BUILDING A DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This quick reference will help supervisors and employees work together to build a Development Plan; that is a formal set of developmental goals with action steps and targeted completion dates, established at the beginning of the performance year.   As we use the term here, development includes "training" (learning directed toward specific objectives such as following certain regulations or procedures or the application of an acquired skill) and "education" (learning directed at broader objectives such as becoming a more effective supervisor or better leader).

Key concepts of a successful development plan:

➢ The employee owns the plan;
➢ The supervisor and employee have jointly created the plan;
➢ The supervisor and employee have realistically balanced benefits with costs;
➢ The supervisor is committed to helping the employee accomplish the plan;
➢ The plan is outcome-focused, not activity-focused (i.e., shows how both supervisor and employee will know when the employee has improved);
➢ Development goals are not rated during the performance review—they are part of planning; and
➢ Training is not the only way to develop. In fact, the majority of development occurs "on-the-job." So, focus on the outcomes that are hoped to be achieved, and then plan multiple ways in which to achieve them.

How to build a development **plan** (advice for the employee):

First: Gather input to determine where to focus:

➢ Performance Outcomes: What new skills or behaviors are required to achieve this year's objectives?

➢ Development areas: Based on performance feedback from past years, where have you fallen short?

➢ Career planning: What new skills and behaviors should you work on to prepare for your future career?

Second: Define one to four development goals for Job Duties, Universal Performance Dimensions, and Job Specific Competencies that will build skills for today or prepare you for future roles and record those goals in the "Development Needs" column for each area of the three areas.

Third: Identify development activities that support achievement of your goals. Consider:

Experience Learning Through Doing	Education Learning Through Resources	Exposure Learning Through Others
Activities such as: • Challenging on-the-job assignments • Job rotation programs • Mentoring others • Project teams/task forces • Conducting research • Tackling a start-up or "fix it" issue in your area	**Activities such as:** • Instructor led courses (on or off campus) • e-Learning programs • Formal education programs • Professional associations and/or certifications • Reading professional books, magazines or journals	**Activities that offer you the opportunity to learn from others, such as:** • Mentors/role models • Feedback, coaching • Visibility with key leaders/projects/teams • Networking

Fourth: Record the selected developmental activities in the "Action Steps" column for each area of the Performance Management Planning and Review Form (Job Duties, Universal performance Dimensions, and Job Specific Competencies); these items should be the actual learning activities that will support the "Development Needs" or goals; also fill in the "Targeted Implementation Dates."

Fifth: Go over the development portion of the plan with your supervisor.

Tips

➢ Supervisors and employees should have regular development check-in discussions to see how things are going.

➢ A plan is only as good as the energy behind it, so it must reflect real needs, the employee's real interests, and real targets to achieve.

➢ Development activities should focus not only on the job a person currently holds but also on jobs that may be of interest to the person in the future. All too often development activities focus only on short-term career aspirations (e.g., receiving a promotion within a job family), but the central focus of development should be towards longer-term career aspirations. Employees interested in higher paying job opportunities share a responsibility in preparing themselves for the jobs with higher levels of responsibility through such activities as university courses or job enlargement. Development plans should include both short- and long-term goals that "plan for the future."

Adapted from Supervisor's Performance Management Toolkit, Auburn University
http://www.auburn.edu/administration/human_resources/compensation/ccp/pm.htm