



University
of Glasgow

**INSPIRING
PEOPLE**

Guide to building a development culture in your team

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Enabling your staff to develop and use their learning will impact on how well you can meet team and University goals.

Learning and development is essential to effective and motivated staff. It is also essential to you being an effective and motivated manager. Learning should be fun, fulfilling and shared.

Remember learning and development includes inductions, shadowing, mentoring, coaching and reading. There are many other ways to learn other than going on a training course.

What managers can do:

- enable learning
- offer opportunities for personal development
- maximise the talent in their team
- help people to identify and achieve their own potential

What the result will be for employees:

- increased confidence
- better performance
- challenging themselves more often without being prompted
- more interest in what is happening in the team and the University

Your role as a manager can have a major impact on staff's willingness and ability to develop. You are able to influence through:

- Leading by example
- Induction and orientation activities and performance development reviews
- Coaching and guidance

- Identifying skills needs then providing training activities, both formal and informal, such as giving more challenging work or shadowing and secondment opportunities
- Encouraging staff career development and promotion

Planning and evaluating learning

Planning

- Think about personality types and previous experiences of planning learning and development. Having a conversation with each individual is vital to understanding the different attitudes of your team to learning
- Be aware of learning styles as not everybody likes to learn in the same way. For more information on learning styles, visit <http://www.mindtools.com/mnemlsty.html> and <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/learn/learning-styles.html>
- Identify learning needs through the PDR system
- Assign a willing team learning champion to assist in finding resources

Evaluation

It's extremely important to measure how useful any learning activity has been, especially after you have thought so carefully about planning it. It's important you understand what learning has taken place and how it will be used in the workplace. This all helps for future planning to make sure you get the best value out of learning and development:

- Consider to what extent the identified training needs were met by the activity
- Discuss with team members what they got out of it, and to what extent their objectives as individuals were achieved
- Discuss with team members how they will use what they have learned to improve or change the way they work
- Measure the overall investment in time, money and resources that your staff put into learning and development
- Report your outcomes to your managers and celebrate successes. This is essential to gain future support for learning and development
- Keeping records can help you identify which learning and development activities are effective and which are not

Leadership, management and coaching skills

To develop your leadership and management abilities, you need to:

- discuss learning and development goals clearly
- be authentic and build trust
- understand your staff and listen to them
- be creative and empower people to develop

Coaching

Using coaching skills to manage tends to promote more personal growth than more directive styles of management. This means:

- using intentional listening – staying open to what is being said, not leaping to conclusions, being attentive and respectful
- asking powerful questions that will encourage discovery and learning rather than giving the answer
- always holding the 'bigger picture' for your member of staff – this means understanding what your member of staff can achieve and helping them realise it.

Some useful behaviours of an effective coach are:

- challenging the learners assumptions
- being a critical friend
- demonstrating how they do something the learner is having difficulty with

How to build a development culture

1. Talk about people's development often

This includes discussing skills, knowledge and areas for further development. Have a conversation with staff before and after development activities. Make sure you always present any sort of development in a positive light, as an opportunity for the individual and the team, rather than as something to remedy a problem. If you ask your team members to attend training, they need to understand why they need to learn that particular skill or gain knowledge and how it will benefit them. After they have done the training, they need early opportunities to put it into practice or many of the benefits may be lost.

Recognise and validate their learning and development. Positive behaviour is strengthened through acknowledgement and praise. When you notice how someone has improved as a result of a specific development opportunity then tell them, and make it explicit how the improvement links back to the learning.

2. Walk the talk

Consider your own development needs and take action. When people see that personal development is important to all levels and job roles they will be more likely to engage in it themselves.

3. Nominate a champion

Learning champions are people in the workplace who will promote learning and development to their peers. Communicating the benefits of learning through word of mouth and personal experience is very powerful.

4. Use what you do already

Use what you do currently on a day to day basis to create a learning environment for example, use team meetings for creative thinking. Use PDR meetings to discuss learning and development planning

5. Build on relationships

Once a month invite one of your partners or stakeholders to give a presentation and question and answer session. Host seminars to encourage sharing of practice and knowledge between colleagues. Set up shadowing or job swap partnerships where staff can learn from each other. This can lead to better understanding of what other employees do and result in more productive joint working.

6. Encourage staff input

Following development opportunities, ask staff to write a short paragraph listing the best thing about the course, the most important thing they've learned and whether they would recommend it to others. This can be taken further by encouraging staff to be reflective practitioners where they can relate the learning to their role and future development. Ask people to share the key things they have learned at team meetings.

To engage with staff really effectively, remember to:

- ***Give people choice***

People have different learning styles, rates of learning and areas of interest. Help them learn and develop in areas that they will find interesting and they will quite naturally become more positive and productive. Offer relevant learning and development in as many ways as you can.

- ***Focus on learning, not training***

Talk about learning, or development, rather than courses. People respond to appropriate learning and development because it:

- benefits and interests them
- helps them to grow and to develop their natural abilities
- helps them to make a difference
- helps them to feel good about themselves and their work

Learning describes a person growing, whereas 'training' describes and commonly represents a transfer of knowledge or skill for organisational gain. Point out how learning takes place naturally as part of people working together e.g. colleagues showing each other a quicker way to complete the process, or having a professional discussion.

Building a development culture to-do list:

- Organise staff sessions/days including learning and development sessions
- Use existing meetings, one to ones, professional and personal development meetings, team meetings etc. for learning and sharing
- Use your stakeholders and partners for quick presentation and quick Q&A sessions
- Ask your line managers to publicise their own learning/courses that they do
- Ask staff to share their learning
- Be really clear about what learning is/means and includes
- Publicise and promote development opportunities in a regular and consistent format
- Create an environment of trust – people are rewarded for trying
- Promote knowledge sharing as an expectation not a bonus