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Individual Development Planning in TExAS by Susanna Coppernoll

With the implementation of the Texas Extension Accountability System (TExAS) came a new type of plan -- the Individual Development Plan. For those of you that worked with the YES! (You, Extension and Success) System you put in professional development plans previously. These “new” Individual Development Plans are the same thing, just integrated now into one planning system verses two separate systems as we had before.

Many of you may wonder “Do I have to have an individual development plan?” The answer is, “**talk with your supervisor.**” In general in order to make our professional development experiences more realistic and targeted at our needs its best to have a plan. Also, by planning you will then report and by reporting you then can extract summaries in the future for use in building your dossier or for sharing in your performance review.

So how do you put together an Individual Development Plan (IDP)? We have put together a worksheet that walks you through how to build an IDP. This worksheet found at <http://extensioneducation.tamu.edu/prog-materials.htm> will walk you through each part of the plan. If you print out the worksheet (available in MS Word or as a PDF) and fill it out you will be able to walk through putting your plan in TExAS pretty quickly. Like other plans there is a plan overview then tasks that go with that plan. The GREAT news...there is only one task type in an Individual Development Plan - the Individual Development Task.

Some of you may choose to put in Individual Development Tasks with your program plans (outcome, output or organizational support) because you are planning that development activity to specifically support you being successful with that program. Some of you may choose to put them all in under the Individual Development Plan because you like to group all of your professional development activities together. Whichever best fits your style is fine. Either way, you will need to put in an Individual Development Plan (the overview) - where you put the tasks is up to you. When it comes time to report or extract what you report it will pull individual development tasks no matter where you planned for them. The bottom line is **plan for your development!!**

Some of you have asked where you put information regarding associations in TExAS. Well, if you are talking about things like board meetings, etc. that is not a direct professional development activity (although there is no doubt you are likely growing professionally as a result of your participation). You should plan for those types of things under an organizational support plan (“activities and/or functions that enhance or support Extension...”). If you are planning to attend an association conference, then that is a more direct professional development and that should be put in as an individual development task under either your Individual Development Plan or an outcome or output program plan that the conference or meeting best relates to.

Professional development doesn’t just happen through face-to-face workshops or seminars. There are resources available on-line as well. Have you checked out the Learning Opportunities Catalog at <http://yespds.tamu.edu/catalog/>? Or visited <http://eit.tamu.edu/resources.html> for resources that can help develop information technology skills? If you’re new to TExAS and need some assistance, it’s also available online, at <http://extensionlearning.tamu.edu/Accountability/TExASUserGuide.pdf>.

If you have other questions related to individual development planning, please feel free to contact Susanna Coppernoll, Extension Specialist for Professional Development at 979-845-2250 or s-coppernoll@tamu.edu.

Centra Central

Oct. 20 - Let's Talk About Diversity (Susanna Coppernoll)

Oct. 27- Creating an Embracing Environment (Susanna Coppernoll)

Nov. 3- How our Organization Operates (Susanna Coppernoll)

Enroll or browse upcoming events or learn more about Centra by clicking the Centra Symposium link from the EIT webpage or going directly to <http://eit.tamu.edu/centra.html>. Playback any of the 250+ recorded sessions from the Public Recordings link at <http://centra.tamu.edu/main/tce>. For more information, go to <http://eit.tamu.edu/Centra/frionline0607.pdf>.

Web Tips – Protect Your Computer and Your Identity by Jill Hughson

Thanks to Nancy Granovsky for giving us the heads up on this website!

Partnering with a host of federal agencies, the technology industry, and consumer organizations, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has launched a one-stop resource to help you guard against Internet fraud, secure your computer, and protect your personal information. OnGuardOnline.gov provides practical tips on Internet auctions, secure use of Wi-Fi, social networking, and much more.

This site lists “7 Practices for Safer Computing”:

1. Protect your personal information. It's valuable.
2. Know who you're dealing with.
3. Use anti-virus and anti-spyware software, as well as a firewall, and update them all regularly.
4. Be sure to set up your operating system and Web browser software properly, and update them regularly.
5. Protect your passwords.
6. Back up important files.
7. Learn who to contact if something goes wrong online

While those 7 steps aren't new information, they do serve as a good reminder. The website also offers a great list of resources that includes interactive activities, a glossary of common terms, and a database of software tools available to help protect your computer and your identity. Another valuable resource on this website is their collection of videos and tutorials. One of particular interest these days is the video titled “Teaching Kids to Be Safe Online.”

So take a minute and click over to OnGuardOnline.gov!

Have a web tip you'd like share? Send it to ajhughson@ag.tamu.edu! Please be aware that if a tip doesn't make it in right away, we'll save it for future use.

Helpful Links

Possible URLs to link from your Websites this Month:

- **FCS** - Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Association of Texas - <http://www.fcstat.org/>
- **AG and Natural Resource** - Texas Committee on Natural Resources - <http://tconr.home.texas.net/>
- **4H** - 4-H Grants Blog - <http://4hblogs.org/grants/>

Other useful links:

- **EIT Learning Resources:** <http://eit.tamu.edu/resources.html>
- **EIT Tech Ops Blog:** <http://tceblogs.tamu.edu/wtexas/>
- **The Brazos Valley Macromedia Users Group :** <http://bvmmug.tamu.edu>
- **The Brazos Valley Web Guild:** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bvweb/>

Tip of the Month: Adobe Download Manager

by Aimee Sandifeer

You take your car in for regular oil changes, tire rotations, and brake checks. You know that you need to run periodic updates on your computer as part of a good maintenance plan. You know to update Windows and your virus protection, but did you know you also need to update your Adobe? Yes, Acrobat Reader has updates that should be run. Maybe you've been prompted when you open a PDF that Adobe has updates to run, but weren't really sure what to do about it, so the updates were ignored. While this isn't a disaster it can cause inconveniences down the line.

So what exactly is Adobe Download Manager? The Adobe Download Manager works directly with Adobe servers to help you manage the process of downloading Adobe Reader files. These files can be security updates or files to correct bugs/glitches in the current version of the software. The Download Manager will inform you of what updates are available and let you choose which ones to install. The following screenshots will illustrate this process.

Step 1: Starting the Download Manager (if it didn't prompt at startup)

- Go to "Help" on the Menu Bar
- Select "Check for Updates" (Figure 1)

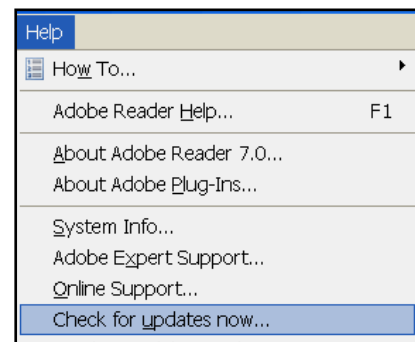


Figure 1

Step 2: Available Updates Listed

- A list of available updates will be presented (Figure 2)
- An asterisk (*) indicates a critical update
- A description of the selected update is given at the bottom of the dialog box

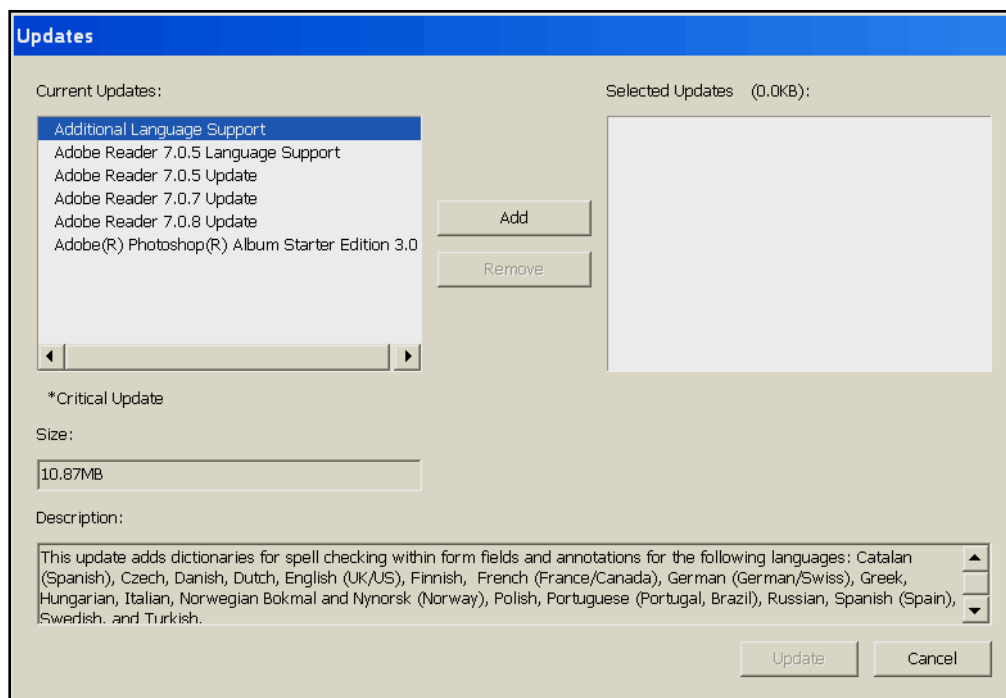


Figure 2

Tip of the Month: Adobe Download Manager (continued)

Step 3: Select Updates

- Click on an update in the “Current Updates” column to select it
- Click the “Add” button in the center to add to the “Selected Updates” column (Figure 3)
- To remove a selected update, click on it in the “Selected Updates” column and then click “Remove” (Figure 4)
- Once all updates are selected, click the “Update” button in the lower right corner of the dialog box

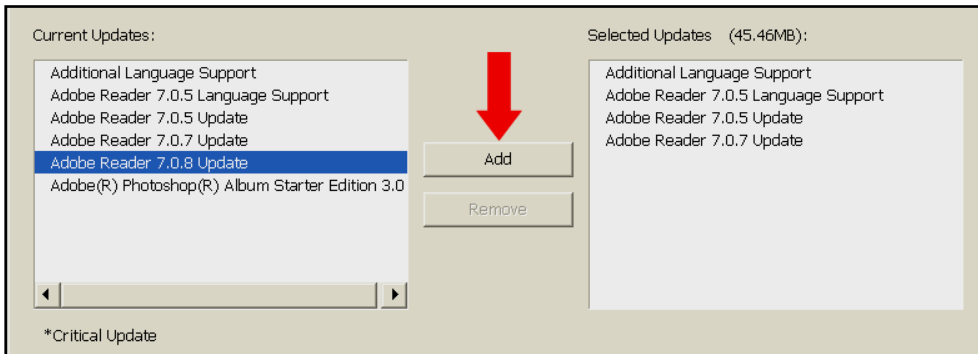


Figure 3

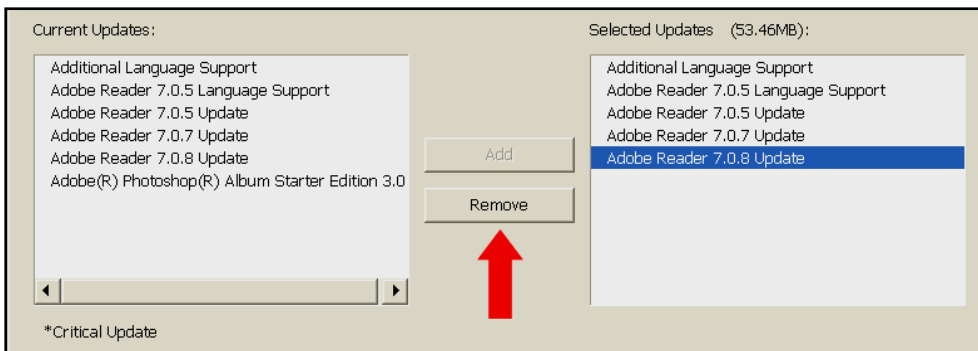


Figure 4

Step 4: Instruction Prompt

- When you click “Update” a prompt providing the Instructions will appear (Figure 5)
- The Adobe Download Manager will download all updates first
- Click “OK” to continue the process

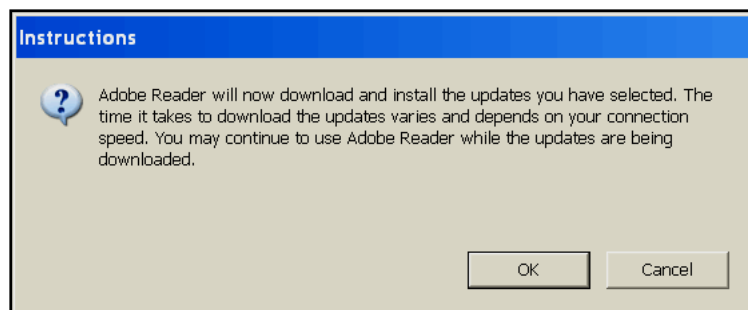


Figure 5

Tip of the Month: Adobe Download Manager (continued)

Step 5: Adobe Reader Update Manager Download

- This dialog box indicates the download progress (Figure 6)
- Make sure that the “Download only when my Internet connection is idle” box is NOT checked (if it is checked, click on it once to uncheck)
 - An idle Internet connection means you are not browsing the web, not checking email, not accessing the Internet in any way
 - If this box is checked and you are using the Internet, the download process will stop and start (resulting in a longer download time)
- The “Minimize to Tray” button will allow the download process to continue, but remove the progress indicator from your screen

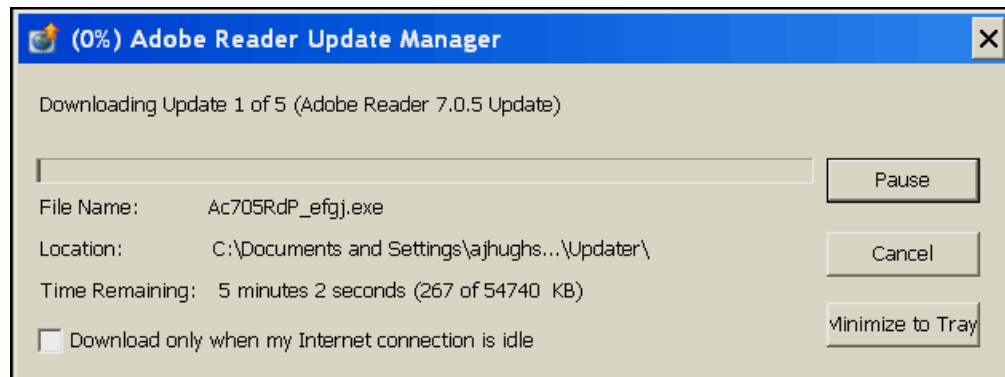


Figure 6

Step 6: Select Updates to Install

- Once the updates are downloaded, the “Select Updates to Install” prompt appears (Figure 7)
- By default, all of the downloaded updates are selected
- If you decide to not install a particular update, simply uncheck the box to the left of it
- Click “Install Now” to install selected updates
- Some updates may require a restart – make sure to save all work that you have open to guard against losing it during a reboot

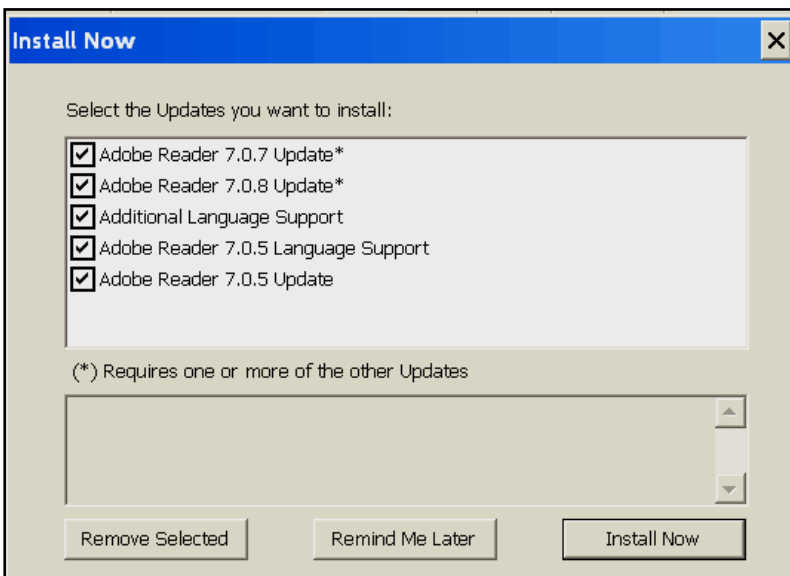


Figure 7

Remember to check for updates regularly and keep your Adobe Reader performing at its best!

Have a tip you'd like to share? Send it to ajhughson@ag.tamu.edu.