

Guide on Holding Development Discussions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

What is the guide for?

The Guide on Holding Development Discussions has been developed to support meaningful career development discussions between line managers and staff.

The aim of the guide is to assist in regular development-focused conversations and to:

- Establish where jobholders are in their career 'right now'
- Better understand their motivation and engagement levels
- Gain an insight into their aspirations
- Discuss current ability and future potential
- Explore focused development

The guide suggests tools to support line managers and staff to achieve these aims including a monthly conversation template for regular discussions and a 'Talent Map' which could be revisited every six months.

Is this guide only for line managers?

The guide is to help both line managers and jobholders prepare for the conversation.

Is the guide only for staff who wish to be promoted?

The guidance is to support all colleagues in developing their full potential, not just those who are seeking promotion. This is about encouraging colleagues to continue to learn and develop in their roles, and ensuring that everyone is supported in their development. The guide recognises it is perfectly okay for people to be happy where they are in their career. Not everybody wants to move up in the organisation and they should still be supported in their development.

Is allocation of a position in the nine box grid system mandatory?

Allocation of a position in the nine box grid system is **not** mandatory. The nine box grid provides a tool to assess where a colleague may be at a point and what might be the most appropriate development options in those particular circumstances. It is designed to add value to the development conversation by highlighting the range of development options and giving suggested conversation starters for line managers. It should be remembered that positions in the talent map are not static and will change at various times throughout a colleague's career.

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How does this link with the Performance Management System?

The guide is intended to improve the quality of the conversations already taking place as part of the performance management process, and to assist line managers to hold conversations in areas where this does not already happen. For example, the use of the talent map and more detailed conversations on at least a six monthly basis aligns with mid-year and end-year reviews and the outcome of these discussions should inform an individual's Personal Development Plan.

How often should meetings be held?

The meetings should be held regularly. In some areas this might be monthly. In other areas it might be more or less frequent depending on the nature of the work. In most cases conversations are already happening on a regular basis between staff and line managers but they may be focused on achievement of objectives and targets without a development conversation. The guide is not about introducing additional, separate meetings but about helping to ensure the conversations are such that everyone is supported with their ongoing development needs.

Will this information be held and if so where?

There is a short template for use by line managers and the individual member of staff. It will not be held centrally or on HR Connect. The outcome of the discussions should however inform the content of an individual's Personal Development Plan which is recorded as part of the performance management process on HR Connect.

What opportunities are there? How do we know what is available?

A guide on the development options available has been created to provide managers with details about what is available across the NICS. It is important to remember that most development happens on the job and should not always rely on formal training or a change of job.

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How is this being introduced and rolled out across the NICS?

The guides are being rolled out as a resource for all colleagues and each Department will be considering how they might be best used to support staff development within their respective business areas.

What if I disagree with my line manager's view on where I am in the talent map?

The talent map is a tool to help to determine the most appropriate development and support for an individual and it is important to remember that positions on the talent map will change over time. If a staff member and line manager have differing views about a position in the talent map, the guide contains suggested conversation topics to help to explore this and ensure the conversation is a meaningful one aimed at providing the appropriate support for the individual.