Development planning framework

## Purpose of this framework

To provide a clear, structured, and practical guide for people and HR professionals to support employee growth, development, and career progression. It can be used for both short-term skill development and long-term career goals.

How to use this framework

This framework is designed to be used collaboratively by the employee and their manager, mentor, or HR partner. It supports structured, personalized development planning that aligns with both individual career aspirations and organizational goals.

Recommended steps:

**1.** Complete Section 1 to align on ownership and timing  
**2.** Use Sections 2–4 to capture the current context and align with broader goals  
**3.** Develop concrete goals and actions in Sections 5–6  
**4.** Personalize the learning process and anticipate blockers in Sections 7–8  
**5.** Clarify support structures and monitor progress through Sections 9–10  
**6.** Motivate, reflect, and learn using Sections 11–13

## Section 1: employee details

What this section is for:

Capture the core identifying information of the employee and ensure that the development plan is connected to the correct people, time period, and oversight structure.

| **Employee name:** |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Job title:** |  |
| **Department:** |  |
| **Manager or development lead:** |  |
| **Date of plan:** |  |
| **Review cycle: (e.g. quarterly, biannually)** |  |

## Section 2: current state snapshot

What this section is for:

Document the employee’s current strengths, development areas, feedback, and motivators. This provides a baseline for planning and measuring future progress.

Prompt questions to ask:

* What are your core strengths in your current role?
* What areas do you want to improve or develop further?
* What feedback have you received from peers, managers, or clients?
* What motivates you most in your current job?

Example entry:

* Strengths: Strong project management skills and stakeholder communication
* Development areas: Needs to build confidence with data analysis and reporting
* Feedback received: “Great at delivery, but sometimes misses the bigger picture”
* Motivation: Interested in leading cross-functional initiatives

## Section 3: career aspiration mapping

What this section is for:

Encourages employees to think longer-term and align their development actions to broader personal and career goals. It can also support succession planning and talent development.

Prompts:

* Where do you see yourself in 1–3 years?
* What role(s) are you aiming for in the future?
* What knowledge, experience, or exposure do you need to get there?

Example entry:

* Aspiration: Move into a strategic HR business partner role within 2 years
* Gaps: Need more experience influencing senior stakeholders and handling change management
* Plan link: Assign to a cross-departmental project as stretch experience

## Section 4: alignment with business goals

What this section is for:

Links individual goals to wider team or organizational priorities. This demonstrates business alignment and increases the likelihood of leadership support.

| **Individual goal** | **Supporting team or org priority** |
| --- | --- |
| Build reporting skills | Improve HR analytics maturity |
| Develop leadership capability | Support succession planning for key roles |
| Enhance stakeholder influence | Strengthen cross-functional decision-making |
| Improve time management | Increase team delivery reliability and efficiency |
| Learn facilitation techniques | Build internal capability for agile ceremonies and workshops |

## Section 5: development goals

What this section is for:

Create specific, actionable goals that support both the employee’s growth and business needs.

Use the SMART goal format:

* **S**pecific
* **M**easurable
* **A**chievable
* **R**elevant
* **T**ime-bound

Example entry:

* **Goal:** Improve ability to analyze and present people data
* **Outcome:** Deliver monthly insights dashboards to HRBP team
* **Deadline:** Within 3 months
* **Success measure:** Quality of insights and confidence presenting in monthly meetings

## Section 6: development actions

What this section is for:

Break down how each development goal will be achieved. This helps clarify the path from intention to progress.

| **Goal** | **Development action** | **Support/resources needed** | **Target date** | **Status** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Improve data skills | Attend “Intro to HR analytics” workshop | Time off for course, manager support | July 15 | Not started |
| Improve data skills | Shadow the People Insights team on monthly report building | 2 shadowing sessions scheduled | August 30 | In progress |

Tips:

* Include a mix of formal (courses) and informal (shadowing, mentoring) development actions
* Make sure each action links directly to a goal

## Section 7: learning style or development preference

What this section is for:

Tailors the development experience to how the employee learns best, improving the likelihood of successful outcomes.

Prompt:

* Do you prefer learning through reading, doing, discussing, or observing?

Examples of preferences and adjustments:

* Hands-on learner: Include shadowing, on-the-job projects, interactive simulations
* Visual learner: Provide recorded walkthroughs, dashboards, infographics
* Social learner: Pair with a peer coach or schedule discussion-based sessions
* Reflective learner: Build in journaling or structured reflection after each milestone

Example entry:

* Prefers hands-on learning and real-time feedback — course work should include exercises and post-task reflections

## Section 8: barriers and mitigation plan

What this section is for:

Anticipates and plans for obstacles that might prevent progress. This shows foresight and improves the plan’s realism and feasibility.

Examples of common barriers:

* Lack of time due to existing workload
* Limited access to learning resources
* Unclear expectations from manager
* Low confidence or fear of failure

Example entry:

* Barrier: Limited time for development due to workload
* Mitigation: Manager will reallocate 1 project to free up 3 hours/week

## Section 9: support and accountability

What this section is for:

Clarifies who will help the employee succeed and how progress will be monitored.

* **Primary accountability (usually the employee):**
* **Support person(s) (e.g. manager, mentor):**
* **Check-in frequency:**
* **Agreed touchpoints and methods (e.g. monthly 1:1s, Slack updates):**

Example entry:

* Accountability: Employee owns plan, manager reviews monthly
* Support: Manager, People Analytics team
* Check-ins: Monthly 1:1s + end-of-quarter formal review

## Section 10: measurement and progress tracking

What this section is for:

Tracks how well each goal is progressing and identifies adjustments needed to stay on track.

| **Goal** | **Progress status** | **What’s working** | **What’s not working** | **Adjustments needed** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Improve data skills | In progress | Completed 1 course, started dashboard | Shadowing sessions keep getting deprioritized | Reallocate weekly workload to free up time |
| Improve team facilitation | Weekly lunch-and-learns are popular | Strong attendance at lunch-and-learns; feedback is positive | Sessions lack consistent format and outcomes | Assign co-facilitator for planning |
| Develop mentoring skills | Paired with junior analyst | Good rapport established with mentee | Sessions feel one-sided | Introduce shared agenda and regular goal check-ins |

## Section 11: recognition and reward opportunities

What this section is for:

Reinforces progress and increases motivation by planning how the employee's development efforts will be acknowledged.

Prompt:

* Are there opportunities to recognize this progress publicly or with incentives?

Types of recognition:

* Public praise in team meetings or internal newsletter
* Nominations for awards or internal acknowledgements
* Opportunities to present work to senior leadership
* Additional responsibility (e.g. lead project, mentoring)
* Financial incentive or learning budget increase

Example entry:

* Recognition: If presentation is successful, employee will co-lead the next cross-functional reporting workshop
* Reward: Eligible for a professional certification budget upon delivery of 3 monthly dashboards

## Section 12: cross-functional exposure and networking

What this section is for:

Encourages learning beyond the immediate team and promotes broader organizational awareness and collaboration.

Examples:

* Join company ERG (employee resource group)
* Attend 1 industry event per quarter
* Collaborate on inter-departmental project
* Participate in job shadowing outside their function
* Volunteer for planning committees or internal working groups

## Section 13: reflections and outcomes

What this section is for:

Supports a review of lessons learned, achievements made, and opportunities for continued growth.

Prompt questions:

* What progress have you made toward your development goals?
* What helped you succeed?
* What would you do differently next time?
* What new goals are emerging?

Example entry:

* Progress: Delivered first dashboard, received positive feedback
* Success factor: Shadowing was more helpful than the course
* Improvement: Next time, start with hands-on experience
* Next goal: Deep dive into data storytelling and visualization