

Personal Development Plan Template

A free, fillable PDP template with a completed example

Training Express

How to use this template

A personal development plan (PDP) sets out what you want to get better at, how you'll do it and when. Type straight into the boxes on pages 2–4, or print them and fill them in by hand. Pages 5 and 6 show a completed example. Aim for **3 to 5 goals** and review your plan about **every 3 months**.

- 1 Review where you are now.** Fill in the personal SWOT on page 2. Use your last appraisal and any feedback.
- 2 Choose what to develop.** Compare your skills with the role or goal you're aiming for. Pick 3 to 5 gaps.
- 3 Write SMART objectives.** Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound — so anyone could tell if you've done it.
- 4 Plan actions and support.** Mix learning by doing, learning from people and courses. Note who or what will help.
- 5 Set dates and measures.** Give each goal a real date and evidence someone else could check.
- 6 Track and review.** Update the status column and use the review log on page 4 every 3 months.

Turning a vague goal into a SMART one

Vague goal	SMART objective
Get better at presenting	Give two 10-minute presentations at team meetings by 31 March, and ask for feedback after each
Learn Excel	Complete an online Excel course and use pivot tables to build a monthly sales report by the end of February
Be more organised	Plan each week every Monday and miss no deadlines for 8 weeks in a row

What to write in each column

Column	What to write	Example
Development goal	One skill or area, in a few words.	<i>Presenting to groups</i>
Why it matters	How it helps your job, course or career.	<i>Team leaders present monthly updates</i>
SMART objective	A clear goal with a measure and a date.	<i>Give two 10-minute team updates by 31 March</i>
Actions	Two to four concrete steps.	<i>Watch two colleagues present; rehearse with a mentor</i>
Resources & support	People, time, money or tools.	<i>Line manager; mentor 1 hour a fortnight</i>
Success measure	Evidence someone else could check.	<i>Manager feedback of 4/5 or higher</i>
Target date	A real date, not 'soon'.	<i>31 March</i>
Status	Not started, On track, At risk or Done.	<i>On track</i>

Tip: Write goals around what you can control. You can't promise yourself a promotion, but you can lead a project, gain a qualification or build the skills the next role needs.

Part 1: About you and your personal SWOT

Start with an honest look at where you are now

NAME	JOB ROLE OR COURSE	DATE STARTED	NEXT REVIEW DATE

Strengths
What do you do well? What do people come to you for?

Weaknesses
What do you find hard or put off? What feedback repeats?

Opportunities
Projects, training, mentors or changes you could use.

Threats
Things that could get in the way: time, workload, competition.

Aim for 3 to 5 goals. Choose a status from the drop-down in the last column.

	Development goal The skill or area	Why it matters Link to job, course or career	SMART objective Specific, measurable, dated	Actions 2 to 4 concrete steps	Resources & support People, time, money, tools	Success measure Evidence you can show	Target date	Status
1								Not started
2								Not started
3								Not started
4								Not started
5								Not started

Part 3: Review log

Review your plan about every 3 months and rewrite it once a year

Questions to ask at each review: What have I achieved since the last review? · What got in the way? · Is each goal still relevant? · Do I need different support? · What's my next step for each goal?

Review date	Progress so far	What got in the way	Changes and next steps

EVIDENCE I'VE KEPT (certificates, feedback, examples of work)

Completed example: Sam's personal SWOT

Illustrative example — use it to see the level of detail to aim for, then write goals that fit you

NAME	JOB ROLE OR COURSE	DATE STARTED	NEXT REVIEW DATE
Sam	Customer Service Team Leader (team of 8)	October	January

Strengths

What do you do well? What do people come to you for?

- Calm and patient with upset customers
- Team trusts me and comes to me for help
- Strong on processes and procedures

Weaknesses

What do you find hard or put off? What feedback repeats?

- Nervous presenting to senior managers
- Little experience with budgets
- Avoid spreadsheets and reporting

Opportunities

Projects, training, mentors or changes you could use.

- Company is opening a second contact centre
- Manager has offered mentoring
- Training budget available this year

Threats

Things that could get in the way: time, workload, competition.

- Busy peak season from November to January
- Other team leaders may apply for the same role

Sam's goal: be ready to apply for an operations manager role within 18 months.

Why this example works: each goal links to the target role (Sam compared the operations manager job description with current skills) · it mixes ways of learning, with only one course · every success measure is something someone else could check, not 'feel more confident'.

Completed example: Sam's development plan

Four goals, each linked to the target role

Development goal The skill or area	Why it matters Link to job, course or career	SMART objective Specific, measurable, dated	Actions 2 to 4 concrete steps	Resources & support People, time, money, tools	Success measure Evidence you can show	Target date	Status
Presenting to senior leaders	Ops managers present monthly results to directors	Present the team's monthly results at two leadership meetings by the end of March	Watch two leadership meetings; build slides with my manager; rehearse with a mentor	Line manager; mentor (1 hour a fortnight)	Positive written feedback from my manager after each one	31 March	On track
Reporting and data	Ops managers report on targets weekly	Build a weekly team performance dashboard in Excel by the end of February	Complete an online Excel course (about 6 hours); shadow the MI analyst for half a day	Training budget; MI analyst	Dashboard used in weekly team meetings for 4 weeks in a row	28 February	Not started
Budget management	The role includes a staffing budget	Help my manager prepare next year's staffing budget for our team	Ask to join budget planning; go through last year's budget with my manager	Line manager; finance business partner	Manager signs off my section of the budget	30 April	Not started
Leading a wider team	The role manages 3 team leaders	Cover the operations manager's role for 2 weeks during annual leave	Agree cover dates; shadow for one day first; keep a daily log	Operations manager; HR for a management course	Cover completed with no escalations missed; feedback from 2 team leaders	31 July	Not started