CREATING ACHIEVABLE GOALS

It is important to build a realistic timeline into your employees' development plans that enable them (and you) to track progress towards their goals. Although this seems easy in theory, some employees and managers struggle to identify milestones that help gauge progress. The graphic below provides managers and employees with a framework for establishing milestones within the plan.

Development Goal	Skill Being Developed	Action Steps	Success Measures	Target Completion Date	Date of Next IDP-Pullup
Goal #1: Be able to present project findings to the senior leadership team	Communication	1. Network with speech "guru" to learn presentation tips 2. Work with team to develop script highlighting project findings	1. Present half of scripted speech to peers; let co-presenter handle Q&A session 2. Present fully scripted speech to peers; handle Q&A 3. Present speech in its entirety to function's senior leadership team	3 Months from now 9 Months from now 1 year from now	6 months

Consider the Employee's Current and Desired Skill Level When Creating Milestones

Take stock of your employee's current abilities as you begin to identify milestones. Ask yourself the following questions:

1) What steps would I expect someone to take to reach this development goal?

2) What activities would indicate growth in this skill area?

Think About the Time It Takes to Complete Each Step

Each milestone builds on its predecessor. As you identify target completion dates, consider the following:

1) How long will it take someone to demonstrate competence at this activity?

2) Is the timeline challenging yet achievable?

! Development plans are flexible: revise plans if it becomes evident that the milestones or timelines are too aggressive. Remember the goal is to stretch employees, not break them.

Source: Learning and Development Roundtable research