

**Initiative** adopts a proactive approach for developing, assessing, and operationalizing ideas to foster positive change while remaining persistent in overcoming constraints. This often involves assuming an active and self-starting approach that goes beyond what is expected or formally required.

### Cultivating Initiative

Initiative can be cultivated through a proactive and persistent approach toward identifying problems and proposing solutions. Below is a list of behaviors that can help cultivate your initiative.

1. **Do more than what is expected of you.** Moving past the status quo will require reaching beyond your typical work to seek out new responsibilities and opportunities.
2. **Draft a plan.** Defining your vision and making plans for achieving your goals will allow you to identify opportunities to build the necessary relationships, develop resources, and/or attain new skills.
3. **Actively request feedback and adopt it.** Requesting feedback on your innovative idea and/or personal development will reveal strengths and areas for development. This feedback should inform changes and course corrections.
4. **Anticipate potential issues and discuss them with your team.** Challenges and opportunities often emerge unexpectedly. Discuss any potential, future issues with your team to gain deeper insight into what may cause the challenges and develop proactive solutions to address them.
5. **Share what you learn.** Disseminate your findings—both successes and failures—to encourage others to overcome real and perceived constraints that often impede the launching of ideas.

### Assessing Your Initiative Competency

Initiative requires putting ideas into action. As you engage in initiative, think about whether you have:

- identified solutions to overcome real and perceived constraints that impede the launching of new ideas;
- used novel approaches to improve ideas that propel change; and/or
- operationalized ideas that foster positive change.

### References

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2. Frohman AL. Personal Initiative Sparks Innovation, Research-Technology Management. 1999; 42:3, 32-38.
3. 9 Tips for Taking Initiative at Work. Indeed. December 8, 2020. Available from: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/tips-for-taking-initiative-at-work>.