

Development Plan Checklist

Development plans offer your employees the opportunity to identify the strengths and development areas that merit their attention and yours. Not all development plans are created equal, however. A good development plan focuses on the development of a few skills, balances the need to develop both strengths and development areas that are tied to your performance objectives, has concrete action steps, and sets gradual, realistic, and achievable success measures.

As you and your employees think about their development plans, remember the following:

- 1) **Performance and Learning Are Linked to Each Other:** Your employees can build the skills they need by focusing on the work experiences and assignments that are most closely tied to their performance objectives.
- 2) **While the Skills May Change, the Strengths Employees Draw upon Do Not:** The strengths that have made an employee successful in the past do not go away. Although employees may need to address development weaknesses, do not forget to continue to build their strengths.
- 3) **Employee Success Depends on the People Asked to Help Them:** By sharing their development goals with you, their peers, a mentor, or their direct reports, your employees can check in at various points to make sure that they are making a strong plan.

The checklist on the following page is designed to assist employees as they build their own development plans. It ensures your employees are creating plans that build skills they need to improve their current performance and to reach career goals. More importantly, it builds in accountability to make sure that lessons learned are not lessons forgotten.

Distribute the “Development Plan Checklist” to employees as they begin to craft their development plans.

Development Plan Checklist

A good development plan can position you to build both the skills you need to improve your performance in the short term and the skills you will need to achieve your long-term career goals. As you think about creating a development plan, remember three things:

- 1) **Performance and Learning Are Linked to Each Other:** You can build the skills you need by focusing on the work experiences and assignments that are most closely tied to your performance objectives.
- 2) **While the Skills May Change, the Strengths You Draw upon Do Not:** The strengths that have made you successful in the past do not go away. Although you may need to address development weaknesses, do not forget to continue to build your strengths.
- 3) **Your Success Depends on the People You Ask to Help You:** By sharing your development goals with your manager, peers, mentor, or their direct reports, you can check in at various points to make sure that you are making a strong plan.

Once you have completed a draft of your plan, use the checklist below to ensure that your development plan focuses on the right goals, provides concrete action steps, and allow you to measure your progress.

Development Plan Checklist		
Category	Step	Completed
Development Goals	1) Have I shared the plan with my manager and incorporated his/her feedback?	
	2) Do I focus on the skills I'll need to successfully do my job now and those I'll need to achieve my career goals?	
	3) Do I focus on continuing to build my strengths at least as much as I focus on closing any gaps?	
	4) Does this development plan push me to the edge of my "comfort zone"?	
Action Steps	5) Have I identified a clear action plan that will help me reach my development goals?	
	6) Have I made sure that at least 80% of my action steps are tied to my day-to-day job responsibilities and project assignments and fewer than 20% are training programs?	
Success Measures	7) Have I shared my development goals with others so I can measure progress along the way?	
	8) Have I created realistic and achievable metrics to measure my progress?	
	9) Have I tied the metrics to realistic deadlines to assess my progress?	
	10) Have I created milestones to ensure I'm on track?	

NOTE TO MEMBERS

This project was researched and written to fulfill the research request of several members of CEB and as a result may not satisfy the information needs of all member companies. We encourage members who have additional questions about this topic to contact the Member Support Center at HRMidsized.Support@executiveboard.com for further discussion. The views expressed herein by third-party sources do not necessarily reflect the policies of the organizations they represent.

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