THE MANAGER’S
DEVELOPMENT
TOOLBOX
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SIXTEEN WAYS TO DEVELOP STUDENTS
As a manager at Brigham Young University, you are responsible for the development of each of the employees who reports to you or is a member of your organization. Each employee also bears a responsibility for his or her own development but your job is to help them get the opportunities they need to grow and develop in their careers.

There are a number of things you can do as a manager to help your people develop:

**Development Planning:**

First, you should have frequent development discussions with each of your employees to understand their needs and goals for development and to help them identify ways in which they can develop their skills and their career.

You should ensure that each employee has a viable development plan based on development needs you and the employee have discussed. More on how to put together a development plan later. You should also follow up during the year to ensure that the employee is making progress on his or her development plan.

**On The Job:**

The job itself is the single most important tool you have for developing an employee. Try to structure jobs to ensure challenge and opportunity to learn and develop. Delegate significant responsibility to each employee to increase their learning and contribution to the department.

Look for opportunities for people to rotate or to move to other positions in the department or outside the department. Sometimes an employee’s best development opportunity is their next job.

**Supporting Training:**

Third, you have a role in supporting training. You should make sure that you are budgeting appropriately for the training needs of each of your employees. Training that the employee attends during the year should be directly tied to the development plan that you and the employee have discussed.
Support your employees in attending training and ask for a follow-up report after training. Ask employees to share significant learnings with the department after returning from training. You should also hold employees accountable for using the new skills they learn during training. Give them positive feedback when they use their new skills appropriately.

**Career Pathing:**

Establish clear career paths in your organization by creating clear competencies for each job family. These can serve as a guide to professional and skill development. Where possible identify job ladders or progression paths with clear criteria to help people understand what they need to do to advance within the department.

**Succession Planning:**

One last development responsibility you have is to help prepare your successor as leader of the department by identifying those with the potential to replace you and by helping them get the kinds of development opportunities that they need to be prepared when you move on to your next career opportunity.
An important question to ask yourself, regardless of how far you are into your career, is how did you learn the things that you know professionally and how did you develop the skills that you bring to work everyday? A number of studies have taken a look at this question. In order to maximize your development and that of your employees it would be useful to know first how development happens.

There are primarily four ways that people develop professional skills and knowledge:

**Through Job Experience:**

Primarily we learn by doing. Being thrown into a position that requires us to learn new skills is the quickest and most durable form of learning. There is no substitute for experience. The job itself and the performance expected in the job motivate the development needed to keep up with the demands of the job. Job interviewers don’t want to know if you have studied a certain role; they want to know if you have done it and for how long.

Generally speaking, the more challenging the job, the more development you experience. Challenging jobs teach us how to cope with pressure, to learn quickly, and to deal with problems that arise. Challenging jobs teach the greatest variety and the largest number of lessons. Part of the manager’s job is to structure each job to...
allow for challenge and growth opportunities for your employees and to give them the opportunity to learn from mistakes, to test their limits and to build their learning capacity and resilience.

**Through Relationships:**

Much of our learning on the job comes from those around us. We learn a great deal by working with others, by observing and by being taught or coached by others. This includes co-workers, your manager, mentors, coaches, and others you work with outside the department.

One of the values these relationships bring is helping you to solve problems you may be having in your job as others share ideas or experiences solving similar problems. This is called the “next bench syndrome” referring to engineering environments where one engineer may be able to solve a problem he or she is working on just by watching and picking up ideas from what goes on at the next bench.

Another important value that work relationships have is the potential for giving you feedback. Getting timely and specific feedback is vital for your development to help you correct shortfalls in your performance. The effective person will frequently seek feedback from a variety of sources rather than waiting for someone to offer it.

**Through Training Or Education:**

Training can provide a valuable boost to your development. Training that is timely and targeted to a development need that you are working on can help support a change in your knowledge and skills and ultimately your performance. Here are a few conditions that can maximize training’s effectiveness:

1. **Tied To A Need**: It ought to be clear why you are taking the training and what you will learn by taking the training. To go to a class because “it sounds pretty interesting” is a sure bet that it will be low impact for you.

2. **Skill Based**: Generally speaking training that has as its objective to convey new skills will be of more value to you than those that only promote awareness and conceptual learning.
THE MANAGER’S DEVELOPMENT TOOLBOX

HOW WE DEVELOP
FOUR PRIMARY LEVERS FOR DEVELOPMENT

FEEDBACK IS THE BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

What is necessary for personal change? Bob Eichinger points out, “Awareness, energy and skill.”

What’s the primary reason people don’t receive the feedback they need? “Lack of managerial courage,” says Eichinger.

3. Observation and Modeling: The new skills should be modeled either in person or through video so that participants can see what the new behavior looks like when done well.

4. Opportunity To Practice: Where participants in training can practice new skills in a safe environment, they get a head start on being able to perform the skill in the work environment.

5. Feedback: Where participants can get feedback before attending or during the program on how well they currently perform a skill, their motivation to change goes up. You want to be sitting in training thinking “Boy I really need to hear this” and not “So and so really needs to hear this.”

6. Accountability: Where the boss is part of the “learning contract” and expects you to report back on how the training went and on how you are doing at applying new skills, new learning has a better chance to sink in through strong reinforcement.

Through Self Development:

There is also a great deal that you can do to develop your self through targeted reading, research, and independent study to sharpen your knowledge in areas important to your career. This area is limited only by your own motivation and appetite for learning.
When you’re trying to learn a new skill, whether it’s riding a bike or effectively leading a team, you go through four phases of proficiency:

- **Unconscious Incompetence**: When you’re finally good at something, you don’t even have to think about it. It seems to come naturally.

- **Conscious Incompetence**: When you make your first efforts at the new skill, you quickly become aware of your own lack of proficiency.

- **Unconscious Competence**: Not only do you not know how to perform the skill, you don’t even know how little you know.

- **Conscious Competence**: You get a handle on how to do the new skill but you have to think about every step while performing it, like the first week or two you drove a stick shift.
“You can’t learn from experiences you’re not having.”

- Gene Dalton
Actively developing your employees involves using these same four approaches as levers for development. Let’s look at the options available to develop the people who work for you:

**On The Job:**

**Job Enrichment:** Perhaps the best way to develop employees is to increase the scope of their responsibilities within their current job. This will require thoughtful delegation on your part with plenty of follow-up to ensure success.

**Special Projects:** Give the employee an assignment to come up with a new process that will benefit the department’s way of operating or some other out-of-the-norm kind of assignment that will stretch their skills.

**Committee Assignments:** Give your employee an opportunity to participate in a committee or task force that your department has a stake in. If you really want to stretch the employee’s skills, give him or her the committee chair assignment.

**Assuming Lead Person Responsibilities:** Give the employee the lead responsibility for a core process within the department or for heading a work team like a customer service team.

**Representing the Manager:** Having your employees attend meetings in your place and representing the department can stretch them as they increase their knowledge base and prepare for a meeting or committee you normally attend.

**Giving Presentations:** Having the employee present the results of a project or process improvement to the rest of the department or to other groups can be a good development experience and can help sharpen his or her presentation skills.

**Preparing Proposals:** If you are developing a new system or need a new piece of equipment, have one of your employees prepare the proposal. This will stretch the employee’s skills in research and cost-benefit analysis.
Installing A New System: Planning and implementing the installation of a new system will require strong planning, communication, influence and detail management skills.

Temporary Job Assignments: Working a short stint in another department can help broaden the career perspective of your employees and help them in understanding and working with other departments.

Full Job Change: Often a full job change based on the employee’s development need or career path is the best option for development. This can be done through rotation within the department or to another opportunity within the University.

Working With A Mentor: Have the employee work with a senior member of the department as a mentor or coach to learn a new skill. If the person is new to BYU you may make a formal mentor assignment for the person’s first six months or the first year on the job.

Focused Interviews: For any given development need there are a number of people around BYU who are experts in that knowledge area or adept in the skill area the employee needs to develop. Have the employee schedule an hour or two with that person and pick his or her brain as much as possible.

Teaming With An Expert: Being on a work or project team with someone who is a seasoned expert in a certain field can help expose the employee to ideas and give them an opportunity to learn by listening and watching someone who has deep competence.

Feedback: Another good way to help an employee’s development is to arrange for him or her to receive feedback from peers using a feedback instrument of some kind. If the employee is a manager, he or she can benefit from a 360 degree feedback survey through which he or she gets feedback from direct reports, from peers and from you.
Conference or Retreat Planning: Giving employees the opportunity to plan a department offsite or retreat or to put together a broader conference will involve them with people across your department and with other departments on campus. This is a great way to get to know and to learn from others.

Student Mentoring: Teaching student employees professionalism, customer service, problem solving, communication and other work/life skills not only helps students prepare for their career but this can be a developmental experience for the employee/mentor as well. More on this later.
Training Seminars: Attending a training seminar based on development needs is a way to focus on a needed skill. After the employee comes back from training have them give a presentation to the rest of the department on their key learnings from the seminar. Hold them accountable for using the skills they pick up in training.

Continuing Education: Taking job related continuing education classes can help fulfill a development need. Again have employees share what they've learned with the rest of the team and give them feedback when you see them using new skills.

Taking A Class: Using the BYU tuition benefit to take an evening class can help employees develop in a variety of ways. Employees can learn a new language or have a number of other enriching learning experiences, whether job related or not. Employees can work toward a degree that may not be needed for their current job but will be instrumental in helping them get another position in the future.

E Learning: Taking classes on line is a good way to pick up new skills at the employee’s pace and schedule. There is a wide variety of computer based training options available to employees on line.

Cross training: Learning each job within a work group increases the team’s flexibility and each individual’s versatility and opportunities for future job assignments.

Conference Attendance: Going to a well selected conference in their field is a great way to stimulate employees’ thinking, expose them to the state-of-the-art in their field and charge their batteries professionally.

Conducting Training: Being asked to provide training for other employees based on their competence or area of expertise can help employees sharpen their own skills.
**Self Development:**

Reading Books: Reading business and leadership orientated books can help an employee keep current on the state of the art practices in his or her field. He or she who does not read is no better off than he or she who cannot read.

Subscriptions To Trade Journals: Take a pile of reading on business trips or set aside a period of the work week for keeping up to date.

Professional Organizations: Being an active member in a professional organization that fits an employee’s current job assignment can be a broadening experience and give them a chance to learn from other organizations or universities.

Research On The Web: The employee can take a topic he or she needs to bone up on and go after it. There are tremendous resources available and gathering professional resources to help out with a development need can be done as easily from home as it can from the office.

You’ll be able to think of many other ways you or your employees can enhance your learning and development on your own. Doing what you can on your own can enhance the development you are getting on the job and in the classroom and sends a signal that you are serious about developing yourself professionally.
**Every year all BYU employees are expected, with the help of their manager, to put together a development plan. This plan is intended to address the question of what each employee will do to develop his or her professional skills during the year.**

Although it is part of the annual BYU Performance & Development Plan, a development plan is different from an annual performance evaluation. A performance evaluation is intended to assess an employee’s contribution and performance over the year and evaluate that performance for the purposes of making pay decisions. It is usually tied to key objectives set early in the year as well as to ongoing job accountabilities and dimensions. The annual development plan asks a key question that is fundamentally different from the performance evaluation:

*What experiences, knowledge, or skills does the employee most need, to better perform his or her current job or to be prepared for other opportunities?*

There are two primary steps involved in creating a development plan. One is to identify an employee’s key development needs and the second is to plan what actions can be undertaken to ensure his or her development.

**Step One: Identifying Development Needs**

A development plan is based on a clear understanding of a person’s development needs. A development need may arise from a performance improvement need, from changing job requirements, from a gap between a person’s current skill set and a desired future job, or from other personal needs. A development need can be surfaced by any of the following:

- Feedback from the Boss
- Performance Gaps – Objectives Not Met
- Feedback Instruments or Surveys
- Inputs from Peers
- Strategic Planning – Gaps between Future Job Needs and Current Skills
PUTTING TOGETHER A DEVELOPMENT PLAN
STEP ONE: IDENTIFYING DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

You may develop a sort of “opportunity map” to assess what the employee most needs to work on for his or her development that looks like the chart below. Focus the development plan on those skills that are of high importance and where current skill level is low.

A development need may involve a technical or business skill like the following:

- Improving C language programming competency
- Learning computer applications needed in the job
- Developing basic finance skills
- Increasing knowledge of project management tools and approaches
- Gaining in depth knowledge of statistical process control

Or it may involve a leadership or interpersonal skill like the following:

- Developing greater coaching/performance management skills
- Building influence or negotiations skills
- Giving effective presentations
- Developing greater strategic thinking and planning skills
- Learning greater communication and listening abilities
The first step in development planning is to be clear on what performance related skills your employees need to develop that would make the most difference in their capabilities and performance. You should focus on between one and three development needs at most in the plan. More than this is simply too many to tackle in one year. Use the Texas Instruments saying in your development planning:

“More than two objectives is no objectives.”

**Step Two: Identifying Development Actions**

Having identified the employee’s development needs, the next step is to decide what specific actions the employee can take to accelerate improvement of his or her development needs. Remember that there are four primary ways in which an employee develops professional skills:

- By Experience On The Job
- Through Relationships
- From Training or Education Programs
- Through Self Help Activities

As you put together a development plan, think through each category to identify actions that can be taken to develop the skill or knowledge area you are working on. Here are some key questions to ask as you try to identify development actions:

1. What experience or added responsibility on the job could help development?

2. Are there special assignments such as task forces or focused projects that could help in development?

3. Who are the key people that could help the employee’s learning and development of this skill?

4. Would the assignment of a mentor or informal coach be appropriate?

5. Are there internal or external training programs that may fit the need the employee has?

6. What can the employee do on his own or her own in the way of reading or research or through personal reminders to develop this skill?
Individual Development Plan

Indicate what the employee will do to develop their skills and knowledge during the next year:

Development Needs: (Indicate the experiences, knowledge, or skills the employee most needs to better perform his or her current job or to be prepared for other opportunities.)

- Aaron needs to develop greater awareness of the budgeting and financial management process at BYU.
- Needs to develop greater listening skills in one on one and group settings

Development Actions: On The Job (What new responsibilities do you plan to assign to help this person develop this year? Are there projects, committee assignments, or special assignments that will help development?)

- Aaron will sit in on department budget planning meetings and will present quarterly budget updates in our staff meeting.
- Aaron will schedule time with Manager of BYU Budget office to overview the budget process for BYU.
- In team meetings Aaron will be called on to summarize team discussions.
- I will give feedback to Aaron after staff meetings or one on ones on his listening during the meeting.

Training: (What types of training or seminars are recommended this year for his/her development?)

- Aaron will attend one seminar on financial basics during the first half of the year. I will ask him to share in our staff meeting key learnings he picked up from the seminar.
- Aaron will schedule and attend effective listening class offered at BYU. Will follow-up with me after attendance.

Self Development: (What motivated self development – readings, research, continuing education etc. – will the employee do this year to develop his or her skills?)

- Aaron will select appropriate readings or audiocassettes on communications and listening skills
Look at the sample development plan on page 18 to see the kind of development actions that can be taken. Remember that on the job development accounts for 50-60% of a person’s development. Don’t restrict the plan to attendance at training programs. Focus especially on what can be done on the job to give the kinds of responsibility, experiences and projects that will accelerate development.

**Step Three: Holding A Development Discussion**

Most often a development plan will arise out of a mutual discussion between you and your employees and will be put together jointly with inputs from you and the employee. A format for a development discussion with your employee may look like this:

*First, outline the purpose and format for the discussion*: This kind of discussion usually has four purposes:

- Discussing the employee’s career direction and goals
- Reviewing your perception of the employee’s strengths and development needs
- Discussing the employee’s assessment of his or her strengths and development needs
- Agreeing on action steps needed for development

*Second, discuss the employee’s inputs on his or her own career*: Several key questions should be addressed here:

- What perspective do the employees have on their own career?
- What direction have they set for themselves?
- What key jobs would they like to have in the future?
- What do they see as their own strengths both against the needs of their current position and in order to meet your future goals?
- What do they see as their own development needs both for the current position and for future goals?
PUTTING TOGETHER A DEVELOPMENT PLAN
STEP THREE: HOLDING A DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

Third, give feedback to the employee. You should give your inputs on how you see the employee’s strengths and development needs.

- Validate any strengths that the employee has shared adding any others that you see.

Identify any development needs that you see in addition to what the employee has shared. Remember that a development need could include any of the following:

- A gap in performance that needs to be addressed
- A key experience that the person may be lacking to get to the next level
- Any people or leadership skill the person may lack
- Knowledge or competence the person may need more depth in in a functional area such as finance, or operations or a particular technology

Fourth, agree on key development actions:

- What actions are needed to shore up development plans?

Remember that development plans may include on the job activities, added responsibilities, special assignments or projects, mentoring, training or other self help activities. See the Toolbox on pages 9 through 14.

Lastly, discuss follow-up: What will you both do in following up on the plan?

- What will the employee do to take ownership for the plan?
- What can you as the manager do to support the employee’s plan for development?
- How will you and the employee follow up on progress against the plan?

A development discussion can be held any time during the year but should at least be held as part of the Performance & Development Plan discussion in December or January. Ensuring an employee’s development progress starts with a well thought out development plan. Make sure to take the time both in the planning and the time it takes to discuss this through with your employee. Though the plan may change and be modified, it helps to start with a plan that you can then execute.
Once you and the employee have a plan defined, the plan then needs to be carried out. Discuss with the employee what may be needed for training, coaching, or travel that is part of his or her plan. You should meet with the employee on a periodic basis and review his or her progress on the development plan. Make the necessary arrangements to provide the job experiences and assignments that have been outlined in the development plan.

You will find that the urgencies of getting the job done and meeting the milestones your department is responsible for can often get in the way of carrying out the development plans you have established with your employees. Take responsibility for following through on the commitments you have made and make your own development and the development of your employees a real priority.
DEVELOPING & MENTORING STUDENTS
SIXTEEN WAYS TO DEVELOP STUDENTS

Students at BYU often spend more time working as a part time employee in a BYU department than they do in the classroom on a weekly basis. Assisting with their professional and personal development can be important in preparing them for their careers and life after they finish their education. At BYU student mentored learning is a significant part of a student’s educational experience. There are a number of approaches that can be helpful in mentoring students:

1. Relationship Building: Take the time to “check in” with each of your students on a regular basis; Ask them about themselves and their schooling and experience at BYU. Get to know them as a person.

2. Attendance At Meetings: Have students join in your staff and other department meetings. This will help them gain a good perspective on what goes on in your operation and will help them to learn basic meeting management skills. Involve students in planning the agenda where appropriate.

3. Preparing Reports: Involve students in the analysis and preparation of reports your department may be involved in. This will help sharpen their analytical and writing skills.

4. Exposure to The Budget: Although students may not control or manage the expenditures of the department, why not have them understand the practicalities of managing the ongoing budget of the department. This will inevitably be part of their professional life after they begin their career.

5. Department Activities: Involve students in any department social gatherings or activities. This can break down barriers to communication and help students feel more a part of the team.

6. Job Rotation: If there are several student positions within your department, consider giving students the opportunity to move through a variety of assignments. This will give them breadth and keep their learning curve fresh. Be aware of the student’s interests and development needs in considering alternate work assignments.
7. **Giving Feedback**: Be liberal with your praise and with your constructive feedback on how the students are carrying out their assignments. Give students about twice as much feedback as you would a normal employee. This will accelerate their learning from any assignment they take on in your department.

8. **Event Planning**: By getting involved in the planning for a department retreat or other event, students will have the opportunity to interact with people across the department and to feel more a vital part of the department.

9. **Data Gathering**: When you are doing any fact finding or analysis in your operation, students can help with the interviews, focus groups or number crunching. This will help them apply the quantitative skills they are learning in the classroom in a real world situation.

10. **Giving Presentations**: This is a critical career skill that you can help students get a feel for while working in your group. Where they have been part of the data gathering or analysis on a project, let them give part of the presentation. Give them plenty of feedback before and after the presentation to help their learning.

11. **Accountability Reporting**: Help the students learn the process of returning and reporting on their work on a regular basis. Teach them the importance of being accountable for work progress and deadlines.

12. **Project Ownership**: If possible give the students projects that they can own start to finish. This will help them learning critical project planning and execution skills.

13. **Participation in Seminars**: Consider having students attend the conferences or seminars that the rest of your staff has exposure to. There are many opportunities that don’t involve significant cost but that will be eye opening for the students.
DEVELOPING & MENTORING STUDENTS
SIXTEEN WAYS TO DEVELOP STUDENTS

14. Career Planning Discussions: Take the time to discuss the students’ career goals and direction and share what perspective and advice you have. This is on the mind of every student and you can be a valuable resource and reality check for them.

15. Mentoring Relationships: Based on the students’ career interests, broker an opportunity for them to meet with a BYU expert in that field or discipline so that they can get an opportunity to ask their questions of someone with experience in their desired field. That person may become a mentor of sorts to the student.

16. Career Search Assistance: When it comes time for students to begin the job hunt, help where you can in polishing their resume or in preparing for job interviews. If you are not the best resource for this, connect the students up with someone who is.

There are many other approaches you will think of to mentor and develop your students. Ask for your students’ inputs on how their on-the-job learning can be maximized in your department. This will be a satisfying part of your job and an invaluable part of the students’ BYU experience.