

Development Planning Conversation Guide for managers

Growth is essential to the success of every organization and each person.

PURPOSE: The three main types of development planning discussion are:

- Development to achieve current goals
- Development to build their longer-term career
- Development to support succession planning

HOW LONG: Approx. 20 to 30 minutes

HOW OFTEN: When setting goals and as required

Development to achieve current goals

Say something like

- Open warmly: restate the importance of development and outline the agenda.
- Identify two or three priorities over the next six to twelve months. These may be to close a gap or build a strength.
- Put goals in order of priority.
- Identify how success will be measured.
- Confirm any timelines and milestones.
- Plan resources.
- Pre-empt risks.

Development is vital to us all.

What additional skills, experience, or other learning are important in order for you to achieve your goals? I suggest that [X] would be helpful for you; how does that sound?

Which of these is the most important?

What outcome are you aiming at?

When do you expect to achieve this?

What support do you need?

What roadblocks might we need to avoid?

Development to build career direction

Say something like

What career actions look like varies from person to person. Some will be ready to take a five-year view; others will prefer to focus on the next three months. Be ready to:

- Explore their career anchors.
- Plan one to two actions over the coming year.
- Explore their longer-term vision.
- Give examples of potential career paths.
- Support them in spotting opportunities.
- End on a positive note.

What drives your decisions around your career?

What is your career goal?

What do you see as your next step?

What wider development might be useful?

Where are you hoping your job could lead?

Which roles do we have that appeal to you?

Development to support succession planning (as required)

Say something like

- Check they know they have been earmarked for a specific position.
- Explore their understanding.
- Plan development actions.

Your next step is planned to be... you'll need to be able to cover for...

This means you will need [X] competencies.

Let's plan specific actions to help you prepare for the role.

Not all requests can be met, especially where they bring little benefit to the organization. If this happens, show appreciation for their positive attitude to learning and then explain why this particular action isn't possible. Explore an alternative that works for both them and the organization.