



# Development Planning Instructions and Tip Sheet

# Development Planning Myths

## **Myth 1 – Development planning is not related to my job. It is something that I have to do that is separate from my job.**

Development planning should not be something that is separate from your job. The major purpose of development is to improve your ability to perform and have success on the job. As you determine what actions you need to take to develop the competencies/behaviors that you have established in your development goals, you should focus on how to apply that development in achieving your annual performance goals.

## **Myth 2 – There is no relationship between my annual performance goals and my development goals.**

As you determine what areas you want to focus on for your professional development, you should ask yourself – “If I focused my development on only one or two areas (competencies), which areas would have the most impact on my ability to achieve my most important goals this year.” This is one way to prioritize where your developmental goals should be focused. Also, remember, **your annual performance goals are what you do; your development goals focus on how you do them.**

## **Myth 3 – Development planning means that I should focus only on my weaknesses.**

Depending on the weakness, improving your skills may have a small effect on your overall performance. Instead of starting with the idea of improving on weaknesses, ask yourself, “Where will development add the most value to my performance?” While you may want to focus on a weakness, you may also find that strengthening an area in which you are currently proficient might be more beneficial to achieving your goals. Likewise, focusing development efforts on how to leverage an area that is a strength for you may also have benefit in preparing you for future opportunities.

## **Myth 4 – It is my leader’s responsibility to develop me.**

Although your leader does have a role in providing for your development, the ultimate responsibility is up to **you**. You need to commit to relevant development goals and then invest the time and effort to achieve them. Your leader needs to set clear expectations and provide appropriate resources and support to help you succeed.

# Creating Your Development Plan

## 1. Deciding where to focus your development efforts (page 4 of the Professional Development Plan)

The bottom line for determining on what area(s) you will focus development relates to the following question:

*Where will you see the greatest impact on your success if you focus on one to three areas for development?*

To answer this question, you will need to reflect on your current skill set and what goals you have to achieve to be successful in your role. This may take a little bit of time up front, but will ultimately make the task of creating your action plan easier in the long run.

### a. Review and assess your knowledge and skills

- ✓ Review the competencies and the behaviors that make up each competency. Consider the Emory core competencies and other competencies specific to your role.
- ✓ Determine your skill level for each competency (or behaviors within a competency) as:
  - Strength to leverage
  - Proficiency to strengthen
  - Weakness to neutralize
- ✓ Consider prior feedback, personal career and/or growth goals, and perceptions of others as they relate to your performance, style, and priorities
- ✓ Consider if there are areas of technical/functional knowledge you need to acquire in order to be more effective
- ✓ Look at the differences between importance for the job and goal achievement, and your current skill set
- ✓ Select between one and three areas on which to focus development attention for the next year -- areas that will have the most impact on achieving your goals.
- ✓ Remember that development does not just mean developing your weaknesses.
- ✓ Make sure that you are motivated to obtain the goal (If you are not motivated or if you don't value the goal, you will have difficulty attaining it.)

**b. List the competencies (or behaviors) on which you will focus your development in the table on page 4, and indicate whether this is a strength to leverage, a proficiency to strengthen, or a weakness to neutralize.**

## 2. Drafting your action plans (pages 5-7):

After selecting the one to three areas on which to focus your development (leveraging a strength, strengthening a proficiency, and or neutralizing an area of weakness), you will need to complete an action plan for each area.

### a. Complete the header section, including

- ✓ Your name
- ✓ Your leader's name
- ✓ The competency (or specific behaviors within a competency) on which your goal will focus

### b. Write your development goal. Your goal should include:

- ✓ What you plan to improve (or leverage)
- ✓ What you will accomplish because you improve this area
- ✓ How you will measure your success

To assist you in writing your goal you will find the following stem language in the block for each development goal:

*"Improve [skill, ability, knowledge]\_\_\_\_\_ so that [what you will be able to do because this is improved]\_\_\_\_\_. I will know that I have been successful when [how you will be able to demonstrate success; measures of success]\_\_\_\_\_."*

### c. Selecting development actions

- ✓ Select a variety of development activities, using the **"70-20-10 Rule"**
  - 70% of developmental activities should be experiential (e.g., seek challenging assignments, focus on current operational goals, look for opportunities outside of work where you can practice the skill, etc.)
  - 20% of development activities should be related to developmental relationships (e.g., role models, mentors, coaches, bosses, supportive others)
  - 10% of development activities should be focused on seeking training on targeted skills (e.g., classroom training, web-based training, reading, attending conferences, etc.)
- ✓ Think about what actions you will need to take right away and what actions you will take over the next several months. Remember improving your skills takes time and you will need to be focusing on what actions to take over the course of the year.
- ✓ Connect as many of the actions you will take to your operational goals and objectives wherever possible.
- ✓ Be as specific as possible when identifying your action steps.

#### **d. Establish target dates**

Identifying and recording specific timeframes for completing actions greatly increase the probability of actually completing the actions.

- ✓ Determine dates for completing discreet actions
- ✓ Determine start and stop dates for continuous actions
- ✓ Provide yourself with reminders of these dates (perhaps log them in your Outlook calendar)

#### **e. Identify the support you will need and potential barriers you will have to overcome**

- ✓ Determine what support you will need to accomplish these activities, such as:
  - Time
  - Additional resources
  - Support from your leader, peers, and/or others
  - On-going feedback
- ✓ Identify potential barriers to accomplishing these activities, and determine ways to eliminate the barriers, such as:
  - ✓ Lack of time
  - ✓ Fear of failure
  - ✓ Feeling stuck
  - ✓ Procrastination

#### **f. Tracking progress and results**

- ✓ Once you have completed your development plans, review and finalize your plan with your leader. Document the progress section showing that the two of you are in agreement on the focus of the plan for each goal.
- ✓ Keep notes on the results you make. (Often maintaining a journal is a great way to not only record results, but also offers a way to ensure time for reflection. These reflections will help to maximize your learning from your experiences.)
- ✓ Share your progress with your leader in update meetings on a quarterly basis. (The quarterly basis is a minimum; you can discuss progress more often if you prefer.)
- ✓ After sharing your progress with your leader, you and your leader will need to initial your progress notes, and indicate the date of the discussion.

# Ensuring Ongoing Development

- ✓ Consider sharing the plan with your team. This not only models great behavior, but also will provide you with the opportunity to get on-going feedback from your team members.
- ✓ Solicit on-going feedback and support from all appropriate sources (e.g., your leader, peers, others you work closely with on committees, task forces, etc.)
- ✓ Review your progress toward your development goals with your leader regularly in update meetings (at a minimum, you should update your leader quarterly on your progress)
- ✓ Reflect on what you are learning and look for other ways to apply your improved skills, for example:
  - Seek experiences in new, complex situations (push your limits)
  - Spend time with experts
  - Cross-train
  - Teach others
  - Serve as a mentor to others
  - Revise your plan as necessary
- ✓ Be a role model for development

## Remember:

- ✓ You, like all employees, are expected to improve your performance and capability year after year.
- ✓ Development is the improvement in your capability to perform in your current job and to perform future roles.
- ✓ Your leader and the organization are here to help you develop and succeed; but, **ultimately, your development is up to you.**