

The Role of Employees in Employee Development

Employee development refers to strategically improving your employees' professional skills through specialized training and specifically guided experience. Employee development programs can help employees grow personally, as well, teaching them things like effective conflict management skills, which can positively affect all areas of their lives. If an employee development program is to work, however, employees must take personal responsibility in responding to and taking advantage of the opportunities their employers provide.

Taking Initiative

Employee development initiatives can involve identifying potential management candidates on the front lines and giving them training and extra responsibility to prepare them for a future promotion. Employees have the responsibility to speak up to management about their ambitions and desire to progress in their career, however, and must earn the attention of management through excellent individual and team performance.

Attitudes

Employees absolutely must have positive attitudes when approaching employee development programs. An attitude of entitlement or complacency can seriously hinder employees' professional growth. If an employer gives an employee additional responsibilities, for example, it is up to the employee to view it as an opportunity to learn and grow rather than being forced to do extra work. In addition, employees have a responsibility to make the most of training sessions rather than complain that training wastes their time.

Outside Learning

Certain aspects of employee development programs place a great deal of responsibility on employees to work hard in their personal time. An employer can offer a college tuition reimbursement plan, for example, but employees have to put in their own hours studying and working toward their degree. Likewise, employers can send employees to seminars and workshops, but employees must choose to use their time for learning and making professional contacts rather than treat the trip like a vacation.

Workplace Politics

Employee development programs cannot always place the same amount of emphasis on all employees at once, and not all employees are interested in growing personally and professionally. When some employees take part in development programs and others do not, it creates an opportunity for negative workplace politics. Employees have a responsibility to refrain from gossiping about or resentfully treating others who take advantage of development programs, and to refrain from looking down on employees who choose not to participate.