

5 Steps to Creating an Employee Career Development Program

How to Create an Employee Development Plan

Do you know what the greatest asset is in your company? You might answer that it is your



company intellectual property or the company's dedication to customer service. Perhaps you believe that it's somewhere in your physical asset base or the value in the pension plan. Yes, you might think your company's greatest asset is any one of those things, but the truth is that your greatest asset is your employees.

It's one thing to "[hire right](#)", but another thing altogether to recognize the inherent value in your employee base and take advantage of that unique opportunity for growth in your company. After all, who has better insight into where the company is going than you and the people you train to create that growth?

Creating an Employee Career Development Program is a sure-fire way to provide growth opportunities for your employees, driving retention and internal talent. When you create employee career development programs, you build trust with your employees that helps to get them to buy-in to your company goals and mission because they feel like an integral part of your greater puzzle.

5-Step Plan for Creating an Employee Career Development Program

1. **Get clear about the positions required to fill your employee roster** – One of the best strategies for understanding the organizational needs of your company, is to *create an organizational chart of each position and define the roles of each*, including the compensation plans for each position. Even if you're just a small "mom and pop" operation right now, there are a number of different duties and positions that must be handled in the business. Making that org chart and defining the position will help you understand the immediate needs of your business, and provide a glimpse of the areas that will scale the fastest, so you can start planning on career development opportunities for your employees.

2. **Develop Possible “Career Maps”** – Once you have created your org chart, start mapping out possible career paths for each position. For example, could someone who starts as a receptionist but shows aptitude with financials train as a bookkeeper or seek additional education to ultimately become the accountant or even CPA within your company? Is it possible for an entry-level business development rep to move along a path to become VP of Sales? Look at the possibilities and keep your mind open because you’ll have a workforce of employees who are [performing well](#) and seeking advancement within your organization.
3. **Get Your Employees “Enrolled” in the Program** – With your basic plan in place, it’s time to get together with your employees to present your ideas and foundational plan for Employee Career Development. Getting your employees properly engaged in the program is like having a team of cheerleaders supporting your program...but they’ll do more than cheer you on – they will want to be part of the process. Remember, you are probably so close to your business (and seeing it from a bigger picture view) that you may not be able to see the day-to-day challenges that your employees see. Get their input. After all, in essence, this is their “benefit” and the plan affects them on a very personal level. Your employees’ input can be invaluable in streamlining the details of your program.
4. **Create an Action Plan** – With everyone on board and the basics of your plan in place, now it’s time to create the specific action plan so your employee can advance and enjoy the benefits of your new Career Development Program. What new training systems will have to be put into place? How will you [track and measure performance](#) so you know when it’s time for advancement? Consider the goal-setting concept of “start with the end in mind.” Look to the goal first; then plan backwards from there.
5. **Launch Your Plan in the Workplace** – You have charted the positions, mapped out the possible career paths, enrolled your employees in the plan and set up the systems to train and advance your employees. Now it’s time to launch! Put your plan into action, track your progress, get regular feedback from your employees on how it’s working and streamline the process as you go so you can polish the details and create higher levels of efficiency.

Creating and launching an Employee Career Development Program will help to motivate your employees and provide them with a roadmap of available opportunities that they can grow towards. By understanding your the goals of your employees, you can start to develop a career path for them within your company to increase retention of your top talent. The bottom line for you is a better trained workforce, more engaged employees who are invested in their own success and higher retention rates, all of which contribute to a stronger company culture and a greater chance of growth and success.