Digital Proficiency Process

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, we'll start building your digital proficiency by learning the digital proficiency process. You will also explore how your technology and initiative skills can help you as you work through the process.

Specifically, this lesson covers:

1. The Digital Proficiency Process
    a. Identify the Goal
    b. DPP Steps
2. Problem Framing Process

1. The Digital Proficiency Process

When learning something new, it is helpful to have a step-by-step process you can follow. Chances are, you have a process like this for many goals you are trying to accomplish. Consider the last time you needed help with a task at work. You most likely considered all of your options, then you chose the best one. The **Digital Proficiency Process (DPP)** is no different. The DPP is a series of steps that can help you find and learn to use the right digital tools to achieve your goals.

Technology: Why Employers Care

Technology is always changing, and an employee who can continue to learn and adapt with these changes is a great asset to their employer.

TERM TO KNOW

Digital Proficiency Process (DPP)
A series of steps that can help you find and learn to use the right digital tools to achieve your goals.

1a. Identify the Goal

Before starting the DPP, you'll need to identify your goal. The **goal** is the task you are striving to accomplish.

This will inform how you complete the steps of the process. Consider what you are trying to accomplish and the tools that you'll need to complete the task. Some examples of digital-related goals include learning to use a cloud system to store documents, creating and inviting others to events through a digital calendar, learning computer shortcuts to work more productively, or using social media to promote your business. Once you have your goal identified, you can begin working through the steps of the DPP.

📄 **TERM TO KNOW**

Goal
The task you are striving to accomplish.

1b. DPP Steps

Digital Proficiency

Navigate · Select · Use · Review · Goal

📦 **STEP BY STEP**

The following are the steps in the DPP process:

1. Explore/Navigate potential tools needed to complete the goal. Determine what types of tools are needed, begin learning about what tools are available for your goal, and decide what you will need to learn in order to effectively use the tools.

2. Select the best tools for the goal. Most tasks can be completed with many different digital tools. Research the available tools and determine which will be the most efficient and effective for your purpose. Also, consider the learning curve of the tool. If you are new to using digital tools, you'll want to start with a tool that's simple to learn and work your way toward tools that are more complex.

3. Use the selected tool. Once you have decided on the best tool to achieve your goal, you are ready to begin trying it.

4. Review how successful the tool was in accomplishing the task. Did you achieve your goal? What difficulties did you encounter? Do you feel that you have learned how to accurately use the tool?

Let's look at the DPP in action.

⤳ EXAMPLE Quincy has been tasked with implementing a digital calendar system for his department. First, he explored possible tools. In this case, he may explore Google calendars, Outlook calendars, or Apple calendars. By reading about each option, he can determine what he will need to learn in order to implement the tool.

Next, Quincy will use his research to select a tool. Since his office uses Microsoft products, including Microsoft Outlook email, he decides to use Outlook calendars. This will enable his team to send meeting requests through email.

Quincy will then roll out the tool to his team. He may provide a presentation or training on how to use it. He will also want to show the features, such as how to view which employees will be attending a meeting, or changing the room for a meeting.

Finally, Quincy will review the tool. He will determine whether it has increased efficiency on his team. If not, he will want to look into why this is the case. He will also determine if he or his colleagues need additional training on using the tool.

2. Problem Framing Process

As you look to work through the DPP, you will first need to ask what problem you are trying to solve and how technology could assist you. Problem framing is at the beginning of the DPP, where you can select the most efficient tool to solve your problem. While problem-solving means identifying solutions for problems, **problem framing** means that you look at the big picture as well as the details of the problem, consider multiple perspectives, and ensure that you're focused on the right problem.

⧉ STEP BY STEP

Here are the steps in the problem framing process:

1. Explore the problem - Closely examine the problem itself. What issue are you trying to solve? What are the root causes of the problem? What are the effects of the problem? What kind of change needs to occur to mitigate the problem? What tools might help make that change?

2. Restate the problem - In order to examine the problem from various perspectives, it helps to restate the problem in different ways. What are other ways to explain the problem? Does this problem affect individuals or systems in different ways?

3. Break it down - Generally, problems are complex and are a summation of multiple, smaller issues. Should this problem be broken down into smaller problems? What are the highest priority issues of this problem that should be addressed first?

4. Determine accuracy - You will likely need to gather information about the problem to fully understand it.

This will prevent you from making decisions that are not based on facts. Could bias be affecting your view of the problem? Are the details of the problem based on evidence?

For an example of the problem framing process, let's consider an employee named Juanita. Juanita is tasked with creating a file-sharing system for her department so that her colleagues can access and share documents in an efficient manner.

⤳ **EXAMPLE** First, Juanita will explore the problem, which is that it's currently difficult to collaborate on documents. Employees are sharing documents by using email attachments and cannot view updates in real-time. The documents also have to be saved on several different computers. This increases the odds for error and makes collaboration difficult and complicated. The department needs to be able to access the most recent version of all documents and make comments or suggest changes. Tools that can help solve this problem include a shared network drive, SharePoint, Google docs, or Dropbox.

Second, Juanita reframes the problem. For some employees, the issue is that it's difficult to find documents since they have to pull them up through their email. For other employees, the issue is that they don't know when changes have been made to a document and don't know when they're working on the most recent version. And still, for other employees, they'd like to make comments and suggested changes to documents that are available for their team to see in real-time.

Next, Juanita breaks down the problem. Some smaller issues that add up to the overall problem might be that the team lacks the resources needed for a shared document system. Or, the team may have a shared document system, but they don't have the skills to know how to use it correctly.

Finally, Juanita gathers information. She determines if she has a bias of what the most important issue is within the problem. For instance, she may believe that easily accessing the file is more important than making real-time changes. This belief may affect which tool she chooses. She will also want to examine the potential biases of her colleagues. Based on evidence and the greatest needs of the team, she can determine which tool will best solve the problem.

> ### Initiative: Why Employers Care
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> Taking the initiative to learn and use the DPP and the problem framing process will enable you to make workplace systems more efficient. As we saw in the cases of Quincy and Juanita, they used the DPP and problem framing to improve processes within their teams. This required them to use their initiative skill to explore a problem within their department, as well as potential solutions. They independently took action in order to make their workplace more efficient. Because employers value efficiency, they seek employees who will take initiative to implement these types of changes.

📄 TERM TO KNOW

Problem Framing
Taking steps to ensure that you're focused on the right problem.

✅ SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned how the **digital proficiency process (DPP)** can help you accomplish your goals. You looked at key elements of that process, including taking time to **identify the goal** and then follow the **DPP steps**. You also examined how a key factor as you look to begin is the**problem framing process**. Finally, you explored how using your initiative and technology skills empowers you to successfully implement the DPP and problem framing so that you can independently take action to examine problems and potential solutions within an organization.

Hope you enjoyed the lesson!

📄 TERMS TO KNOW

Digital Proficiency Process (DPP)
A series of steps that can help you find and learn to use the right digital tools to achieve your goals.

Goal
The task you are striving to accomplish.

Problem Framing Process
A series of steps taken to ensure that you're focused on the right problem.