

How to Create a Career Development Program for Employees

Your greatest asset isn't your intellectual property, your revenue generating technology, or your cost-cutting software. It's your employees. Nothing can influence your company's growth better than you or your team. Because your team is essential, you should actively support the growth of your employees. Once you've [hired the best team](#) and established [metrics for tracking performance](#), it's time to create an employee career development program. Doing so will put you ahead of the employment curve because your employees will know what's next and want to continue to succeed at your company. You'll hold onto your best performers and grow from the inside, confidently promoting from within. You'll earn the respect of your employees because they will feel essential to your cause.

Here is our strategy for creating an employee career development program in 5 steps:

1. **Construct an organizational chart of your roster, defining each role** – This will provide you with a clear picture of the individual responsibilities and needs of your business as a whole. It will be useful because you'll know the value of each employee on your roster. You will also be clear on your company's short-term necessities, while showing you where your company will grow and requires future support. Incorporate salary information for each employee. You'll have a clear understanding of what you're getting from each member of your team, and where you might need to scale up.
2. **Create "Career Maps"** – When your organizational chart is complete, you can map how your employees will move through the ranks on one career path or another. For example, a budding sales rep hits the ground running and is awarded both a \$5,000 bonus after three months and access to a short list of the best prospective clients. After nine months, the sales rep can become a sales account executive, and after 2 years, lead an expansion into new territory. Or let's say the sales rep shows promise in customer service. A career path could lead to upper level marketing where understanding relationships with customers is valuable.

Map each possible career path. Your career paths are interchangeable because you've already constructed your organizational chart. Remember transparency: show your employees their potential paths to success if they perform well in particular areas. If they know where they are going, **they won't be looking around**. [[Hyperlink to "Peak performance" article](#)]

1. **Show Your Employees Their Potential** – Host a full team meeting that shows your employees the career maps and org chart you've constructed. This will demonstrate to

them how you've invested in their future. Be sure to also give your employees one-on-one time for career conversations. By shedding light on long-term and short-term goals, you help your employees understand the big picture while also seeing the everyday challenges your employees face. Connecting their daily goals to a beneficial career plan creates a bond between the company's objectives and employees' career objectives.

2. **Time for Action** – When all of your employees are prepared to set out on their career path, you need to give them specific steps to get them where they want to go. Be specific. What new skills do they need and how can you develop these skills in training? What short-term, individual goals can they achieve on the way to their long-term goals? What new training systems will have to be put into place? Make sure you are tracking their path so you know when to promote them.
3. **Give Regular Feedback, Always Constructive** – Once you launch your action plan with clear goals in mind and career paths charted, you must constantly coach your employees to success. Look at the metrics, determine where your employees need encouragement, and always champion their strengths while building on their weaknesses. Communicate with your employees about their progress. You will sharpen the edges and get more out of your career employees on a day-to-day basis.

Employee Career Development Programs give employees accountability that will motivate them to get to the next level. With a career path in mind and you coaching them along the way, employees will achieve the individual goals they want to while contributing to collective goals. If you know where your star players want to go, you can help them get there and retain them. Career development programs engage employees in their careers, and when employees are actively involved in your company, your work culture will be strong, and your company will grow.