

# Finalize Your Plan

## Make it Happen – Create a Plan

Creating a plan is investing in your future. By writing down goals and laying out a plan of action, you are more likely to succeed – either by growing in your current position or progressing to a new one.

Check out this easy-to-use guide for more help on the Development Blueprint.

### Development Blueprint

Click on any [link](#) below for more details

The screenshot shows the 'Development Blueprint' form. It includes fields for Associate Name, Current Position, Manager Name, Mentor/Coach Name, and Date. Below these are sections for 'My Development Focus', 'What I'm Doing', 'What I Want to Learn', 'Check In', and 'My Action Plan'. The 'My Action Plan' section is a table with columns for 'What Do I Want to Accomplish?', 'What Will I Do?', 'By When?', and 'What is the Status or Result?'.

#### Identify Your Focus

Are you focused on growing in your current position or preparing for your next one?

Tip: First make sure you have mastered your current role before focusing on getting ready for the next role.

#### Assess Your Skills & Use Feedback

Incorporate in the feedback you've received. Need help finding it? See [Use Your Performance Feedback](#).

Assess your strengths with the [Discovering Your Strengths Card Sort](#).

The [Talent Development Toolbox](#) can also help you define those skills and remedies for improving.

#### Share Your Plan & Check In Frequently

Share your goals and get input from others. Your Manager and/or Mentor can help you clarify, define and keep you accountable on your goals.

#### Enter Your SMART Goals

Use the [Create Career Goals tips](#) if you need help creating your goals.

Don't conquer the world... stick to 2-3 goals!

#### Determine Timing

Be realistic! By what date will you be able to accomplish these actions?

Tip: Consider the schedule and availability of your resources.

#### Track Your Results

- What were the lessons? What did I learn about myself?
- What actions should I incorporate into my daily routine?
- What should I keep from doing in order to be more effective?

#### Create Action Steps

List out the activities and tasks needed to accomplish your goal - consider the following:

- On-the-job opportunities: take on new projects, give presentations, or join a task force.
- Observe & model others: experiment with new behaviors; seek feedback regarding your effectiveness.
- Practice the desired behavior: start with a trusted friend, a colleague, or a small group. Ask for frequent feedback.
- Conduct research: read books, journals, articles, manuals, and magazines. Consult with others: interview experts in the area.
- Coursework and study: participate in company training programs, outside seminars, and adult education classes.
- Off-the-job applications: join or lead a community group, try a new skill in a volunteer organization, or give presentations to civic organizations.

## Discuss Your Plan with Your Manager – Here’s How...

Discussing your development and goals can be challenging; the more often you do it, the easier it becomes.

### Helpful Tips:

- Schedule time to meet with your manager (and/or Mentor) on a monthly basis to discuss your progress, any new goals and changes to your plan.
- Be prepared. You’re responsible for these meetings, so be prepared and know what you’d like to discuss. Bring your Development Blueprint Check-In Form to take notes.
- Use the Blueprint: This document was created to help you talk about your goals.
- Focus the conversation on behaviors and actions: What have you already achieved and would like to achieve in order to take it to the next level.
- Be specific: Expectations and results can become unclear when performance is discussed in general terms, so use specific examples such as:
  - What was the situation?
  - What impact did your actions have on the business and the customer? What did you learn?
  - Ask your Manager to provide feedback and goals so they are clear to you both.
- Share your plan, AND learn what your manager’s plan is for you.

- Be open to feedback: No one wants to hear that they’re not fully developed and ready for the next role, but that’s why you’re having this conversation – to help you get there!

## Ask Your Manager...

- What resources are available to help me be successful in this goal (such as job shadowing, mentoring, and training)?
- Do you agree and support the plan and goals I have outlined? What would you change, add or remove?
- What do you see as my next career opportunity or challenge?
- What feedback do you have regarding my progress towards [insert specific goal]?
- If you were me, what would you focus on?

## Execute your plan and watch your goals become a reality!

### Evaluate Your Success

Completing your plan is easier than it sounds, so...

- Commit to following the steps you outlined.
- Schedule time to work on your development. It helps if goals and action items are manageable with your current workload, so consult your manager.
- Be flexible; adjust your development plan as new goals and challenges are presented.
- Track your progress on the Development Blueprint.
- Celebrate your accomplishments and don’t be afraid to share them with your manager.