

# Professional Development

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## Justification Toolkit

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A Guide for Preparing, Submitting, and  
Supporting Professional Development  
Through Clear, Evidence-Based Requests

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# How to Communicate the Value of a Professional Development Opportunity to Your Leader

## General Tips

### Before you make your case:

1. Prepare a plan describing how your work responsibilities will be managed during your time away (if applicable).
2. Focus on the specific value this educational opportunity will bring back to your team, department, or organization.
3. Review the learning objectives, agenda, or course content and identify the sessions or topics most relevant to your role and organizational priorities.
4. Review and customize the sample justification narrative provided.
5. Review and complete the budget worksheet outlining the anticipated expenses.



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## Reasons to Attend:

*Below are examples of ways to articulate the value of a professional development activity. Use these concepts to support your justification and supplement your written explanation. You may have different reasons for pursuing this education, so be sure to include any factors that strengthen your justification.*

- The activity offers focused education across multiple topics, formats, or learning sessions relevant to professional practice.
- The knowledge and tools gained can be shared with colleagues and applied to improve team performance, workflows, outcomes, or improve employee retention.
- The content addresses best practices in areas such as professional development, well-being, workforce sustainability, quality improvement, education, leadership, or role-specific competencies.



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## Examples of Value Statements:

- **Recognize** and understand the long-term value and return on investment of evidence-based practices or professional standards relevant to your role or organization.
- **Learn** how to apply established frameworks, guidelines, or accreditation principles to improve practice.
- **Network** with nursing, advanced practice, and interprofessional colleagues to exchange ideas, strategies, and lessons, learned across organizations.
- **Earn** continuing education credit or certification-related education that supports licensure, credential maintenance, or professional development requirements.

*Educational activities that offer multiple learning sessions also provide opportunities to engage with subject matter experts and peers, strengthening both individual competence and organizational capability.*

# Sample Letter

Use this sample letter as a guide to clearly articulate the value of attending the professional development activity. Review the agenda and customize the sections below by referencing the specific learning objectives or topics most relevant to your role, team, or organizational priorities.

[Date]

Dear [leader's name],

I am requesting approval to participate in the [title of the professional development program] scheduled for [dates] in [location].

This [conference/course/activity] will provide a great opportunity to learn from the country's most innovate leaders in healthcare education and practice. I will be able to bring back to our organization proven solutions to address our toughest healthcare challenges.

This activity aligns with my current role and provides focused learning relevant to both my professional development and the needs of our team.

Participation in this activity will allow me to gain practical, evidence-based strategies that can be applied directly to our work. The content addresses priority areas in professional practice and will support improvements in quality, efficiency, and/or workforce development.

Benefits to the team and organization include:

- I will participate in structured learning sessions focused on strategies related to:
  - [Key topic or competency area]
  - [Key topic or competency area]
- I will engage in targeted sessions that provide practical approaches I can share with the team, such as:
  - [Example skill, tool, or framework]
  - [Example practice improvement or application]
- This activity offers continuing education credit that supports licensure, certification maintenance, and ongoing professional development requirements (if applicable).
- I will ensure the department/organization benefits by:
  - [Sharing key learnings with stakeholders]
  - [Disseminating evidence, best practices, or takeaways that support practice improvement]
  - [Translating conference content into actionable education]

A detailed cost breakdown outlining the anticipated registration, travel, lodging, and related expenses is attached. I have also prepared a plan to ensure appropriate coverage of my responsibilities during this time.

I consider this educational activity a sound investment that will provide measurable value to both my role and our team.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

# Expense Worksheet

Expense	Explanation	Estimated Cost
<b>Registration fee</b> <i>Include any pre-course, add-on, workshops, or other fees associated with sessions you want to attend.</i>	Registration fee includes: • • •	\$
<b>Airfare</b>	<i>Round-trip or other long-distance transport</i>	\$
<b>Ground Transportation</b>	<i>Taxi, rideshare, shuttle, or rental car.</i>	\$
<b>Mileage/Parking</b> <i>Include any parking fees and (if using a personal vehicle) the estimated vehicle mileage and estimated mileage reimbursement per policy.</i>	Parking Fees	\$
	Estimated Mileage: _____ Estimated reimbursement: _____	\$
<b>Hotel/Lodging</b> <i>(Include any lodging-related taxes or fees.)</i>	Number of Nights: _____	\$
<b>Food/Meals Per Diem</b>	<i>Per policy or estimated daily cost</i>	\$
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
<b>Explain:</b>		\$
	<b>Subtotal</b>	\$
<b>Other Funding Sources (if applicable)</b> <i>Include any grants, scholarships, etc. &amp; subtract from subtotal.</i>	<b>Explain:</b>	(-) \$
<i>x Number of Employees Attending</i>	# of Employees: _____	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$

I confirm that the above cost estimates are accurate to the best of my knowledge and reflect reasonable expenses consistent with organizational policy.

**Learner signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Registration Details & Supporting Documentation

Use this checklist as a guide to ensure all necessary documentation is submitted with your professional development request. Required documentation may vary based on the type of activity, department expectations, and organizational requirements. Incomplete submissions may result in approval delays.

## Registration Documentation:

- Registration confirmation or proof of enrollment**  
*If not yet registered, include pricing information or a registration summary page.*
- Agenda, syllabus, or course outline**  
*Should show session titles, dates, and overall structure of the activity.*
- Schedule or program overview**  
*Include learning sessions, instructional hours, and key timeframes.*
- Continuing education credit information (if applicable)**  
*Include credit type, number of credits offered, and accrediting body when available.*

## Additional Documentation:

- Session or topic selection list**  
*Highlight sessions, modules, or topics most relevant to your role or team.*
- Learning Objectives**  
*Demonstrates relevance to professional practice and organizational priorities.*
- Poster, podium, or other presentation details (if applicable)**  
*Include title, abstract, and role (author, co-author, presenter).*
- Faculty or speaker information**  
*May be helpful if expertise or credentials support the value of attendance.*
- Course modality details**  
*In-person, live virtual, on-demand, or hybrid format.*
- Technology or platform requirements (for virtual activities)**  
*Helps leaders anticipate scheduling or access considerations.*
- Policy-related documentation (if applicable)**  
*Includes compliance requirements, accreditation relevance, or regulatory alignment.*

## Budget-Related Documentation:

- Completed budget worksheet**  
*Itemized estimates for registration, travel, lodging, meals, and related expenses.*
- Supporting cost documentation:**  
*Examples include registration pricing pages, hotel rate listings, or airfare estimates.*
- Coverage and operational considerations**  
*Explanation of how responsibilities will be managed during participation.*