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From aspiration to achievement: How one CU staffer used Percipio to earn a career-boosting certification [1]

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Professional development doesn't always require a classroom — sometimes, it begins with a spark of curiosity and the right tools at your disposal.

When Julia Wagenaar began exploring ways to grow in her role as a business services senior professional for the Rocky Mountain Multisystemic Therapy (MST) Network at the Kempe Center [3] on the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, she considered all potential options, not just a formal university course or degree.

Instead, she wanted a practical, recognized credential that aligned with her work in project management and coordination. That search led Wagenaar to the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) certification [4] — a stepping stone to the more advanced Project Management Professional (PMP) credential [5].

But like many professionals, Wagenaar faced a common barrier: cost.

"A lot of prep materials are hundreds of dollars. Being able to have Percipio as a resource that's free to university employees was really great and made it accessible to me," she said.



Julia Wagenaar, MBA, MST Associate Program Manager, Rocky Mountain MST Network.

Flexible learning, real results

CU's investment in learning platforms like Skillsoft Percipio helps employees overcome financial and logistical barriers to growth.

Percipio's self-paced structure allowed Julia to study on her own time, without the pressure of subscription deadlines or rigid course schedules. She used Percipio to fulfill the CAPM's education requirement, using the platform's certification courses in combination with Coursera [6] — another university-provided learning and test prep resource — to log the necessary hours.

"I liked that it was broken down into smaller modules. It was easier to organize and more interactive than just reading a textbook or PDFs," Wagenaar said.

Percipio's built-in features — like progress tracking, flexible navigation and the ability to revisit content — made it easy to tailor the experience to her learning style.

"For me, I don't always do things in order, so sometimes I would jump around. I had a study plan with an outline of the different things that I needed to study so I could flexibly jump around. If I needed to rewatch something or go back to a concept I struggled with, it was easy to do," Wagenaar said.

Resources that make a difference

Access to high-quality, no-cost resources can be a game-changer for exam prep.

Beyond the extensive collection of video modules and quizzes, Wagenaar found Percipio's digital bookshelf [7] quite helpful. The digital bookshelf provides unlimited free access to textbooks that usually require expensive subscriptions.

"(Textbook subscription costs) all add up. It's amazing what you can find with the resources CU provides," Wagenaar said.

She also appreciated the real-world application built into the platform's practice questions.

"A lot of exam questions aren't just definitions — they're applications and scenarios. The practice questions really helped me test my understanding," she said.

A certification that paid off

When considering what a certification could add to her career path, Wagenaar approached her supervisor and together they set a professional development goal of passing the CAPM exam. When the time came to sit for the exam, she was a bit nervous considering project management was somewhat new to her. But, due to her consistent and effective studying, she passed the CAPM exam on her first try — an achievement that helped her earn a

promotion.

“(The certification) was a tangible thing that I was able to show like, ‘Hey, this is a way I have grown in this role.’ I’m still on the same team and have the same supervisor, but now I’m more involved in project oversight,” she said.

The experience also sparked a deeper interest in project management. Wagenaar is now preparing for the advanced Project Management Professional (PMP) certification exam [8] using Percipio’s PMP boot camp course [9], which, like the CAPM program, fulfills the certification’s classroom hours requirement.

CU’s professional growth and development offerings support not just individual goals but broader career transformation.

With her new certification, Wagenaar is helping her team implement Wrike, a robust project management software suite. “Understanding project management concepts has been really helpful in figuring out how Wrike can support our work,” she said.

Advice for others? Start small, stay consistent and make it your own

Wagenaar encouraged other CU employees to take advantage of CU’s learning tools —especially if they’re unsure where to start.

“If you feel there’s a skill gap or a growth opportunity, you can probably find the resources through one of the university’s platforms,” she said. “Set a study schedule — even if it’s just small chunks of time. Put it in your calendar and use the flexibility of Percipio to your advantage. Whether you take notes, make outlines or use flashcards, find what works for you.”

Take the next step in your professional journey today

Ready to develop your skills and experiences further? Explore Skillsoft Percipio’s certification offerings [10].

Review CU’s other professional development resources [11] to find the optimal platform or combination of platforms for your specific goals. Or visit The CU Advantage website [12] to learn more about all the professional growth and training resources available to you.

Percipio [13], Professional Development [14]
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