Conversations of Performance Management

Performance Management at Ohio State
The Second Conversation ~ Development

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The Ohio State University
Office of Human Resources
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Introduction – Welcome to Developing Employees

One of the most important qualities of a leader is the ability and desire to develop employees. Taking an active role in the development of your team demonstrates concern for the future of the organization and commitment and engagement with the goals and values of Ohio State.

Employees need to do their daily work, achieve their annual goals and participate in development opportunities that will build their strengths. A partnership is needed. Employees have a finite amount of time to dedicate to development and managers can play a key role in helping an employee grow.

In this conversation we will discuss how to develop a focused partnership that connects each employee’s talents and skills with the goals and values of our organization.
Develop What?

The second conversation in the performance management process is the development conversation. During this conversation, employees should be asking, “Based on our planning conversation, what do I need to develop?” During this conversation, managers and employees should focus on the expectations and goals as well as the employees’ skills and behaviors. Both the manager and the employee should be considering what is needed to support the employee’s success in their role.

Benefits of Employee Development

There is a well-established case for developing employees. It makes sense for the university, it makes sense for the team, and it makes sense for the individuals concerned.

From the organizational perspective, it is clearly beneficial to make the best of the talent held in your employee base; there is huge competitive advantage in their creativity and imagination. The university also gains in commitment and loyalty from employees.

From the team perspective, harnessing the team’s collective talent maximizes its effectiveness. It also motivates everyone involved to learn, develop, and increase their contribution.

From the individual perspective, development brings new possibilities for career progression as well as personal rewards and recognition for the value that is contributed. Individuals gain a satisfying sense of personal achievement from expanding their own skills and increasing their value to the university.

That some achieve great success is proof to all that others can achieve it as well”
~ Abraham Lincoln
Chapter One – The Development Conversation

To develop an employee is to help an employee grow. It involves building on an employee’s strengths as well as identifying strategies to improve areas of opportunity. It concentrates on the short-term, with a focus on the skills and knowledge necessary for the job the employee holds.

Employee development can happen informally through a caring, exploratory conversation. Development can also be more formal and structured including a planned series of tasks, assignments and training sessions that will enhance an employee’s level of skill and knowledge.

When done effectively, development will:

- Upgrade skills
- Boost confidence
- Enhance knowledge
- Promote willingness to take risks
- Engage and Motivate
- Build trust

Two-Way Communication

Employee development begins with two-way communication. Some questions to consider for managers and employees during a planning or development conversation are:

- What skills and/or knowledge does the employee need to enhance their current performance?
- What tasks and/or knowledge would the employee like to obtain to position them for the future?
- In what new ways would the employee like to see himself/herself contributing to this unit? How can we make that happen?
- How can this employee’s potential be developed?
- What new knowledge or skills do you think I may need to develop?
- What development opportunities do you see for someone with my background?
- Outside of my regular duties are there other things I can do (e.g. join a professional organization, lead a new project, etc.)
- You’ve said I need to improve my ____ skills. Can you provide me with some resources to help me develop those skills?
- I’m interested in attending this training class or professional development opportunity. Can the university pay for this?
- You’ve provided me with some feedback but I feel like we need to meet more regularly. Can we plan to meet monthly?
Two-Way Communication, continued

Employee development – helping employees to stay challenged and keep growing – is an important part of every manager’s job. Development is a two-way commitment that employees and employers make to each other. The manager is committed to support the employee to help them reach their goals and objectives. The employee is committed to continue to grow and develop skills, knowledge and ability. Make time for development conversations with employees and during these conversations:

- Help the employee think about steps he or she can take to achieve their personal or professional goals and objectives that were shared in the planning conversation.

- Ask exploratory questions such as:
  - Describe how you best like to learn
  - What do people say you do best?
  - What talents are you most proud of?
  - What do you wish you had more time to do?
  - What things are you doing that you would like to stop doing or delegate to someone else?
  - What skills, experiences, and/or knowledge would you like to obtain to position yourself for the future?
  - What do you hope to accomplish in the next 6-12 months? This question is a follow-up question to the planning conversation.
  - What aspects of the job interest you most? Least?
  - What would you like to learn about?
  - What tasks and assignments would you like to be involved in to increase your skills?
  - In what new ways would you like to see yourself contributing to this unit?

- Give ongoing coaching and feedback in terms of what they are doing well and where they can be more effective.

- Suggest and support attendance at trainings, conferences, etc.

- Ask employees about lessons learned from formal and informal professional development experiences.

- Reinforce and support the knowledge and skills gained at a workshop or conference.
Chapter Two - Employee Development Model

Development should not be an indiscriminate activity that generates random skills, but rather a focused approach that connects each employee’s talents and skills with the university vision and values. As you think about employee development, this model can help you identify the level of skill expected that an employee needs in a particular position or that an employee might be striving for.

University Values are an integral part of every employee’s role at Ohio State. Our values (Excellence, Collaboration, Integrity and Personal Accountability, Openness and Trust, Diversity in People and Ideas, Change and Innovation and Simplicity in our Work) describe our expected behaviors.

Core Skills are the skills every employee of The Ohio State University and in individual units must be skilled in to continue to be successful. These skills are largely determined by the university’s vision and goals; the individual unit’s vision and goals and the specific expectations and specifications of the position.

Development Opportunities are the general knowledge and skills needed to remain current, professionally aware and highly contributing within a specific field or role. In order to continue to be successful, employees must further develop their skills, knowledge and abilities.
Employee Development Model

Sample Resources to attain or enhance skills

Values:

- New Employee Orientation
- Excellence to Eminence website
- Culture Unfreezing Retreats
- Observing positive role models
- Office of Human Resources Quarterly Training Courses, Online Courses, Tip Sheets and Podcasts
- University Faculty and Staff Assistance Program

Core Skills:

- On-the-job training
- Job Aids
- Ongoing coaching and feedback
- Job Shadowing
- “Stretch” Assignments
- Office of Human Resources Quarterly Training Courses, Online Courses, Tip Sheets and Podcasts
- Office of Continuing Education
- John Glenn School of Public Affairs
- Fisher College of Business
- Wellness Programs
- OSU Leadership Center
- The Women’s Place

Development Opportunities:

- Professional Organizations
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Special Projects
- Continuing Education through Tuition Assistance Program
- University Committees
- Job Shadowing
- Job Rotation
- “Stretch” Assignments
- Networking
Development Worksheet

This worksheet can help managers and employees narrow down the skills, knowledge and abilities necessary for each position. Once the worksheet is completed, the manager and employee should have a conversation to discuss specific development needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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### Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Values:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Excellence</td>
<td>* Diversity in People and Ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Collaboration</td>
<td>* Change and Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Integrity and Personal Accountability</td>
<td>* Simplicity in our Work</td>
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<td>* Openness and Trust</td>
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### Core Skills

Skills, knowledge and abilities that the individual employee must have to be successful in their current position.

**Examples:**
- Job Knowledge
- Specific Technology
- Customer Service

### Development Opportunities

General knowledge, skills and abilities needed to remain current, professionally aware and highly contributing within a specific field or role.

**Examples:**
- Experience working on a committee
- Experience leading a small project
- Experience leading a work team
- Experience presenting at a conference
Manager Assessment: Providing Development Opportunities and Support

Assess your use of these best practices for creating plans and providing developmental opportunities and support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you:</th>
<th>To no extent 1</th>
<th>To a small extent 2</th>
<th>To a moderate extent 3</th>
<th>To a great extent 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know your employees individual strengths, areas of opportunity and interest?</td>
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<td>Provide training opportunities for staff members to develop new skills?</td>
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<td>Allow employees to take risks and learn from mistakes?</td>
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<td>Encourage team members to use their own judgment in making decisions and solving problems?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide time and resources for employees to enhance their current skills, learn new skills and take on new responsibilities?</td>
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<td>Seek alternative methods for development, not just sending employees to training classes?</td>
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<td>Build on employee’s strengths by giving assignments related to their areas of interest?</td>
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<td>Include professional development in performance planning conversations with employees?</td>
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<td>Encourage staff members to initiate tasks or projects they think are important?</td>
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<td>Involve employees in creating a partnership for developing their skills, knowledge and abilities?</td>
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<td>Transfer responsibility for new assignments gradually so that employees do not feel overwhelmed?</td>
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1 Adapted from *Coaching for Development* by M. Minor.

**Scoring:**

30-40: Congratulations! You are implementing many of the best practices.

20-29: Good Work! Ask your employees which of these you should do more of.

Below 20: Include the implementation of these practices in your own performance plan for this year.