

Developing: An Overview (Form Sections III, IVA)

Developing is something that happens all the time—it's ongoing. One way to think of it is as the "glue" that holds the performance management process together. While events like defining and reviewing happen at specific times, developing happens all the time.

Here are some key aspects of developing to keep in mind:

- As with all other aspects of Amoco Performance Management, developing is *mutual*
- Employees and supervisors share responsibility for employees' development.
- It's critical that adequate time be committed to development.

Why is developing so important?

The key reason ongoing development is so important is that Amoco's business and technical environment is changing constantly. As an organization, Amoco needs to be improving and adapting all the time. In order to keep our competitive edge, all employees need to be encouraged and allowed to be the best they can possibly be.

Fulfilling potential is an ongoing process. Developing means personal and professional growth that allows employees to cope with change and challenges in the best way possible.

There are three elements to developing:

- Development planning;
- Coaching and being coached; and
- Interim reviews.

There is nothing
permanent except
change.

—Heraclitus

Development Planning (Form Sections IIIA, IIIB)

Philosophy

Development can't happen without proper planning.

Development planning is critical to:

- Increasing the probability of reaching objectives;
- Giving employees the tools needed to do their jobs;
- Improving skills employees need for job performance; and
- Encouraging employees to look forward.

During the defining stage, employees and supervisors need to discuss development needs and their plans to address them. They also need to agree on the resources the employee will use for development over the coming year.

Content

A development plan consists of two parts. The first part is the identification of developmental issues that affect performance, particularly those leading to the achievement of roles, accountabilities, objectives, or performance dimensions. These issues should highlight where employee learning, growth, or skill development should occur.

Several tools are available to help you identify areas for development. For instance, you might use previous performance reviews. Another tool is Sections I and II of the performance management form that deal with roles, accountabilities, objectives, and dimensions.

An especially critical tool is personal input. Employees need to prepare for planning by thinking about their most important issues.

The second part of development planning is listing the actions that the employee should take during the performance cycle. This includes the roles, responsibilities, and time frames by which activities should be completed.

When planning for development, there are a variety of options and resources available. Training is an important resource, but it is not the only one.

Development options and resources

- New assignments/projects;
- Working with people who have mastered the skills you need to improve;
- Consulting co-workers for help and suggestions;
- Asking for coaching from your supervisor;
- Training a new employee;
- Serving on a committee or task force;
- Books;
- Training classes; and
- Seminars, conferences, and courses.

Development planning: process steps

- Employees should prepare for planning by drafting their developmental issues and possible activities.
- Supervisors should prepare by drafting these for their employees.
- At defining, employees and supervisors should meet and come to a mutual understanding about issues and plans.
- After establishing developmental plans in Section IIIB, both employee and supervisor should sign and date the form on the bottom of page 3.

Taking responsibility for your own development

There are several ways that everyone can participate actively in their own development. Here are some suggestions:

- Monitor your performance. Are you meeting the standards you set for yourself?
- Ask for help when you need it. Can you use resources such as your supervisor and other employees as examples and sources of information?
- Track your progress. Are you where you should be at checkpoints throughout the year?
- Follow through on your development plans. Have you done what you said you would do?
- Take initiative. Are there options or resources available to you that will improve your performance?

III. Performance Development

A. Identify developmental issues affecting performance which relate to roles, accountabilities, objectives or performance dimensions.

Because of the need to revamp/upgrade the MCU test equipment, Tim will be involved in problem solving, decision making, and innovation.

Gas chromatograph operation is a big operation in Tim's lab.

B. Describe action plans to address developmental issues discussed above. Include roles, responsibilities and the time frame by which the activities should be completed.

- 1. Attend a three day Kepner-Tregoe course during the first quarter.*
- 2. Attend a vendor course on gas chromatograph operation and maintenance within six months.*

Roles and Accountabilities, Objectives, "Importance" portion of Performance Dimensions and Performance Development issues and plans have been mutually established and Supplemental Input individuals have been identified.

Employee's Signature

Date

Supervisor's Signature

Date

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	Supervisor's Signature	Date

Coaching and Being Coached

Supervisors need to be good coaches, while employees need to be coachable. Good coaching means letting people know they can do better at their work as soon as you know how they can do better. Being coachable means being open to feedback and being willing to modify your behavior. Coaching is critical because it's designed to:

- Help build a foundation of trust and respect;
- Provide day-to-day informal feedback about performance;
- Develop employee skills and knowledge;
- Resolve performance problems;
- Increase employee satisfaction;
- Ensure continued understanding of expectations and priorities; and
- Recognize positive performance.

Knowledge is the only instrument of production that is not subject to diminishing returns.

—J. M. Clark

Key concepts in coaching and being coached

Coaching is intended to help people improve performance, fulfill their roles and accountabilities, meet their objectives, and succeed within the performance dimensions.

Here are some key concepts associated with coaching and being coached:

- *Effective coaching needs to be timely.* The supervisor should communicate immediately upon seeing a way to make an improvement in performance or when spotting an error in process or about to happen. Also, long-term observations should be communicated as soon as you have analyzed any trends in performance.

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- *Frequent coaching is important.* Coaching can last one minute or one hour. The length of time depends on the employee's needs and the supervisor's style.
- *Mutuality is critical to effective coaching.* When employees or supervisors are advised of problems or trouble areas, they need to listen objectively and think of ways to correct the problem.
- *Coaching doesn't always start with the supervisor.* If employees need help with something, they should approach their supervisors and ask for coaching on a specific issue.

Coaching Tips

- Overcome any resistance to coaching by setting a positive tone. Begin and end your session with a positive comment. Be optimistic.
- Establish ground rules by stating your intentions to be honest, open, and direct.
- Be sure to focus on specific behaviors, activities, and results. Generalities do not help improve performance—people need specific information in order to correct problems.
- Discuss the effects of behaviors, activities, and results. Try to put behaviors in context and relate them to other departmental goals.
- State your opinions honestly, but be sensitive to the other person's feelings. Keep in mind that coaching should be done as you would like to have it done to you.
- Keep in mind that many strengths and weaknesses are related.
- Don't forget that negative feedback is hard for anyone to accept. Discuss negatives in a constructive way—as opportunities for improvement.

- Deal with resistance by letting the other person know of behaviors or actions that are blocking the coaching process.
- Remember that mutuality is important. Invite the person being coached to make the session a two-way conversation.
- Take responsibility for your own actions and find out what effect they might have had on the person's performance.
- Don't stray off onto other subjects—stay focused on coaching.

Skills for accepting and responding to coaching

- Overcome your resistance to constructive criticism about performance. Remember that without frequent coaching no one would improve as quickly in job performance.
- Help set a positive climate by being open to what your supervisor has to say. If the time is inappropriate to receive coaching, say so, and schedule another time.
- Encourage your supervisor to be open, honest, and direct by stating you will be open during the coaching session.
- Stay focused on performance activities, behaviors, and results. Don't fall into the trap of discussing personalities and pet peeves.
- As you hear feedback, think honestly about how your activities, behavior, and results affect other people in your department or unit.
- Try to see the positive in the situation being discussed. If your supervisor does not bring up positive aspects, raise them, since your strengths and your development needs are related.

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- Stay calm in the coaching session. It's sometimes difficult for everyone to accept constructive criticism. Try to see problem aspects of your performance as opportunities for improvement.
- Always remember that coaching is a two-way street. Your supervisor needs to give you important information about your performance, but you need to listen and respond to that information.

Interim Reviews (Form Section IVA)

Philosophy

Objectives can change during the year—and for several reasons. Because change is a fact of life, performance management includes regular opportunities for employees and supervisors to review objectives and modify them if necessary. These opportunities are interim reviews.

Interim reviews give you the chance to step back from your everyday responsibilities and look at overall performance. Interim reviews are formal events that, ideally, happen three times during the year. They are key to the development process.

There are several reasons that interim reviews are included as part of Amoco Performance Management:

- To encourage two-way communication and feedback;
- To reinforce the positive aspects of performance;
- To help employees and supervisors stay on track regarding expectations for performance;
- To separate review sessions from routine job responsibilities;
- To provide the basis for the preliminary review discussion; and
- To ensure that there are no surprises in the formal review.

The purpose for interim reviews is employee development, the same purpose associated with coaching and being coached. The difference between the two is that coaching and being coached are ongoing *processes*, while interim reviews are formal *events*.

Content

During the defining discussion, you may schedule all of the planned interim reviews for the year, or you may set up only the first interim review date.

Interim reviews should occur on a regularly scheduled basis, such as once a quarter. Or they should occur after an event, such as when a milestone is reached, a project is completed, or you are transferred to a new job.

During these interim reviews, progress on roles and accountabilities, objectives, and performance dimensions will be reviewed and discussed to that point in the performance cycle.

Interim review: process steps

The employee and supervisor need to take several steps to independently prepare for an interim review:

- Review roles and accountabilities and consider how they are being fulfilled.
- Review employee objectives and progress to date.
- Look at objectives and consider if they need to be modified.
- Review performance dimensions for progress in fulfilling them.
- Jot down notes about observations about performance since the last review.
- Consider progress on the development plan.

Steps for conducting an interim review

The simplest way to conduct an interim review is to walk through the sections of the performance management form that were filled in during defining. Both participants should discuss:

- What has performance been within roles, accountabilities, and performance dimensions? Are the priorities set in defining still appropriate?
- What progress has been made toward meeting each objective?
- What's going well? Why?
- What's not going according to plan? Why?
- What progress has been made in implementing the development plan?
- Are adjustments needed in performance? In roles and accountabilities? In objectives? In performance dimensions? In the development plan?
- Have any development opportunities surfaced in the performance dimensions?
- Are additional resources appropriate? What are they?
- If adjustments are required, what are they? Who will follow up on them?

Key skills for interim reviews are giving constructive feedback, reinforcing positive behavior, asking for feedback, and handling resistance.

Steps for giving constructive feedback

- Build a rapport to help the employee feel at ease. Be sure that feedback is given privately, with no interruptions.
- Use open-ended questions to gather information and to encourage the employee to become involved.
- Be sensitive to important emotional messages and to where “hot buttons” are.
- Use both praise and specific, constructive feedback to motivate and correct behavior.
- Ask the employee for suggestions and solutions.
- Build on the employee’s suggestions to formulate action plans.
- Gain commitment to the plans.

Steps for reinforcing positive aspects of performance

Performance management is committed to improving job performance and effectiveness. Because of this goal, most people tend to focus on things that aren’t going well or need improvement. But it’s also important to reinforce things that are being done right:

- When you see an employee succeeding, provide encouragement and positive feedback immediately, as well as in the interim review.
- Cite specific accomplishments when giving praise.
- Always explain why the achievement was significant.

Steps for asking for feedback

Because Amoco Performance Management is a mutual process, employees need to develop skills in asking for feedback. Here are a few suggestions:

- When your supervisor mentions that something went well, ask what specifically went well.
- When asking for feedback, be sensitive to the other person's schedule. Try to approach your supervisor when there is enough time to do justice to the feedback.
- If you want feedback on a specific event (for example on a presentation you're giving), ask your supervisor to attend.

Steps for handling resistance

In any reviewing or coaching discussion, it's likely that the supervisor and employee won't agree on all points. If there is resistance, here are some tips on how to handle it:

- Anticipate the effect you have on the other person and think about possible sources of anger or conflict.
- Ask open ended questions to bring out the other person's feelings.
- Listen and be prepared to change your mind if necessary. Never argue or defend.
- If you believe you are right, repeat your message. When repeating, use a specific example as evidence.
- Involve the other person in the solution.
- Take time out, if necessary. If the conflict persists or you're not arriving at any solution, stop the discussion and set a time to return to it later.

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Keep in mind that what you are doing is worthwhile even if the session is difficult or your message doesn't seem to be getting across. The behavior in question may take time to change. Also, consider the consequences of *not* dealing with a problem; persist if the consequences are significant.

Documenting interim reviews

There need not be much paperwork involved with interim reviews. These reviews are intended to be simple. Here are a few documentation suggestions to keep in mind:

- Note on Section IVA the actual dates in which interim reviews are conducted.
- If there are any changes in objectives, they should be noted in Section IB1 of the form. Employee and supervisor should initial the form.
- Take notes on a separate piece of paper.
- Keep copies of all documentation in both the employee's and the supervisor's forms folders until the formal review is written.