

Guide to Developing Individual Development Plans

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a valuable performance enhancement tool for any federal employee. The IDP can be of great assistance to those who want to enhance skills and strengths and learn more about matters of interest that are relevant to the performance of the agency. Bureaus/Offices may require the use of an IDP at their discretion. Check with your Human Resources Office for the IDP or other appropriate form to be used by your Bureau/Office for documenting employee development needs.

The following is a brief outline of the definition, steps and goals of an IDP.

Goals The employee and the rating official develop goals together. The IDP provides a connection between the employee's career interests and needs to the organizational mission and priorities. The most common goals of an IDP are to:

- Learn new skills to improve current job performance
- Maximize current performance in support of organizational requirements
- Increase interest, challenge, and satisfaction in current position
- Obtain knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for career growth

Definition An IDP identifies a broad spectrum of developmental opportunities for the employee, including on-the-job training, distance learning, formal classroom training, details, shadow assignments and self-development. It addresses the needs of the organization and of the employee beginning with a focus on maximizing employee performance in the current job.

An IDP is a guide to help individuals reach career goals within the context of organizational objectives. It is a developmental action plan to move employees from their current place to where they want to go. It provides the systematic steps to improve and to build on strengths as individuals improve job performance and pursue career goals.

An IDP is a partnership between the employee and the rating official in personal development. Preparing an IDP involves open feedback, clarification and discussion about developmental needs, goals, and plans. Periodic communication between the rating official and the employee is the key to the currency and success of an IDP.

An IDP is not a:

- *Performance appraisal. It is not used to determine pay, awards or other personnel actions based on performance.*
- *Contract for training. Final approval of training opportunities is made based on factors such as timing and budget availability.*
- *Position description. It is not used for clarifying discrepancies in the duties as described.*
- *Guarantee for promotion or for reassignment to another position. While the developmental experiences identified in an IDP may have some training that might qualify the employee for another position or grade, there is no guarantee of advancement.*

Responsibilities As in all aspects of the employee/supervisor relationship, direct and open communication is the key to the success of an IDP. The following responsibilities address the IDP process specifically.

The employee is responsible for:

- Assessing personal skills necessary for performing the current position
- Suggesting developmental experiences which would enhance the skills necessary for performing the current position and for the desired career goals
- Identifying personal career goals
- Understanding what skills are necessary for meeting the career goals
- Participating in open discussions with the rating official concerning the elements of the IDP
- Completing the developmental experiences in the IDP as approved by the rating official
- Alerting the rating official when the IDP needs review and updating

The **rating official** is responsible for:

- Providing constructive feedback to the employee about skills necessary for performing the current position
- Suggesting and reviewing employee suggestions for developmental experiences which would enhance the skills necessary for performing the current position
- Counseling the employee about career goals
- Identifying developmental experiences which would enhance the skills necessary for performing in the next type of position toward the employee's career goal
- Participating in open discussions with the employee concerning the elements of the IDP, in periodic updates and reviews of the IDP for currency
- Giving final approval to specific developmental experiences
- Monitoring the progress of the employee in completing the developmental experiences agreed upon in the IDP

Individual Development Plan

CAREER GOALS

Employee's Name	Position Title/Grade	Office Phone	Email Address
Current Supervisor's Name	Supervisor's Title	Office Phone	Email Address
Goals for Successful Performance in Current Position			
Short-term Career Goals (2-3 years)			
Long-term Career Goals (3+ years)			
Development Objectives			
What do you need to do this year to work towards your goals?			
Development Activities (training, assignments, projects, details, etc.)	Proposed Dates	Estimated Costs	Date Completed
Notes			
Employee's Signature/Date		Supervisor's Signature/Date	

An IDP is required for Supervisors and optional for Employees.

Instructions for completing the Individual Development Plan

Employee Development and Career Goals – the employee and supervisor work together to complete the goals for successful performance in the employee's current position and the employee's short- and long-term career goals on the IDP.

Developmental Objectives – describe what the employee needs to do this year to work toward his/her goals. Objectives describe what the employee needs to learn or achieve in order to reach his/her goals.

Determine a method of training and a training time frame – determine what type of training or activity is needed to accomplish the employee's developmental goals. It could be on-the-job training, a detail, or a formal training course or a combination of methods. Identify the proposed dates for the training or activity in the "Proposed Dates" column. Enter the actual or estimated cost of the activity in the "Estimated Costs" column. This column can be used in preparing your office's annual budget. Once the training is completed, write the date in the "Date Completed" column.

Methods of Training:

On-the-job training – this can include coaching by a skilled individual or details into positions that will give the employee the skills and knowledge needed.

Details – temporary assignments to another location and/or position to gain specific knowledge and/or experience.

Courses – formal training courses, e.g., from your agency, local universities, commercial vendors.

Satellite Broadcasts/Computer/Web Based Learning – a variety of topics available through your agency via satellite broadcasts, software packages, and on-line training.

Discuss the Development Plan with your Employee – discuss the IDP with the employee and make any necessary modifications. The supervisor and employee should sign and date the plan. This plan should be completed within 60 days from the beginning of the performance year.

Review and Modifications – the plan should be reviewed at each performance review and modified as situations or needs change.