

The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.



constructive
CHOICES
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Quotable Quotes

"Even your most talented employees have room for growth in some area, and you're doing your employee a disservice if the sum of your review is: 'Your great!' No matter how talented the employee, think of ways he could grow towards the position he might want to hold two, five, or 10 years down the line."
~ Kathryn Minshew

"To fear change is to fear being challenged. To fear being challenged is to fear growth and new possibilities." ~ Ty Howard

"If you take care of your employees they will take care of your customers and your business will take care of itself." ~ J.W. Marriott

Dear Jean,

Congratulations! You, the new employee - you got the job you wanted! Manager - You have hired whom you believe to be the right employee! The organization, the work and the employee all seem to be in alignment. And, yet ... your development efforts with your new employee is just beginning.

While the recruiting, application and hiring phase may seem like it takes forever, the longest phase in the performance management cycle is the time (years) you will spend to develop and support the professional, technical and career growth of your employee. I am devoting two months to explore the best practices regarding employee development. There is that much information out there! Part 1 - what does it really mean to develop your employees and who truly is responsible? Part 2 (coming in August) - best practices and innovative approaches. Read on ...

With Joy,
Jean

Developing Your Employee - Part 1

Is there a simple answer to the question, "What does it really mean to develop your employee?"

Yes, I believe there is. Consider, that the growth of your employee is strongly dependent on the time and planning you invest in their learning, change and growth beginning in their first month. There are phases of an employee's growth and development and it is important for any manager with the support of the organization to pay attention to the specific needs within each phase.



The first phase for an employee's development is typically focused on additional training. The emphasis is to ensure the employee receives any new knowledge, learning and practice align specifically to their role and support the business of the organization. This phase has a technical work focus and getting to know the organization and the culture. It is an opportunity for a new employee to land and settle within their new position and with their co-workers. It is often referred to as an entry phase and the primary responsibility resides with the organization and the employee's manager to guide and direct the learning path. At a minimum, this phase will last an entire year so that an employee is exposed to a full annual business cycle of work activities and tasks. Depending on the organization's stability, transition through change, job complexity, and/or work restructuring, this phase can extend for 2-3 years.

Phase two of the employee development cycle requires a more focused attention on refining the strengths of the employee with a goal of stretching performance goals and expanding their value and contributions. Phase two is further divided into sub-phases and based on the employee's years of experience of work. If the employee is new to the work discipline, this phase can run from the end of the entry phase until either the employee prepares for moving out of the organization or as the employee begins to prepare for retirement.

The manager and the employee share the responsibility for designing these development opportunities aligned with the business and mission. The manager is responsible for keen observation of the employee's strengths and keeping lines of communication open to listen to the employee. The employee's responsibility is to openly discuss their learning needs, challenges and/or opportunities they want to be nominated for. These conversations occur from year to year, and typically during an organization's performance management cycle. The intent is to ensure an alignment to the organization's business while also supporting the employee's need for meaningful work. While the conversations may, in fact, be very focused on learning opportunities directly related to the employee's work, there may also be a desire of the employee to give some serious consideration to the "career" focus or "career" development conversation.

Remember, the employee is solely responsible for the management of his/her career. This fact is not usually understood as an employee responsibility. While the organization may support and encourage the career conversations and frank discussions regarding career opportunities, the organization does not carry a primary responsibility for fulfilling an employee's career choice, nor even funding specific career growth activities. It is up to the employee to participate in the development of their career and then manage their learning, career growth and ultimately their career goal achievement.

Phase three is often associated with the employee beginning to prepare for a retirement stage, or for the mid-term employee, their exit strategy to another career opportunity. This phase usually lasts for about 2-3 years as the employee considers the options for sharing their learning, wisdom and experiences. For the employee in mid-career and moving on to another organization, the employee is often actively increasing their knowledge of what else is out there for them. Late career employees in this phase move into a dimension of mentoring and or teaching vs. active learning for the sake of a continued career growth. Management has a responsibility during this phase to solicit the support of this employee in succession planning and acknowledging the best practices and learning experienced by the senior employee. These employees may also be called up on to

support the design and development of learning and career growth opportunities for those that are new and in mid-career phases.

Wherever you find yourself - entry into a new career, mid-career, or beginning to think about moving on or out, I encourage you to increase communication between you, your management and your colleagues. Sharing your ideas is an event that never goes out of style. With your sharing and wisdom comes an unanticipated clarity of your own career path. Remember, you design your path, you manage it and you live it.

Tools and Resources

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go: Career Conversations Employees Want](#) by Beverly Kay and Julie Winkle Giuioni (2012)

[Create Your Future the Peter Drucker Way: Developing and Applying a Forward-Focused Mindset](#) by Peter Drucker (2013)

[Developing Your Leadership Competencies](#) by the Department of the Army (2015)

[Staff Development: A Practical Guide, 4th Edition](#) by Andrea Wigbels Stewart (Author, Editor), Carlette Washington-Hoagland (Author, Editor), Carol T. Zsulya (Author, Editor), Library Leadership and Management Association (Author, Editor) (2013)

THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

[Developing Employees Who Think for Themselves](#). Harvard Business Review, by Francesca Gino and Bradley Staats, June 3, 2015.

[Managing Yourself: Bringing out the Best in Your People](#). Harvard Business Review, by Liz Wiseman and Greg McKeown, May 2010.

[Keeping Your Professional Development Continuous](#) by Corinne Mills, May 6, 2013.

[5 Steps to Creating Employee Development Plans that Truly Work](#) by Insperity Staff

[Implementing an Employee Training and Development Program](#)

Reflection

Determine where you are in the phase of developing yourself to be the "Employee Extraordinaire!"
Are you a new employee - within two years of being hired into your current position?
Are you a mid-career employee - satisfied or dissatisfied with your position? What will shift the dissatisfaction to satisfaction and excitement about your work?
Are you in the latter phase of your career - with this organization and you are ready to move on ... or are you looking to retire in the next 3 three years?

Once you have figured out what development phase you are in, then take a few quiet minutes and consider the answers to these questions below?

What does meaningful work look like for me?

What type of work do I want to be doing in 3-5 years? Do I see myself in the same organization?

What type of work do I want to be doing in 10 years?

To strengthen my learning, what skills or knowledge am I missing?

How I will close the gap on what is missing in my development?

Are these activities written and in my plan?

Have I discussed my desired learning opportunities with my manager?

What are my greatest contributions to the organization I work in?
What increased value can I develop and bring to my work daily?
What knowledge and learning do I want others to share with me?
What learning can I to share with others?
If I am ready to leave (or retire) what is my plan for a gracious and meaningful exit?
What question isn't in this list that you want to ask yourself, and you will commit to answering?

Choose To

Own your development ... design a career and meaningful work for you ... manage your career ... have the conversations ... ask for the support when it can be given ... provide feedback to others on the value of any learning you receive ... align your contributions to your work to your development ... write the development plan ... live your plan ... revise your plan as you grow and learn ... live the new plan.



July Joyful Observances

Air-Conditioning Appreciation Month
[Independent Retailer Month](#)
National Ice Cream Month
National Wheelchair Beautification Month
Worldwide Bereaved Parents Month

[Roswell UFO Days](#) (July 1-4)
Freedom Week (July 4-10)
[National Ventriloquism Week](#) (July 13-16)
Everybody Deserves a Massage Week (July 17-23)
World Lumberjack Championships (July 29-31)

Second Half of The Year Day (July 1) * *also Jean and Michael's 38th wedding anniversary*
Chocolate Day (July 7)
Don't Step On a Bee Day (July 10)
National Lollipop Day (July 20)
[National Chicken Wing Day](#) (July 29)

Administrivia

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- * Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- * New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- * Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, live their voices, and...
- * Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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