PDI’s Development FIRST Model: Strategies for Self-Development

Focus on Priorities
Identify your critical issues and development objectives

Implement Something Every Day
Stretch your comfort zone

Reflect on What Happens
Extract maximum learning from your experiences

Seek Feedback and Support
Learn from others’ ideas and perspectives

Transfer Learning into Next Steps
Adapt and plan for continued learning
Focus on Priorities: Identify Your Critical Issues and Goals

Begin your development planning process by deciding where to focus. Discover what your most meaningful development priorities are by gaining clarity about what is important to you and your organization. Use the following questions to determine where your personal goals align with those of your organization — these are the areas you are likely to find the energy and support to carry out your plan.

Begin with Personal Insight — Know Yourself

- Who can give me additional insight into my areas of strength and development?
- What two or three things are most important to me where I feel I can improve?
- Remember: “People succeed on the basis of their strengths, as long as their weaknesses don’t get in the way.”

Look for “GAPS” in Your Competency Portfolio

- Goals: What do I want to do?
- Abilities: What can I do?
- Perceptions: How do others see me?
- Success Factors: What do others expect from me?

Reinforce Commitment to Your Development Goals

- How are my goals important to my current and future work success?
- Are my goals relevant to my organization?
- Are my goals important to me personally?
- Will the results be worth the investment?

Anticipate Obstacles

- What roadblocks are likely to get in the way of my development goals?
- How can I be proactive and prepare for these challenges?
The “GAPS” Model

Goals: What do you want to do?
- What are the internal motives and values that drive your behavior?
- What is important in your work and life? Why?
- What do you want to do that you are not doing?

Abilities: What can you do?
- Where have you been successful? Not successful? Why?
- What are the ways in which you apply your knowledge and skills?

Perceptions: How do others see you?
- What have you learned from your PROFILOR Feedback Report?
- Based on others’ feedback and project debriefs, how do you think others see you?
- How do these perceptions fit with how you see yourself?
- What feedback do you regularly get from others, both inside and outside of work?

Success Factors: What do others expect from you?
- What are the criteria for success in your job/position?
- What examples of others’ success and failure have you seen?
- What are the competencies you will need in the future?
## “GAPS” Analysis

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<th>My View</th>
<th>What Is</th>
<th>What Matters</th>
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<tr>
<td>My View</td>
<td>Abilities</td>
<td>Goals</td>
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<td>What you can do?</td>
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<th>Others’ View</th>
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Implement Something Every Day: Stretch Your Comfort Zone

Development planning is useless without action. Like in physical conditioning, making a small investment in your development each day will yield better results than trying to accomplish all of your development goals all at once. Even five minutes a day, used wisely, can make a tremendous difference.

Set triggers to alert yourself to take action. Ask yourself: What will trigger me to act on a targeted behavior daily? Use the tips and tools below to help you to get the most mileage out of your daily development activities.

Find Five Minutes Each Day to Spend on Development

- What regular time each day will work for me to use for my development?

Be Opportunistic: Link Your Goals with Something You Are Already Doing

- What already-scheduled meeting and activities can I use to test out my new behaviors?
- How can I connect my development with my job objectives?

Be Proactive

- How can I add a new challenge to the routine tasks of my job?
- How can I network with people who are skilled at what I want to learn?
- What new assignments could I request that are relevant to my priorities?

Take Intelligent Risks

- What fears do I have that keep me from risks?
- When do I tend to stay in the “safety zone” rather than allow myself to experience some of the discomfort associated with development?
- How can I reframe my definition of failure to overcome my fear of it?
Reflect on What Happens: Extract Maximum Learning from Your Experiences

It is important to plan for reflection on both short- and long-term learning. Reflection helps you to take stock of your lessons of experience, identify behavior patterns, track your development progress, and plan for future growth. Use the following questions as guidelines for reflecting:

**Take Stock of What Happened**

- What have I learned from my development experiences?
- What worked and why?
- What could I have done differently?

**Learn from Your Successes**

- What did I do that was more effective than what I have done before?
- What could have gone wrong that I managed to avoid?
- What people or situations do I handle the best?

**Learn from Your Mistakes**

- What factors were under my control? Out of control?
- When have I made this mistake before?
- What people or situations are a particular challenge to me?

**Learn from Your Emotions**

- How do I currently handle the many different emotions that I experience?
- How do I use my emotions of satisfaction and happiness to reflect on my successes?
- How can I use my emotions of frustration, anger, etc., to identify areas to develop?
Seek Feedback and Support: Learn from Others’ Ideas and Perspectives

Getting others’ ideas, perspectives, and feedback is key to helping you track your progress. Use the tips below to ensure feedback flows to you continuously.

What Feedback Am I Interested in Receiving?

- Broad if you are just beginning; more specific as you advance in skill.

From Whom Should I Ask for Feedback?

- Seek feedback from a variety of people, including both friend and foe.
- Consider the source; assess their ability and opportunity to observe you accurately.
- Cultivate key sources — choose two or three people that you trust.
- Be opportunistic; get input from anyone who has observed you who will be honest.

How Should I Prepare My Sources?

- Tell people what information you need before they begin to observe you.
- Let them know you are serious about your development.

What Is the Correct Timing?

- Get information when it is fresh; keep the discussion short and focused.
- For feedback on your behaviors over a period of time, discuss what you need and give people time to think.

How Can I Make it Easy for Those Giving Me Feedback?

- Focus on visible behaviors — ask what they saw.
- Listen; don’t argue, debate, or explain. Ask questions only to understand.
- If feedback is vague, use open-ended questions to clarify. Otherwise, just listen.
- Express your appreciation and thank people. Then, put relevant feedback to visible use so others can see that you have taken their feedback seriously.
Transfer Learning into Next Steps: Adapt and Plan for Continued Learning

Once you have reached this step, it is time to take a break, reflect on where you have been, where you are now, and where you will want to go next. Take time to celebrate your accomplishments, especially with those who have helped you along the way. Stay sharp by creating opportunities to continue to grow and develop.

Solidify Success

- How do I plan to acknowledge and celebrate my successes?
- With whom do I want to share my success stories?

Advance to the Next Level of Mastery

- What additional experiences can I get involved in to push my limits?
- Who is more skilled than myself?
- How can I create ways to work with this person?

Share the Wealth by Teaching Others

- Who would benefit from the skills I have developed?
- What could I learn from teaching others?
- What “students” would create a learning experience for me?

Regroup and Correct your Course

- What barriers have I encountered in my development?
- Who can offer me feedback and perspective on my progress or lack thereof?

Recharge Your Batteries

- What do I need to maintain my energy and momentum?

Focus on New Goals

- What have I learned about how to manage my development?
- Have I completed a full cycle? Am I ready to recycle and focus on new goals?