

Tips for Supervisor on IDP Planning

General Comments and Instructions

Employees use IDPs to maintain and improve their employability and thus advance their careers. However, the supervisor uses IDPs to enhance the organization's ability to achieve its objectives, both now and in the future. Specifically, supervisors work with IDPs to encourage employees to enhance their competencies and to make the best use of their competencies. Hence, IDPs include objectives to improve knowledge and skills and build experience that will be used to benefit the organization as a whole. The responsibility also includes assigning work to employees that allows them to make a maximum contribution.

However, in a more general sense, the supervisor's responsibility is to understand that employees are the organization's greatest assets, and to develop these assets. That development is not limited to near term organizational needs and requirements. It takes into account the organization's longer range needs, and the need to help every employee maintain optimism and sustain motivation that leads to doing the best possible job every day. The organization relies primarily upon supervisors to make this happen. Fulfilling this role requires a willingness to invest in people. It also requires an understanding of the organization's:

- Goals
- Needs
- Functions
- The competencies needed to accomplish the functions
- The competencies possessed by the individuals in the supervisor's human resource pool
- A plan for using and developing available resources that takes into account where individuals are now, and where they can be in the short term and long term future

This approach does more than mandate knowledge and skills employees must learn. It seeks ways to change and add assignments to allow the development and practice of unused or undeveloped competencies. It takes the broad view across the organization and the long view over the coming years in imagining and evaluating career development. It empowers and motivates individuals to produce and grow, and to serve the organization at the same time they are building their careers.

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Your Analysis of Your Organization

Full participation in the IDP process and maximum benefits from it rest on the supervisor's understanding of the following items, and application of that understanding in making individual development real and useful.

1. Thinking from the perspective of the organization as a whole, and of your specific supervisory perspective, what are the organization's needs and objectives, now and in the future?
2. What are the functions and tasks that must be accomplished in your organization's daily work if it is going to meet these objectives?
3. What competencies (ability to do things) are needed among your staff to accomplish these functions and tasks?
4. What competencies do each of the individuals within your span of control possess?
5. What are the gaps between the competencies needed, and the competencies now present in your organization?
6. In what ways can you bring the required competencies that already exist to bear on the functions and tasks that must be accomplished?
7. What competencies should each individual develop from the organization's point of view? from the employee's point of view?

You may want to record your thoughts about specific individuals on your team on the chart on the next page.
