

# Employee Development Success Factors

Employee development involves providing employees with the information, tools, training, resources and support needed to learn and grow on the job. Effective employee development benefits the employee, the department, the manager and, ultimately, the company as a whole. To be effective, though, companies need to make sure that their development efforts are focused, specific and aligned with company goals and objectives.

## Just Doing It!

A survey by the Society for Human Resource Management revealed that almost 84 percent of HR professionals do not use structured employee development programs. Instead, they rely on information processes or, basically, just leave it to chance that employee development needs are being taken care of. Odds are, they're not. A critical success factor for effective employee development is not leaving it to chance, but developing specific programs and processes to provide employees--and their managers--with the tools, information and resources necessary to help employees learn and grow on the job.

## Clear Expectations

Employee development is all about helping employees learn and grow so that they can meet organizational needs. The first step, therefore, is determining what the organizational needs are and then setting clear expectations for employees in terms of how they can best meet those needs. This is generally done through the job description, which should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure alignment with current goals and objectives. But, in addition to the job description, managers should be letting employees know what, specifically, is expected of them and how their performance impacts the organization's success.

## Effective Feedback

Employee development success requires ongoing conversations and feedback between managers and employees so that employees know whether their performance is meeting expectations and if there are areas where they need to improve. Managers who set clear expectations and then provide specific and timely feedback on whether employees are meeting those expectations are more successful at employee development than those who don't have these conversations. Feedback can also be built into the job itself. So, for instance, employees in a call center may have expectations related to the number of calls they handle in an hour, how quickly they answer calls, the satisfaction of callers based on survey responses.

## Access to Training And Other Resources

When development needs are identified, it is important that employees have access to coaching, mentoring and training activities that can help them meet these needs. Managers and supervisors are in a natural position to serve as coaches and role models. Training can be offered internally or externally, in live or online formats. Information technology makes access to information easier and less expensive than ever before.