

WE KNOW

HUMAN RESOURCES

DEVELOPING A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

QUICK GUIDE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Below are some guidelines to assist you in forming a Professional Development Plan for employees.

- **Defining career goals and objectives**
Take some time to sit down with your employees to identify their career goals and objectives within your organisation. Clearly write out their one year and five year career goals and what they will need to do in order to achieve them. The employees may require additional support from their line manager and peers to achieve those goals. Identify the people that will be key in their career development.
- **Identify the skills and work experience needed to achieve goals**
Write down the type of additional work experience and skills your staff will need in order to achieve their career objectives. Identify any additional continuing education classes your employees may need, conferences that you would like them to attend and projects you would like your employees to work on.
- **Framing career goals within the context of current employment**
Employees' career objectives should fit in with your company objectives. You should be able to define career objectives that will be beneficial for both your employees and your organisation. If an employee's goals are out of sync with what you want to accomplish within your current organisation, this should be a signal to you that this employee may want to look for change.
- **Set up a career goal accomplishment line**
In order to accomplish your employee's goals they will need to break down their goals into smaller tasks with well-defined timelines. Set up a calendar schedule with target dates for accomplishing each task.
- **Work with their line/direct manager to set up clear expectations**
If employees want to be promoted to a higher level within the next year, both you and they will need to work with their manager to identify what is expected of them and how they can achieve that particular goal. If employees are interested in working on a different project, make sure that you inform them of the process and their manager early on so that you can clearly outline the project expectations. Always keep in mind that employees will need to demonstrate how their particular goal will benefit the organisation.
- **Take initiative**
Once you have identified your employee's career goals, it is both your responsibility and the employee's to be proactive and take the initiative to do what it takes to accomplish their goals. Be willing to adapt and modify yours and the employee's expectations of achievement of those goals according to changing circumstances. Use feedback from their line/direct manager and colleagues to constantly evolve the employee's professional development plan. Sometimes external sources are better able to identify employee strengths, weaknesses and areas for development.

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