



TIPS, TOOLS & INTELLIGENCE
FOR DEVELOPING TALENT

2017
JOB AID COLLECTION

10 TOOLS TO AID EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE



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Designed for managers at all levels, the tools and templates in this TD at Work job aid collection serve to set the stage for conducting developmental conversations and gauging employees' aptitudes and skill in several areas, including emotional intelligence, change, and technology. These tools also may help you check in on your own thinking about conversations with your employees and change in your organization.

Are you creating the scene for productive and welcoming developmental conversations? Do your direct reports sense that you're dreading the conversation—or that you're relaxed and looking forward to it? Are you and your direct reports open and forthright with each other? Use the guide to “Preparing and Facilitating the Developmental Conversation” to improve the conversation.

What is your contract with yourself? Who and what do you want to become? These are just two questions managers can ask their direct reports to foster employee development. As a manager, you might ask direct reports what they need to know from your organization for their career planning. You'll find many more questions to assist in talent development in the “Questions Tool for Critical Conversations.”

Before the development discussion with your direct report, you can pass along the “Career and Development Discussion Preparation Worksheet.” Not only do the meeting preparation questions ask about desired new projects and assignments, but they also probe further, asking, for example, “What do I hope to accomplish from my development discussion with my manager?”

Plan the work, and work the plan. “My Career and Individual Development Plan” will encourage the outlining of specific concrete steps for accomplishing short- and long-term career goals—including a reminder for the all-important check-in date.

The next several job aids cover more specific aspects of direct reports' skills and aptitude. The first, “Emotional Intelligence Personal Development Plan,” outlines steps to improve your emotional intelligence (EQ). EQ expert Travis Bradberry explains that EQ skills are responsible for 58 percent of performance with all job types.

Change is here to stay in the workplace, but everyone's capacity to handle change is different. How do you know how much change is the right amount—and how much is too much—for your direct reports? “Questions for Determining Employee Comfort With Change” offers guidance. Similarly, “Burnout Assessment” is a tool to delve into your direct reports' readiness to take on more change.

How can technology support your employees' performance? Much of that depends on direct reports' past experience with technology and how best they learn to use new applications, software, and other tools. See a list of questions to consider in “Finding the Digital Motivation Match.”

Many organizations are becoming increasingly scattered, within a city or around the world. In “Managing the Virtual Workforce,” Erika Tedesco explains the nuances of managing remotely. Her “Performance Log Template” is a handy tool for recording date, incident, and feedback for both corrective and praise-worthy behaviors and actions.

Does your team work well together? Do employees support each other and build each other up in conversation? You can use the “Positive Performance Checklist” on your own or to generate a conversation among team members.

In “The Manager's Guide to Employee Development,” David Hosmer writes, “By providing opportunity, guidance, and resources, you can realize the sweeping benefits that inspired employees bring to their role, their work, and their organization.” These 10 tools will help get you there.

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PREPARING AND FACILITATING THE DEVELOPMENTAL CONVERSATION

The following is a list of some possible questions talent development managers can use to assess various aspects of developmental conversations with their direct reports. These questions can be asked, in many cases, of the direct report, but the TD professional may also pose the questions of herself during or after the conversation.

The Conversation	Questions to Ask
1. Getting in the Right State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you in the right state of mind to hold a developmental conversation? • Are you relaxed and in tune with your mind and body? • Is your breathing relaxed and in control? • Is your body relaxed? • Are you sitting comfortably? • Is the environment right to have a conversation?
2. Engaging the Conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you truly present in the conversation? • Are you asking opening questions to put the other person at ease? • To what degree have you shared something of yourself? • How have you demonstrated curiosity? • How is your body language influencing the conversation?
3. Listening and Silence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How focused are you on what the person is saying? • Are you noticing his or her body language and the signals you are receiving? • Are you waiting for the person to stop speaking so you can speak? • What is the degree of silence between each party involved in the conversation? • How comfortable are you with this silence?
4. Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are you engaged in "what," "why," and "who" matters, questions, and discussion? • To what extent are you really drilling beneath the surface to get to the heart of matters? • What is the level of comfort with the style of questioning? • How do you know the level of comfort?
5. Dealing With Roadblocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are you noticing shifts in thinking? • What blockages are appearing and why? • Are you able to reflect back the conversation and identify where the roadblock might have appeared? • Pause and reflect on the approach to questioning and the openness of the dialogue.

QUESTIONS TOOL FOR CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS

Conversation	Sample Questions for TD Managers to Ask
1. Internal Dialogue of Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your contract with yourself? • What is the critical benchmark question you use to test difficult alternatives in work and career decisions? • When new job opportunities arise, what values will you apply to assess whether they are right for you at this time in your life? • Are the career options you envision likely to open up horizons of opportunity or narrow them? • Who and what do you want to become?
2. Systemic Dialogue With Immediate Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will take this team closer to where it wants to go? • What will take each employee closer to where he or she wants to be (both within the organization and outside it)? • What do we do together to ensure an appropriate mix of routine tasks and stretch projects? • What learning can each team member assist colleagues with? • What opportunities can we identify that will assist any (or all) of us to build career-relevant experience and expertise?
3. Employee/Organizational Dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do employees want to know from the company for their own career planning? • What skills and knowledge will become more important and valuable in the future in this organization? • What kind of track record will be valued in the future? • What constitutes talent in this organization? • What can individual employees do to increase their chances of role advancement or movement?
4. Social Networking Dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are you involved in learning communities? • How do you access virtual learning environments? • How do learning communities stimulate ideas and generate interest? • How are you using your resources to support others? • To what extent is that contribution being reciprocated by your fellow learners?
5. HR, Senior Management, and Line Manager Dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How, when, and where is the talent management strategy discussed with the wider team? • What conversations around changes in the business and talent management strategy are happening, at what level, and how, when, and where? • What support is in place to help line managers have developmental conversations with their teams? • How effective is the support provided to encourage these developmental conversations? • What plans do line managers have in place to facilitate the movement of their team around the organization?

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