This edition:

The Talent Development team is pleased to offer relevant and meaningful learning opportunities to Virginia Tech.

For this edition of On Topic, we’ve chosen to focus on three different times in our lives, our Past, our Present, and our Future.

Whether we think about them or not, these three times work on a sliding scale, affecting us to different degrees throughout our lives.

Our past is what shapes us and makes us who we are, our present is who we choose to be in the moment and controls where we are heading, and our future is our goals and motivations, who we want to be as we mature and what we want to look back on as we age.

The Past (Who we were)

The past is a tricky thing. For some of us, we don’t really like it. Some days we want to forget the past and who we were, wishing we were born in another place or time, or even dreaming we were someone else.

For others, we like who we were, maybe some more so than who we are today. We spend our days wishing to reclaim that version of ourselves, our past successes, accomplishments, and sense of confidence.

Either way we can’t really change our past; it’s what made us who we are today. So instead of forgetting it or chasing it, we need to accept it. For the things we like, we can use them to build confidence and motivation. We’ve done it before and we can do it again. When it comes to the things we don’t like, it’s not so simple. We may try to forget them or bury them deep down, but really what we need to do is to learn from them. Reflect on what we don’t like or did wrong, understand why and resolve to do better the next time.

Many more development opportunities and resources are available for faculty and staff at Virginia Tech.

See what is available HERE!

- Fooled by Experience - We interpret the past—what we’ve experienced and what we’ve been told—to chart a course for the future. It seems like a reasonable approach, but it could be a mistake.

- How to nail the question, “What did you learn in your last job?” - Rehearse a few of these tips before your next big interview and impress your potential employer in just a few sentences.

- The Power of Regret - Find out how regret, our most misunderstood emotion, can be the pathway to our best life.

- Why You Should Make Time for Self-Reflection (Even If You Hate Doing It) - You can become more reflective by practicing a few simple steps.
The Present (Who we are)

Who are you right now? Are you the person you want to be? Are you doing something that brings you joy or satisfaction? In many ways, the present should be about balance: balance between personal and professional life; balance between reflecting on the past; planning for the future and living in the now; and balance in having a plan but understanding that things change and adapting to whatever comes your way.

**How to Master a New Skill** - Mastering new skills isn’t easy, and these days it’s not optional either. Here are some principles to follow in your quest for self-improvement.

**The ‘Great Resignation’ Is Really the ‘Great Discontent’** - People are calling it the “Great Resignation” or “The Great Reshuffle,” and as the Gallup data show, it’s less an industry, role or pay issue than it is a workplace issue. The highest quit rate is among not engaged and actively disengaged workers.

**Flow** - Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s famous investigations of “optimal experience” have revealed that what makes an experience genuinely satisfying is a state of consciousness called flow.

**Virginia Tech Resources**
- **Professional Development Circles** - Share knowledge, support one another, build connections, and grow your leadership knowledge and skills.
- **Faculty and staff caucuses** - Virginia Tech has ten faculty/staff caucuses representing differing communities at the university.

The Future (Who we want to be)

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? How about 10 or 20? Can you imagine it? The future is our hopes, our dreams, and our goals. Some of us are closer than others; sometimes we get there and realize it wasn’t what we thought it would be. Sometimes we don’t know where we’re going, but as long as we keep moving and growing we know we’ll find something that catches our interest. And some of us might never get there, but as long as we have a plan, at least the journey should be fun.

**How to get better at the things you care about** - In this TED Talk Eduardo Briceño reveals a simple way to think about getting better at the things you do, whether that's work, parenting or creative hobbies.

**Designing your life** - In this book, Bill Burnett and Dave Evans show us how design thinking can help us create a life that is both meaningful and fulfilling, regardless of who or where we are, what we do or have done for a living, or how young or old we are.

**WINGS: The 5 primary skills for the future of work** - In a fast-changing world, what are the five vital skills you will need to be successful in your career? Walter will reveal how to develop what he calls your WINGS to embrace your future.

Constructive feedback welcome!
We work hard to bring you interesting and relevant content, and we welcome your input. So let us know what you’d like to see in future editions.