it can be helpful to make sure they are SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Based.

#### 3. Take on new challenges

By accepting new challenges, you can greatly enhance your initiative skills. This can entail joining a new initiative as a volunteer at work or starting a brand-new interest after hours. Putting oneself through new challenges can help you learn new skills and advance yourself.

#### 4. Be proactive

Being proactive is crucial if you want to develop your initiative. This is being prepared to start a task on your own rather than waiting for someone else to finish it. You can advance in both your professional and personal life by being proactive.

#### 5. Stay positive

When attempting to develop your initiative skills, it's crucial to have a positive attitude. This entails adopting a cheerful outlook on life. Positivity can help you identify the bright aspects of every circumstance and keep your motivation levels up.

#### 6. Find balance

Even if taking the initiative is crucial, using it wisely is equally important. It can sometimes be improper to take the lead, and people who create too much extra labor for others can annoy other people. Therefore, your ability to balance when to take the initiative, when to innovate, and when to remain back and observe is another skill in line with other life skills. None of the skills that are being taught in this program should be thought of isolated from others as each skill strengthens and boosts others.

### Gamification-Based Interactive Tasks

#### **Interactive Task 1: SMART Goals**

As mentioned above, one of the ways in which you can develop initiative skills is to set goals in a SMART way.

#### SMART Criteria

***S – Specific*** – What will be accomplished? What actions will you take?

***M – Measurable*** – What data will measure the goal? How much? How well?

***A – Achievable*** – Is the goal doable? Do you have the necessary skills and resources?

***R – Relevant*** – How does the goal align with broader goals? Why is the result important?

***T – Time-Bound*** – What is the time frame for accomplishing the goal?

Here is an example of initial goals to walk through this process:

***Goal: “I want to complete a personal goal”***

This is a typical approach to creating goals, but it is very vague. With the current wording, the goal probably will not be attainable. The statements lack specifics, timelines, motivation, and a reality check.

When stated and framed using the S.M.A.R.T. goals formula, the goal is both clarified and improved as seen below:

**Goal: “I want to complete a personal goal”**

**Specific:** Many people create a page and profile when seeking a job. Since I do not have one, it limits my job finding prospects. I want to create my LinkedIn profile by the end of the month.

**Measurable:** Creating a LinkedIn profile will require some time and information and endorsements. To make it worthwhile, I’d like to have at least 20 skills defined and have endorsements for each.

**Achievable:** I will need to start right away and enter personal information.

**Relevant:** Creating a LinkedIn profile is crucial for my personal development and increasing my prospects of finding a job as it will increase my visibility.

**Time-Bound:** In order to achieve my goal, I need start right away, collect information, start entering data to the profile and expand my network within the next couple of weeks.

Once you go through and write your goals according to each S.M.A.R.T. characteristic, you can then combine and consolidate all the work you’ve done into one S.M.A.R.T. goal.

**S.M.A.R.T. Goal: “I want to complete a personal goal”**

**Description:** Creating a LinkedIn profile is crucial for my personal development, so I want to create my LinkedIn profile by the end of the month to increase my visibility to employers.

When this thought process is followed, and the goal is written in this way it becomes easier to complete tasks and projects. With this approach, taking the initiative without outside help and guidance will be easier.

Following the steps above and based on the example given, write S.M.A.R.T. goals for the following aims:

- 1- I want to improve my performance (i.e., learn a software)
- 2- I want to complete job applications relevant to my skills
- 3- I want to improve my social skills (i.e., join a club, association, etc.)

**Interactive Task 2: Home Tasks**

	<p>Sometimes, improving your initiative skills requires practice, and practicing at home is a risk-free way to build your confidence and understand your response to sudden challenges or opportunities. You may find it useful to practice taking initiative in the comfort of your home or with family and friends.</p> <p>Consider creating a list of opportunities and practicing your response to them in the mirror until you feel comfortable declaring your solution or decision. You may also ask family and friends to roleplay work scenarios with you so you can practice responses to unexpected requests.</p>
Reading	<p>17 Tips on How to Take Initiative at Work</p> <p><a href="https://www.thriveyard.com/17-tips-on-how-to-take-initiative-at-work/">https://www.thriveyard.com/17-tips-on-how-to-take-initiative-at-work/</a></p>
Self-evaluation test	<p>ARE YOU AN INITIATIVE TAKER? TEST YOURSELF TO SEE!</p> <p>Read the statements below that reflect on perceptions of initiative taking. For each statement, please choose a number between 1 to 5, where 1, which is the minimum number, denotes that you highly disagree with the statement and where 5, which is the maximum number, denotes that you highly agree with the statement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When I see bad decisions being made that could be disastrous, I generally have courage to speak up and point the flaws rather than waiting for the bad thing to happen and then make statements such “I thought that wouldn’t work out well.”</li> </ol> <p>Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. I am generally considered a role model and leader by others.</li> </ol> <p>Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. I generally detect and do things that need to be done without waiting to be told.</li> </ol> <p>Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. I prefer to make decisions and put it into action as opposed to over thinking about the decisions.</li> </ol> <p>Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. I generally find myself helping others with their tasks.</li> </ol> <p>Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. People generally come to me when they need help resolving their conflicts.</li> </ol> <p>Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree</p>

7. I tend to cover for others when they are unavailable or absent.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

8. I am able to do things and projects others avoid.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

9. I can anticipate problems and prevent them before they happen.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

10. I tend to volunteer to work with different teams and departments.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

QUIZ