

Developing Staff

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

What do you think it takes to be successful? How many of us really get there by ourselves? The real question is, as a manager, what can you do in order to bring your people along and help them be the best that they can be? This tutorial will cover the topic of developing staff, including the best practices for developing direct reports. Our discussion breaks down as follows:

1. Developing Direct Reports

Now, managers play an absolutely critical role in developing their staff. One of the biggest challenges for any manager is to make sure that the people who report directly to them could, in a sense, replace them, meaning they could do the manager's job.

This requires a manager to develop them in such a way that they would be better at what they did, that they could adequately and successfully do their jobs to the best of their ability and eventually take the manager's place.

2. Best Management Practices

There are some best practices to look for when developing staff. Managers should be able to communicate and manage direct reports, develop career goals of a direct report, and help direct reports with job changes and skills.

Best Management Practices	Description
Provide challenging goals and tasks	A good manager will make sure their direct reports have goals that are not only business-related, but also challenging and rewarding.
Hold development discussions	You want to make sure that they understand where they are and where they need to be, and also some pointers and tips on how they can get there--issues they can work on to help

with them regularly and often	them along that development path.
Be conscious and mindful of the direct report's career goals	The last thing you want to do is get in the way of someone developing. You want to find out where <i>they</i> want to be. What's their five year plan, if you will? In addition, you want to make sure that you're doing everything you can to get them there. That will make them a better employee; not only will they be motivated to work harder, it will be better for your relationship with the direct report.
Construct compelling development plans	You also want to make sure that you and your direct reports are following through on development plans. It doesn't do any good to have a development plan if you're not acting on it and using it to get better.
Get the direct reports to accept developmental moves	As mentioned before, you don't want to keep them in one space. Even if they're the best employee you've ever had, you want to make sure that their goals are getting taken care of. Therefore, if a move comes up that allows them to further that career goal, you want to help to push them along to make sure they're getting the most out of their career and not stagnating in one spot.
Develop people skills	In fact, you want to develop not only your own people skills, but you want to make sure that your direct reports are developing their people skills, too. Part of being a manager and developing your staff is ensuring that they can one day take your place if you need them to. You want to give them the best opportunity you can, and developing those people skills--because managers deal with people--is going to help them quite a bit along the way.

In summary, it's all about making sure that the direct report gets a good shot, and a good turn, up the career ladder!



SUMMARY

Today we learned about **developing direct reports** and how a manager plays a critical role in that task. We also learned about some **best management practices** that managers can take.

Good luck!

Source: adapted from sophia instructor james howard