

How to create a development plan



To best support your employees, everyone should have a Personal Development Plan (PDP). This guide is designed to be used by both line managers and individual employees, ensuring their PDPs are following a well-rounded and unified structure that supports professional and personal development.

What is the purpose of a Personal Development Plan?



A Personal Development Plan or PDP is a structured framework anyone can use to:

- Become aware of skills you have.
- Identify and develop the skills you need.
- Work out what you want to achieve and how you can achieve it.

What are the key elements of a PDP?

Performance objectives

Establishing performance objectives that you can work towards and be measured against is essential for a PDP. These objectives should be developed in collaboration with an employee and their line manager: they should **never** be dictated.

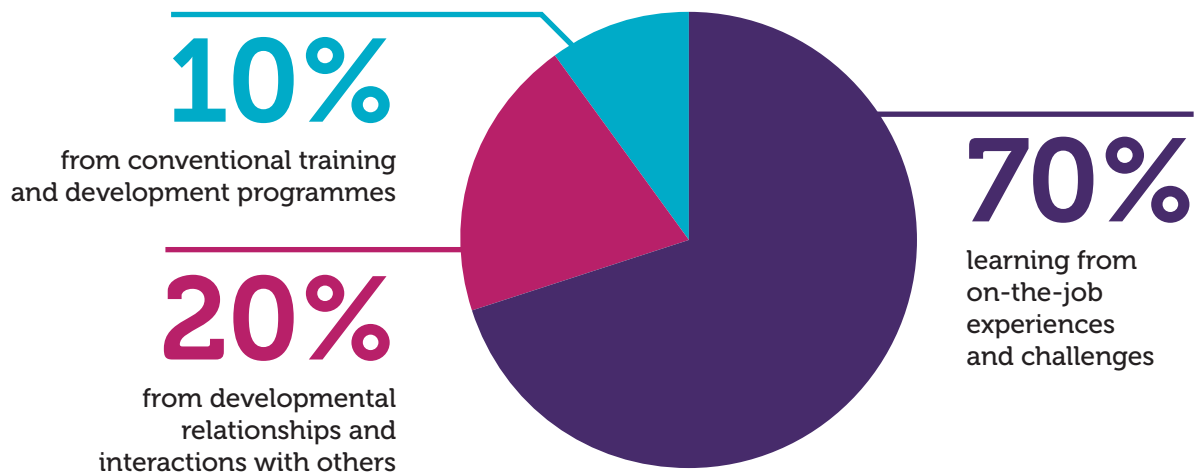
Performance objectives should be set at the start of the business year, with the aim of achieving them within that same year. The **SMART framework** is a great way to structure these objectives; helping you realise and stick to your plan.

S	Specific		The narrower and more specific a goal is, the clearer the steps to achieving it will be.
M	Measurable		Goals need to be quantifiable; this will make it easier to track progress.
A	Achievable		Ensure the goals are realistic and reachable.
R	Relevant		The objectives need to be supportive of the individual's career aspirations.
T	Time-based		Set the goals to be reached within both a reasonable and achievable time frame.

Performance objectives and development goals

Performance objectives are only one of the two types of objective that make up a PDP, the second are development goals.

Performance objectives will focus more on your current job duties, such as increasing sales or meeting deadlines. Development goals aim at long-term growth, such as acquiring new skills or preparing for future roles.

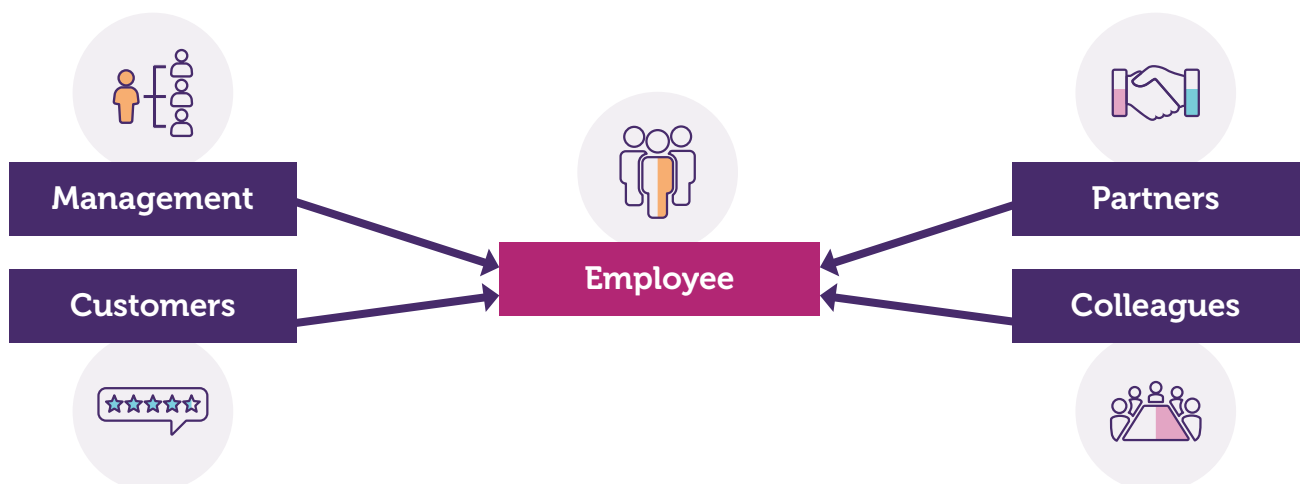


These development goals should also be built around the **SMART framework**. However, they don't necessarily need to be achieved within the same business year, and they shouldn't be as formally accessed as the performance objectives.

When setting out development objectives, try to build them so they follow the **70:20:10 principle**. This approach will help strengthen the synergy between learning and working, so that professional and personal development support one another.

Feedback

Feedback should be a component of every PDP as it gives constructive insights on where we can improve or take our performance to the next level. Be sure to give special consideration to where this feedback comes from, as it will vary from one employee to another and will be role specific.



Values and behaviours

One of the most often overlooked parts of a PDP are the organisations values and behaviours. This is because we naturally focus on the objectives and what actions are required to achieve them.

The way we achieve our objectives is as important as the objectives themselves.



Employees should embody their organisation's **values** and **behaviours** when at work. They are important to the organisation because they align to their overall goal and ways of working; therefore, any objective should be aligned and reflective of them.

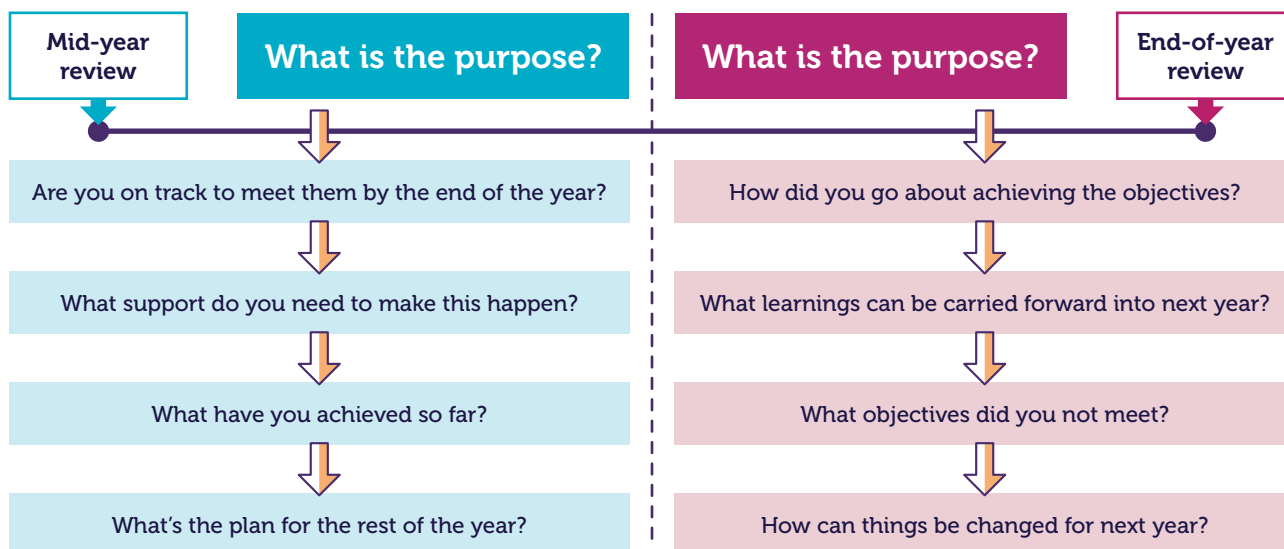


Top tip: Include a section at the top of your PDP template that states your organisation's expectations, values and behaviours. This will reinforce their importance.

Reviews

Employees and their line manager should frequently review PDPs to make sure things are on track, and to secure additional support. However, there should be two formal review points – one mid-year and one at the end of the year.

The structure of both reviews should have the same aim, but with slightly different purposes:



Top tip: For each review, both the manager and employee comments should be captured, as well as any actions taken or changes made.

Are you using your WISE Member benefits?

WISE members get exclusive access to numerous business benefits, including events, job adverts, and access to thought leadership. Are you getting the most of your membership? Speak to us to explore how WISE can support your organisation further – info@wisecampaign.org.uk.