



Development Discussions

WORKSHOP GUIDE

CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	2
LEARNING OBJECTIVES	3
FEATURED VIDEOS	3
INTRODUCTION	3
FILM 1 – MICRO GOALS.....	4
FILM 2 – PERFORMANCE VERSUS CAREER DEVELOPMENT.....	5
FILM 3 – QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU THINK ABOUT DEVELOPMENT	6
FILM 4 – APPRECIATING DEVELOPMENT.....	7
FILM 5 – HELPING YOUR MANAGER DISCUSS YOUR DEVELOPMENT	8
FEEDBACK CONVERSATIONS – EXERCISE.....	9

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

When managers develop their staff, benefits begin to flow – performance, motivation, job satisfaction and talent retention all improve.

Unfortunately, there is a problem. Annual appraisal has been the traditional time to consider staff development yet more organisations are shifting emphasis onto frequent one-to-ones, which tend to be focus on short term operational issues. The solution is for managers to recognise and exploit the learning potential of the work staff do.

Consequently, this programme is designed to help managers and staff gain maximum benefit from ‘everyday’ development opportunities.

FEATURED VIDEOS

- Micro goals
- Performance versus career development
- Questions to help staff think about their development
- Appreciating development
- Helping your manager discuss your development

INTRODUCTION

This guide will help you lead a short workshop featuring videos from the Video Arts’ Conversations programme. Each video comes with a series of activities designed around the following structure:

Look – watch the video.

Think – reflect on the content and consider how the messages link to your own experience and goals.

Remember – summarise the key learning points.

These activities will take about 30 minutes to complete. At the end of the Guide is a practical exercise to help bring together all the learning points.

FILM 1 – MICRO GOALS

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

People learn more, and improve their performance more, when:

- They have something relevant and precise to aim for – a goal.
- The goal provides just the right amount of challenge – neither too easy nor too big a ‘stretch’.
- The timescale is just sufficient to achieve the goal.

That is the concept underpinning micro goals – something to aim for that is precise, quick and demonstrably beneficial.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Encourage the group to think about their own experiences by discussing questions such as:

- How many of you have a hobby or interest outside work that involves a degree of expertise and at which you enjoy getting better?
- Which approach tends to result in more reliable improvement – a) just doing it and hoping you get better or b) having something specific to work on?
- How far ahead do you work on that ‘specific something’ – 10 minutes, an hour, a week, a month, most of these timescales simultaneously?
- What would happen if you applied the same ‘micro goal’ approach to something you wanted to get better at in your job?

REMEMBER

Learning and performance improvement happen more easily and reliably when we have something precise to aim for over a short timescale.

- Micro goals are short timescale objectives actioned between one-to-ones.
- To ensure clarity, they need to be specific and descriptive.
- Tailor micro goals to individuals by focusing on developing the knowledge, skill or perspective.

FILM 2 – PERFORMANCE VERSUS CAREER DEVELOPMENT

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Performance development and career development are different. Performance development means improving performance in one's current role; career development means working on the competencies necessary for the next step in a progression of bigger roles.

While performance development can be an integral part of career development, it also exists in its own right. After all, most people enjoy developing their expertise, getting better at what they do and, depending on their employer's policies, getting paid for better performance.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Help the group to think about their own experiences of performance development and career development by discussing questions such as:

- When we help staff get better at what they do who benefits?
- When staff get better at what they do, how naturally does that translate into better performance?
- How does helping staff improve performance in a current job differ from helping staff prepare for a bigger, more challenging job?
- How aware should managers be of the competencies staff need to be eligible for bigger, more challenging jobs? If they are not aware what should they do about it?
- How do managers benefit when they develop staff even when that means some staff move on?

REMEMBER

Reinforce the following points:

- Performance improvement applies to everyone; career development is for people who want to move on to bigger, more challenging roles.
- All managers can, and should, work with staff to continually develop their performance and, where staff are career orientated, to help them develop their careers. However, when it comes to transfers and promotions, managers have to work within organisational procedures.
- Developing staff might mean that they move on. That is not only perfectly normal, it is a sign of a good manager.

FILM 3 – QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU THINK ABOUT DEVELOPMENT

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Some people are lucky and know exactly how they want to develop and how they want their careers to progress. Most people, however, benefit from some help to clarify their thoughts.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Help the group think about their experiences of development (in one's current job as well as career progression) by discussing questions such as:

- How sensible is it to leave thinking about your development career progression to someone else?
- What questions help people think about their development and their careers?
- What aspects of work are relevant to development but can be easily overlooked? Examples include amount of autonomy, feeling of achievement, amount of challenge – what others are there?
- As a manager, what questions can you ask to help staff clarify their development and career goals?
- As a member of staff, how can your manager help clarify your thoughts?

REMEMBER

Summarise by emphasising the following points:

- Don't rely on your manager to think about your career.
- Answers may not come quickly so give yourself time to think about how you want your career to develop.
- Use rich questions to prompt thinking and provide clarity.

FILM 4 – APPRECIATING DEVELOPMENT

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Most people learn a lot from their work but do not always realise it. However, when managers help staff identify how they are developing, staff often become more motivated and learning orientated.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Use the following questions to help the group think about a) how they can encourage staff to appreciate their development and b) the benefits of doing so:

- Generally, where do people learn most that directly affects their performance – at work or on courses?
- How easily can people state how they are developing or are they too busy 'getting on with the job'?
- When staff really appreciate how much they are learning and what they are getting better at, who benefits and how?
- What questions during one-to-ones can managers ask that help staff appreciate their development?

REMEMBER

Summarise by emphasising the following points:

- Helping staff appreciate how much they are developing motivates them.
- Using thought-provoking questions helps staff recognise how much they are developing.

FILM 5 – HELPING YOUR MANAGER DISCUSS YOUR DEVELOPMENT

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

As people's development involves the right learning opportunities, micro goals and feedback, staff need to involve their manager. With the right approach, even reluctant managers will discuss development.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Use the following questions to help the group think about a) the benefits of involving their managers in discussions about development and b) how staff can initiate development discussions:

- What are the benefits of a staff member involving their manager in discussions about development?

If necessary, prompt the group with questions such as:

- How might a manager be in a better position than a staff member to be aware of forthcoming development opportunities?
- Managers allocate tasks, agree micro goals, monitor performance and provide feedback. In what ways do those activities contribute to staff development?
- How might a manager's involvement in developing benefit the staff when performance is formally assessed?
- How much more likely will a manager discuss development with a staff member when:
 - The staff member shows motivation and willingness?
 - The discussion happens when the manager is praising the staff member?
 - The request for development is logically linked to the staff member's performance?
 - The manager sees how successful development benefits him/herself?

REMEMBER

Summarise by emphasising the following points:

- Use feedback as a springboard to a request for development.
- Link a request for development to something your manager regards as important.

FEEDBACK CONVERSATIONS – EXERCISE

This exercise provides an opportunity for participants to consolidate their thoughts about development conversations.

1. Before the workshop, write on cards or A4 sheets of paper questions relating to each of the videos you have watched. Suggested questions appear below; feel free to add your own questions relevant to your workshop. The videos and suggested questions are:
 - Micro goals – What are they? How can they be used to enhance staff development?
 - Performance versus career development – How do performance development in a job and career development differ? Do they overlap and, if so, how? How do managers benefit when they develop staff even if some staff move to other jobs?
 - Questions to help staff think about their development – How do staff benefit when they think about their development? List the questions that help staff think about their development. Then prioritise them in terms of their value.
 - Appreciating development – How do staff benefit when they understand how much they are developing? List the questions that help them appreciate how much they are developing. Then prioritise them in terms of value.
 - Helping your manager discuss your development – How do staff benefit when they involve their manager in discussions about development? What tips would you give a colleague whose manager seems reluctant to discuss development?
2. Fold them over so that the headings are not visible and stick them to a wall or flipchart.
3. Arrange participants into groups of between 4 and 6. Explain that they are tasked with preparing a 5-minute presentation on the subject written on one of the cards (or pieces of paper). Allow 10-15 minutes for preparation.
4. Listen to, and discuss each presentation, correcting any misunderstandings at the end of each presentation.
5. After the last presentation summarise all the positive points.
6. Conclude by asking participants to describe to the colleagues in their group one key 'take-away' from the workshop and explain how they will implement it (5 minutes).
7. Discuss a selection of 'take-aways' and implementation actions (5 minutes).