



# The Training Post

www.nj.gov/csc

Fall Edition

October 2021



## Leveling Out to Level Up

### Striking Your Balance

Happy Fall y'all! There are subtle hints that autumn is here: occasional cooler temperatures, the smell of bonfires, and football is back. While summer may leave us with lasting memories, we know it's time to prepare for what lies ahead.

In our last newsletter, we focused on "not waiting for the perfect moment...", and diving in." Which brings us to our focus for this edition; what happens after you

take the dive? You may feel a sense of accomplishment, or dismay because you wanted a better result. While it's useful to reflect on your actions and note possible improvements, don't get stuck in this pondering phase. Instead, it's more self-empowering and productive to think about your next move and incorporate what you learned from your previous experience. Basically, it's a balancing act.

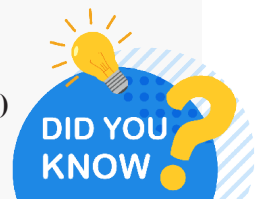
In this edition of **The Training Post**, we want you to level out to level up with our featured training and development opportunities, professional growth advice, and beneficial updates and tips for the Learning Management System (LMS) and ePAR.

“  
Every next level of your life will demand a better version of you.  
– ELEVATE YOUR MINDSET

### New Releases >

In each edition of **The Training Post**, be sure to check here for a list of highly recommended Quarterly Courses, Specials, and Training Promotions.

1. **Business Objects 4.2 Web Intelligence HR Novice**  
Dates: November 9, 10  
Location: Civil Service Commission
2. **\*Personnel Management Information Seminar (PMIS)**  
Dates: November 18  
Location: Civil Service Commission
3. **Understanding Title 4A: State**  
Dates: October 26, 27  
Virtual training available via the LMS
4. **Understanding Title 4A: Local**  
Dates: December 7, 8  
Virtual training available via the LMS



October is National Book Month?

\*Online component assigned with confirmed registration



## Instructor Spotlight



### Dr. John Decker

“Everyone gets called on, and everyone participates in my classes.”

Because successful training programs are not just about content, each edition of **The Training Post** will spotlight an individual who has been involved in one or more of the many professional development programs offered by CLIP.

In this edition, we highlight the New Jersey Certified Public Manager (NJCPM) Program, instructor and Capstone Advisor Dr. John Decker.

He began his training career 20 years ago as a Field Training Officer, instructing fellow police officers and later transitioned to facilitating municipal in-service training on a variety of topics. Recruited as an instructor for the NJCPM Program in 2014, Dr. Decker’s experience as a NJCPM graduate enhanced his ability to relate to students as well as the program.

His familiarity with course topics enables him to effectively prepare and deliver instruction in conjunction with advising students about assignments, projects, and group activities. He develops a synergistic relationship with students and stated, “I let them know right from the beginning, on the first day, that

I know what they are going through and I am here to help you succeed through the program.” Applying his “no one can hide” approach, Dr. Decker noted, “everyone gets called on and everyone participates in my classes.”

Proclaiming the uniqueness of the NJCPM Program, Dr. Decker conveyed that one of, “the benefits the NJCPM Program provides to public sector professionals is its diverse student population.”

He further noted that, “converging numerous forms of government professionals into a single class gives each of the students a better understanding of the role their peers play in the larger framework of government.” Students establish “a sense of fellowship as the cohort progresses and it is satisfying to see.”




### Using PowerPoint Slides as a Virtual Background

Are you ready to transform your virtual background in Zoom using your PowerPoint slides? Zoom has made this possible by allowing the presenter to overlay their video onto PowerPoint slides.

In doing so, you will maintain a virtual presence with your audience while creating an enriching environment.

But before you try this feature, ensure you have the 5.2.0 (or later) software update. Also note that sounds, transitions, and animations are not supported so they will not function.

To try this feature, follow the steps below:

1. Turn on your video.
2. Click the **Share Screen** button  on your meeting toolbar.
3. Select **Advanced**.
4. Click **Slides as Virtual Background**.

5. Select your PowerPoint Presentation slides.

6. Click **Open**.

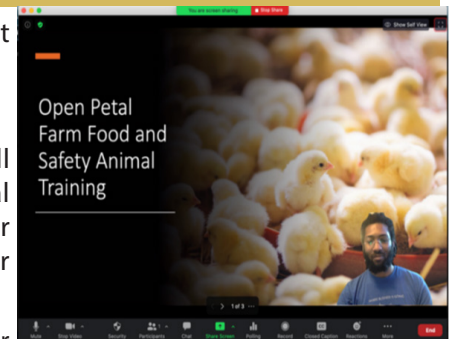
Presto! Your slides will display as your virtual background with your video overlaid on your presentation slides.

To go back or advance your presentation, click the < or > arrows on the presentation controls.

You also can reposition and resize your video. Click ... on the presentation controls and select *Resize My Video*.

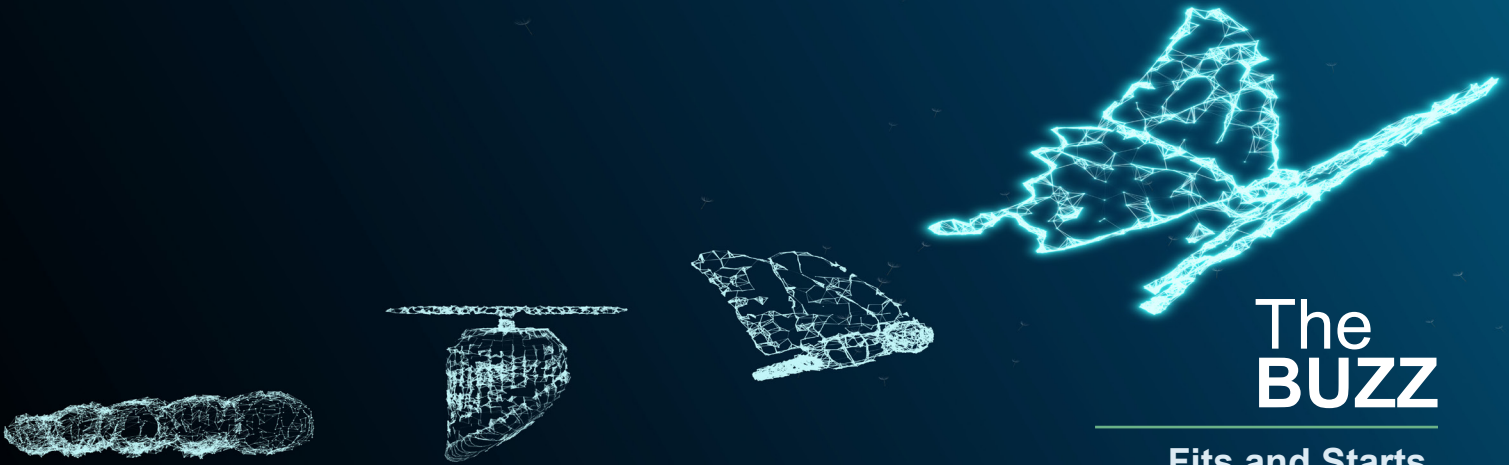
Click one corner of the image and drag your mouse to resize.

To reposition, click and drag the center of the image.



When you’re finished presenting, click the **Stop Share** button at the top of the screen.

Levelling up your virtual background with your PowerPoint slides will help to maintain a virtual presence and provide a connection to your audience.



# The BUZZ

## Fits and Starts

At CLIP, we strive to provide our participants with innovative and cutting-edge learning experiences. “The Buzz,” features the latest training trends and noteworthy “buzz” about various professional developmental themes.

Growth is rarerly smooth or consistent. It occurs in fits and starts: large leaps forward, significant stumbles backward, and long periods of stasis. Stock prices follow a similar pattern. They soar, dive, and consolidate within stable price ranges for prolonged periods of time. According to the theory of punctuated equilibrium, the same might be said of evolution. Species evolve and adapt rapidly before reaching equilibrium points where they remain mostly unchanged for many lifetimes.

We can expect our personal and

professional development journeys to follow a similar track. Change is never clean or linear. It’s always messy. We will experience setbacks and hit plateaus, but it’s important to remember that those plateaus aren’t necessarily obstacles to be overcome. Stasis does not mean stagnation. Stocks need to consolidate their gains before tearing to new highs. Species have to reach equilibrium points between periods of change; we have to level out before we can level up.

The process of leveling out gives our minds the time and space necessary to fully internalize the lessons we’ve learned

and skills we’ve acquired. Without this recovery and consolidation period, we run the risk that all of our hard work will be undone and we will lose all the progress we’ve made.

So, take your time. Don’t rush yourself or fret that you’re falling behind because you think you aren’t reaching your development goals fast enough. Like any fitness instructor will tell you, if you work too hard and too fast, you’re going to injure yourself. So always remember that leveling out is natural, and leveling up will eventually follow, because growth is not smooth.

## ePAR Insider: Level Up Your Ratee’s Performance with the Development Plan



Managers and supervisors may consider ePAR as a tool to only evaluate performance; but it is much more than that. Being an effective manager or supervisor entails guiding the progress of your employees’ skills, abilities, and mindsets. One way to accomplish this can be derived from the development plan.

In the Development Plan, specific skill-set training, such as Excel, can be assigned to help your ratee reach the next level of

performance. In addition, training series like “The Growth Mindset” may help propel employees to strive toward their full potential. Finally, curated learning paths such as “Civility and Professionalism in the Workplace” offer online training via the LMS on many of the soft skills that can improve productivity and workplace culture. Take advantage of the many training opportunities available by assigning them in the ePAR Development Plan and guide your team to “level up”.



Why are cranberries often grown in bogs? (see p. 6)

- A. Deters natural predators
- B. Easier to harvest
- C. Adds a tourist attraction
- D. Looks better in photos





## Level Up Your Growth Potential

### Four Key Workplace Mentors

A workplace mentor is traditionally considered an experienced person in your industry who is able to guide your professional development. The typical goals of this relationship are to help you avoid pitfalls and provide advice about your career trajectory. However, this conventional mentorship ideal has expanded to include different types of individuals.



So, it's time to expand your possibilities. By looking for mentors at different career levels, you can build a strong, diverse network. These unique perspectives may help you maintain balance, gain momentum, and have the extra support that propels you ahead.

#### 1. The Coach (above your current level).

Find a person in your organization who can share their experiences with you. They have been in your shoes and can help you to progress. Turn to them with tough work-related issues and for advice with complex ideas or projects.

#### 2. The Cheerleader (at your current level).

There is nothing like getting advice from a colleague. They are in the trenches with you, celebrating the wins, and by your side during the challenges. They just get it. Even though their level of experience and exposure is like yours

they enhance your know-how on a regular basis through collaboration.

#### 3. The Rookie (below your current level).

The person just starting out can provide fresh ideas and methods. Additionally, by paying it forward and imparting your insight with someone trying to learn the ropes, you can establish a more comprehensive level of understanding about the overall organization. Through this reciprocal relationship both of you can gain support and validation.

#### 4. The End-User (the customer level).

The input from the person you are trying to impact is extremely valuable. They can provide feedback on what is and is not working, as well as ideas for how to make improvements.

## LMS Café

The "LMS Café" has something for everyone. In each edition of **The Training Post**, the LMS community can find information on new course releases, blended learning recommendations, and for our LMS administrators, system updates.



### What's Brewing

Annual Cybersecurity Awareness Training

New Jersey Workplace Violence: Recognize, Prevent & Report

*Below, view our CLIP All Access themed courses for the next quarter.*



#### National Bullying Prevention Month

Bystander Intervention

Bystander Intervention: Practical Tips



#### World Kindness Day

Small Acts of Kindness: Create Energy Around You



#### Human Rights Day

8 Keys to a More Respectful Workplace: 02. Act Ethically

### Signature Blends

(\*available with a CLIP All Access Pass)

\*Employee Motivation by Vubiz

Classroom Complement: NJ Supervisory Training Empowering Performance (NJ STEP)

\*Passion for Service Excellence by 7 Dimensions

Classroom Complement: Customer Service



# Writing @ Work



## Level Off and Determine Your Writing Destination

Stride forward with a firm steady step..." This paraphrase of author Eileen Caddy's quote parallels the optimistic view we adapted to "dive" back into the workplace. And, like

a seasoned aquanaut, the next step after diving is to "level off" and move in a certain direction. Of course, as business writers, we can do this with more time to think about our destination than the water diver.

Specifically, we can use this time to focus on reflective questions to decide the path we'll pursue to achieve

writing goals. So, as you continue to "level off," consider the following example questions:

- How do I make my writing more concise but still informative? Include examples and quotes.
- In what ways can I apply tone to better tailor my writing to different readers?
- What techniques can I apply to enhance my wording choices?
- Do I need to better understand the rules for using certain punctuation marks?

Business writing is a skill that we continuously refine over time, so level off and decide the direction to your next writing destination.

If you have questions or suggestions for topics you would like to see in **The Training Post**, email us at [Trainingfeedback@csc.nj.gov](mailto:Trainingfeedback@csc.nj.gov).

Click the icon to subscribe to **The Training Post**



### Credits

LaVida Stalworth, Chief Editor: Introduction, LMS Cafe  
Janet Thompson, Editor: Writing @ Work and Professional  
Charleen Moore, Writer: #TechTips  
Eugene Lanzoni, Writer/Designer: The Buzz  
David Allen, Writer: ePAR Insider  
Tira McCants, Writer: Spotlight  
Melissa Czaplicki, Writer: Professional Development Toolkit

## Question Corner

### FALL Question:

**What is your favorite fall activity or hobby?**  
(Click here to respond)

Respond to be entered into our FREE Training Drawing. By submitting to the Question Corner, you are authorizing CLIP to publish your response.

[Respond >](#)



**DID YOU KNOW?**

December 10th is Human Rights Day?



**CONGRATS!**

Congratulations to **Tammy Perilli** from NJ Motor Vehicle!

You have been selected to receive the "Free Single-Day Training".

Thank you to all of our Fall "Question Corner" respondents.

Summer Question: What is your favorite Olympic Sport?

[Summer Responses >](#)





# Leveling Out to Level Up

State of New Jersey  
Governor Phil Murphy | Lieutenant Governor Sheila Y. Oliver  
Civil Service Commission  
Chair/Chief Executive Officer Deirdre L. Webster Cobb, Esq.

## Trivia Answer

B. Easier to harvest

## References

Professional Development Toolkit:

McGee, N. April 14, 2021. Leveling Up Mentorship: Four People Who Can Help Support Your Growth. American College of Education.

Liu, B. The 4 Types of Mentors You Need in Your Life to Succeed. Inc.com Retried September 2021 from The 4 Types of Mentors You Need in Your Life to Succeed | Inc.com

TechTips:

Zoom (2012, August 27). Sharing Slides as a Virtual Background. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360046912351-Sharing-slides-as-a-Virtual-Background>

The Buzz:

How to Identify a Stock Under Consolidation? (<https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/120414/how-do-i-identify-stock-under-consolidation.asp#:~:text=Consolidation%20Strategies-,What%20Is%20Consolidation%3F,opportunities%20until%20another%20pattern%20emerges.>)

Did evolution unfold steadily, or in fits and starts? - Genetic Literacy Project (<https://geneticliteracyproject.org/2017/06/22/evolution-likely-not-unfold-steadily-fits-starts/>)

Punctuated equilibria - Scholarpedia ([http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Punctuated\\_equilibria](http://www.scholarpedia.org/article/Punctuated_equilibria))