



Building Competitive Companies Since 1946

Career Development is Not Optional

Customers of PSP Metrics are well-acquainted with our strong belief in the value of career development activities – for an individual employee and for a company as a whole. They are aware that we advocate broadening and deepening one’s skill sets to better execute current job responsibilities, as well as to prepare for future opportunities. Our customers know PSP preaches that lifelong learning is the key to success in any career one might choose.

So, what can be said about career development that we have not already stated or written in the past 25 years? The “new news” about career development is that it is no longer optional. Employees who do not work to improve themselves every year will be left behind. Change is happening so fast in business that the skills, abilities, and work behaviors needed for success this year may not be enough next year.

Automation, computerization, and international competition have changed the landscape for career planning.

Gone are the days of job stability where an employee could count on employer loyalty by simply being “a good worker.” Mergers and acquisitions, downsizings and rightsizings, reorganizations and restructurings are requiring people to change jobs whether they want to or not.



GET A GRIP

How does one get some semblance of control of their career trajectory in such an environment? First, take your own pulse. In other words, get a grip on your current strengths and weaknesses. If you have difficulty doing so, consider an assessment by an industrial psychologist who works with a broad range of companies. Make sure the psychologist uses assessment tools that are benchmarked to specific occupational groups and industries.

Second, update your resume. Even if you are not planning to test the job market, updating your resume gets you thinking about your accomplishments and about marketing yourself for opportunities that may arise. An especially important part of this exercise is crafting an “Objective” statement. Write down what you want to do next in your career, the next contribution you would like to make to a company. The Objective statement, in itself, can help you get a grip.

STRENGTHEN YOUR GRIP

Once you have assessed your strengths and weaknesses and have updated your resume, you can begin to address your needs for improvement. We call this “strengthening your grip.” Until now, improve-

ment efforts typically have consisted of such activities as cross-training, job shadowing, attending seminars, reading books, earning a graduate degree, or talking to a coach/mentor. Often, several of these activities are bundled into a broad-based management training program; other resources are tailored to the specific needs of individuals.

However, an important ingredient is missing in most career development programs. That ingredient is evaluation. Despite all the time and money spent on career development activities, there has been little measurement in the workplace of the results of self-development activities. Many companies simply track completion/non-completion of an employee's improvement "do-list." Some companies conduct 360 surveys on managers before and/or after a major training program, but rarely do this on an ongoing or repeated basis. Fortunately, the technology now exists to do much more to measure and evaluate career development progress.

PSP Metrics has developed a digital Leadership Dashboard that tracks a user's progress on each improvement need. Graphic outputs show not only percentage of completion of each development activity, but also periodic progress ratings by fellow employees who observe the participant regularly at work. PSP's web-enabled tool can be programmed for any development need and can automatically solicit and compile progress ratings by a number of raters. In addition, the Leadership Dashboard captures PSP's custom-tailored training and development recommendations for a user on a topic-by-topic basis.

PSP's Leadership Dashboard makes evaluation of career development activities as easy as clicking an icon on one's computer, tablet, or smartphone. Most importantly, it enables an employee to know if career development activities are achieving observable outcomes.

CHANGE YOUR GRIP

Career development is a continuous and ever-changing process. As technology and globalism alter the world of work, each of us must change our grip and continue to adapt our skills and behaviors to keep pace. Whether you are early-career, mid-career, or late-career, the only constant is change. We are constantly preparing for our next assignment, whether that is broader responsibility in our current role, promotion to management or executive ranks,

or eventual retirement. Yes, even retirement requires preparation for using your strengths, improving your weaknesses, and allocating your time.

Gone are the days when an employee could spend an entire career on one job with one employer. Continued self-development is the only option employees have to create a long and satisfying career. Tools are available to help you get a grip on your pluses and minuses, strengthen your grip to make self-improvements, and change your grip as opportunities and circumstances require. For more information on lifelong career development or the Leadership Dashboard, consult your PSP industrial psychologist.

Check Out Our New Developmental Tool!



If you haven't done so yet, check out our new developmental tool, The Leadership Dashboard. It's an online tool that makes individualized career development easy for today's busy managers.

Visit our website at
www.leadership-dashboard.com

PSP Metrics is a leading provider of pre-employment screening tools for the manufacturing, consumer products, utility and service industries. We adapt applicant screening tools to the information needs and budget of each customer and provide 24-hour turnaround of test results worldwide. We also design tools for employee retention, management development, and succession planning.