

Step 4: Have the Development (IDP) Conversation



“Do more than is required. What is the distance between someone who achieves their goals consistently and those who spend their lives and careers merely following?

The extra mile.”

— Gary Ryan Blair

1. Understanding the Importance of Having a Development Conversation with Your Leader:

- It’s important for you to work (with your direct leader’s support) to create mutually beneficial professional development goals. An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is often the best way to accomplish this. An IDP is a clear statement of your career goals and includes a specific action plan as to how you can achieve those goals through training, new projects, networking, and other methods.
- Career development, in general, is led by you and supported by both your supervisor and the overall organization.
- This Conversation Guide serves as a starting point for your development discussion with your leader and to help you refine your IDP.

2. Setting Up Your Development Conversation:

Schedule the meeting	Partner with your leader to set up a meeting dedicated to discussing your development and the Individual Development Plan you put together.
Review and complete the conversation guide and define your role and responsibilities	A week before the meeting, you should briefly review the purpose and use of the Development Conversation Guide presented on the following page. Also, review the roles and responsibilities on page 3.
Consider additional tips and best practices to help you develop your core competencies	The tips presented on page 4 will help you consider additional options to work on your competency development. While you are having your conversation look for those ideas so that you can incorporate them in your plan.

Development Conversation Guide

What Should I Do Before the Meeting?	Before you set up a meeting with your leader, the best way to prepare is by writing a draft of your own Individual Development Plan (IDP). This brainstorming and preparation process will help you identify your priorities and will point towards ways that your leader can support you in your development.
What Will Happen In the Meeting?	<p>While meetings will vary to some degree, the purpose of an IDP meeting is to come away with a comprehensive plan for your development. This includes goals and competencies as well as action items that will help you pursue those goals with support.</p> <p>Your leader may ask you some questions to start the conversation, and you will have the opportunity to share what you've brainstormed on your own. Then, from both of your thoughts, recommendations, and resource ideas, you will work together to craft an IDP and focus on the different competencies you selected based on your self-assessment.</p>
What will be the outcome of this meeting?	By the end of the meeting, you will have an action plan for your own development. Be sure to schedule a follow-up meeting for reviewing your plan and your progress at a later date.
How Can I Make My IDP Meeting a Success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be prepared. Bring your development needs, your competency self assessment, goals, as well as potential resources discuss.• Be open to feedback and suggestions. Choose a time when neither of you will be distracted by other obligations so you can both stay focused on the development conversation.• Place timelines on your goals and objectives and set specific guidelines for follow-up. Schedule a follow-up meeting to review your progress at a later date.
Who Is Responsible for What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding roles and responsibilities will help create a productive IDP experience. On Page 3 you will find more information.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Learner Role (Your Role)

- Understanding how well your skills, competencies and knowledge match what is needed to complete your job.
- Identifying career goals, development needs, and training or development opportunities geared toward the realization of your goals.
- Assessing individual progress toward reaching your goals.
- Identify how you will demonstrate that you have accomplished your learning objectives and how you will use what you have learned. (Complete all learning experiences)
- Demonstrate how your learning objectives link to your department's vision, mission, and strategic goals.
- Meet with your leader to discuss your plan and finalize your Development Plan.
- Review progress with your leader

Your Leader

- Assess your strengths and development needs. Help you identify training and development opportunities.
- Provide opportunities to discuss and plan your development
- Ensure that training and development opportunities align with your goals.
- Ensure that your goals and development needs align with the organization's goals and objectives.
- Evaluate the outcome of your developmental experiences.

The Organization

- Provide the structure and time for you and your leader to work together on IDPs.
- Supply training and development opportunities for you to expand your skills.
- Ensure that your leader has the training and skills to encourage your career development.

Tips for Your Individual Development Plan

Think of ways to transfer the learning from your IDP into your job

- Learning goes beyond what you pick up in a classroom or other learning situations. The best way to reinforce learning, increase your competence, and improve your performance is to practice and use what you have learned on the job.
- One way to successfully transfer learning back to the job is to consciously identify ways to use what you have learned and to get feedback and coaching from peers, mentors, or others who can observe you using your new knowledge and skills.

Use Mentoring and Coaching

- A mentor is a role model and sounding board who provides confidential guidance. A mentor is someone, not in the employee's chain of command, who is in a position to help with job and career goals, and who is committed to doing so. Mentoring is a constantly evolving process and requires the mentor and protégé to work together as partners to define appropriate mentoring goals and to provide each other with sufficient feedback to enable the achievement of those goals.
- A coach assists in review and self-reflection and helps recipients apply experience, book or classroom knowledge to their current work situation. This reflection helps those receiving the coaching learn how to analyze and resolve the leadership challenges they are facing.
- Leaders at all levels often find a coach especially valuable when facing the challenges of a new leadership position.