

Creating a Strong Professional Development Plan Guide

This document serves as a guide, providing you with the most crucial aspects of how to create a professional development plan. When asked to specify the most effective development opportunities, the majority of leaders identified on-the-job-learning and coaching/mentoring as critical to their success and desire to stay in their organizations. The research confirms that teams that focus on growing and developing their people in intentional and effective ways are retaining their most talented individuals in an environment where talent is hard to come by. This guide outlines best practices for creating highly effective and strong professional development plans that retain and grow the top talent in your organization.

Six “Must-Haves” for Professional Development Plans

- Define Role-Specific Competencies
- Utilize the 70-20-10 Model
- Co-Creation & Joint Accountability
- Identify Measures of Success
- Revisit Regularly & Build Habit
- Connect to Year-End Evaluation

How to Create Strong PD Plans

| MUST HAVE | WHAT IS IT? | BEST PRACTICES |
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| Define role-specific competencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of shared competencies for hiring, performance evaluations, and professional development. • Ensures that development areas are not arbitrary, but are aligned to the functional role and/or necessary leadership skills of the employee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-15 competencies per role • Balance of functional and leadership competencies • Defined and agreed upon at beginning of fiscal |

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| | | <p>year or evaluation cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select from those the 2-3 competencies critical for the employee's development |
| Utilize the 70-20-10 model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Center for Creative Leadership pioneered the 70-20-10 approach, which has three times more impact on employee performance. ● Focuses 70% of development on on-the-job training, 20% on coaching and mentoring, and 10% on formal training and self-study. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Job-embedded training (i.e. stretch project, leading a team meeting, etc.) ● Mix of 2-3 project throughout the year that addresses key development areas |
| Co-creation/ Joint Accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Both the manager and the employee invested in the design and creation of the plan, which leads to higher engagement, deeper job satisfaction, and increased likelihood of execution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboratively develop the plan in-person ● Employee is responsible for the document and should be generating ideas in the plan document ● Manager comes to the meeting with ideas for development opportunities, but the employee ultimately has final say |

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| <p>Identify Measures of Success</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures of success are clear, measurable goals that will be reached once the professional development plan is complete (i.e. readiness to take on a new responsibility, a new direct report, etc.). • Two types of success measures are vital: outcomes based measures and process based measures (i.e. check in once a month around lessons learned, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively identify what success at the end of the plan will look like • Use SMART goals to set measures of success (specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, time bound) • Includes two types of success measures: 1) project outcome measures and 2) development process measures |
| <p>Revisit Regularly/ Build Habit</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established progress checkpoints happen consistently throughout the implementation of the plan to build a sustainable habit. • Ensures accountability and allows for problem solving, coaching, and feedback. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively identify regular progress checkpoints • Add this as a section to weekly check-ins (1-2x/month) • Share plan with leadership team and team members as appropriate who can help highlight growth for employee • Manager takes responsibility for ensuring follow |

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| | | <p>up on progress checkpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicate time to both project review and staff reflection |
| <p>Connect to Year-End Evaluation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensures that development areas are not arbitrary, but are aligned to the organizations’ strategic priorities and the priorities for this specific role.• Connecting the plan to the qualitative and quantitative metrics used to assess performance of employees allows for increased focus, investment, and follow through. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include qualitative and quantitative metrics in plan that are used to measure employee performance• Set timeline to end prior to end of year evaluation in order to include results |