Personal development plan template with a 70-20-10 activity planner

A personal development plan template helps one person plan their growth at work over three to six months: a direction, two or three capabilities, activities that mix real work, other people and courses, the support they need and three review dates. This kit has a blank plan, a 70-20-10 activity planner, a review sheet, a manager guide, a filled example and a 60-minute session. It is owned by the person, not an appraisal.

60 minutes | 2–16 participants | Online and adaptable in person

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The outcome

In 60 minutes each participant drafts a plan with a direction, two or three capabilities, at least five activities of which most sit in real work, support requests that name one person and a date, and three review dates.

Before the session

- For trainers, coaches and team leads who help 2–16 people at work each write their own development plan, for example at the end of a programme. It is not an appraisal.
- Send the blank plan a few days before. Ask people to think about where they want their work to go in the next 12 months. Bring the filled example.
- Agree with the sponsor who sees the plans. The default here: the person keeps the plan and chooses what to share. Say so in the invitation.
- Send the sheets as plain text for screen readers and as an editable file. Accept typed plans, let people pass and keep cameras optional. Nobody has to share a capability.

Included in this kit

A facilitator run of show, participant worksheets with real tables, reference tables, debrief questions, adaptation notes and a follow-up plan. Use the editable Word copy to tailor examples and prompts before delivery.

Original material by Superglue. Timings are suggestions; adjust them to your participants. This resource has not been independently evaluated.

What is inside

- Personal development plan: direction and capabilities
- 70-20-10 activity planner
- Support needed and review dates
- Review sheet
- Pair check questions
- Manager conversation guide
- 70-20-10 activity types
- Filled example: direction and capabilities
- Filled example: 70-20-10 activity planner
- Filled example: support needed and review dates
- Filled example: review sheet
- Facilitator section: run of show, reference tables, debrief and adaptations

Personal development plan: direction and capabilities

Choose two or three capabilities: things you want to be able to do at work, written with a verb. For each one, give a real example of what you can do now and say how you and others will see the change. This is your plan; you choose what to share.

Name, role, plan start date and end date

_____

Direction: where I want my work to go in the next 12 months

_____

#	Capability (what I want to be able to do)	Why it matters for my work	What I can do now, with an example	What I will be able to do by the end date	How I and others will see it
C1					
C2					
C3					

70-20-10 activity planner

Write two to four activities for each capability. Each one starts with a verb. Type: Experience (learning in real work), Others (feedback, coaching, shadowing) or Structured (courses, reading). Hours are your own estimate. Status: planned, in progress, done or dropped.

The 70-20-10 split is commonly attributed to Michael Lombardo and Robert Eichinger, drawing on research at the Center for Creative Leadership, in the 1990s. It is a rule of thumb for balancing a plan, not a measured ratio or a target. Use it to check that most activities sit in real work.

#	For	Activity (starts with a verb)	Type	Hours	Start	Done by	Status
A1							
A2							
A3							
A4							
A5							
A6							
A7							
A8							
A9							
A10							

Mix check, in planned hours: experience ____ others ____ structured ____ total ____

Support needed and review dates

Each request names what you need, one person to ask and the date by which you will ask. Mark it Asked when you have asked and Agreed when the person has said yes. Then set three review dates, each with a person.

#	What I need	From whom	For	By when	Asked or agreed
S1					
S2					
S3					
S4					
S5					
S6					

Review 1, after four to six weeks: date and with whom

_____

Review 2, in the middle: date and with whom

_____

Review 3, at the end date: date and with whom

_____

Review sheet

Fill one column at each review. Look at what you can do now, not only at what you have done. For each capability, decide to keep it, adapt it or stop it.

Question	Review 1	Review 2	Review 3
Date, and who was there			
Activities done since the last review			
What I can do now that I could not do before, with an example			
What got in the way			
Mix check: hours done of experience, others and structured			
Decision for each capability: keep, adapt or stop			
Next activity, with a date			
Support I still need, and from whom			

Pair check questions

The partner asks; the owner decides what to change. Four minutes for each plan, then two minutes to make changes.

Question	Passes, or what to change
Can you picture each capability being done at work?	
Does “what I can do now” give one real example?	
Does each capability have at least one activity in real work?	
Does at least one activity involve another person?	
Does every support request name one person and a date?	
Are the three review dates in a calendar?	

Manager conversation guide

A 30-minute conversation after the person has drafted the plan. The person leads and owns the plan; the manager listens, offers real-work opportunities and answers support requests. The minutes add up to 30.

Keep out of this conversation: ratings and comparisons; pay, promotion and grading; performance concerns (hold a separate conversation); private matters, unless the person raises them; promises you cannot keep.

Minutes	Part	What the manager does	Words you can use
0–3	Open	Say what the conversation is for and what it is not. Let the person lead.	“This is your plan. My job today is to understand it and help with support. I am not rating anything.”
3–10	Listen	Ask the person to read the direction and the capabilities. Ask questions; do not rewrite them.	“Which of these matters most to you, and why?” “What would I see you doing when this is done?”
10–17	Real work	Look at the activity planner. Offer stretch tasks, projects or people to learn from that the person may not know about.	“Where in the next month could you practise this in your real work?” “Who does this well that you could watch?”
17–24	Support	Answer each support request with yes, no with a reason, or a date by which you will find out.	“Yes, from [date].” “Not this quarter, because [reason].” “I will find out by [date].”
24–28	Reviews	Put the review dates in both calendars now. Agree who books them.	“Shall we put the three reviews in now? I will send the invitations.”
28–30	Close	Read back what you agreed to do, and when. Write it on the support list.	“So from me: [what] by [date]. Anything I have missed?”

70-20-10 activity types

The three types of activity in the planner.

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Type	Rule of thumb	What it means	Examples at work	Watch out for
Experience	About 70%	Learning by doing real work: a stretch task, a project, covering a role	Lead part of a meeting; build next month’s report	No time to reflect. Add a short note after each task.
Others	About 20%	Learning from people: feedback, coaching, mentoring, shadowing	Ask someone to watch and give feedback; shadow a colleague	Waiting to be offered. Name the person and ask.
Structured	About 10%	Planned learning: a course, an e-learning module, a book	A three-hour course; two chapters of a book	No practice after it. Pair it with an experience activity.

Filled example: direction and capabilities

A fictional learning coordinator drafted this plan in a session on Tuesday 27 October 2026. The plan runs from Monday 2 November 2026 to Friday 26 March 2027.

Worked example

Direction: in the next 12 months I want to move from organising sessions to leading short ones myself, so that the team can run more onboarding sessions without waiting for a trainer.

#	Capability (what I want to be able to do)	Why it matters for my work	What I can do now, with an example	What I will be able to do by the end date	How I and others will see it
C1	Lead a 60-minute online session for 8 to 12 people	The team wants to run more short onboarding sessions, and the two trainers are fully booked until March.	I have produced sessions but never led one. I hosted the chat in four sessions in September.	Lead two onboarding sessions alone, finish within five minutes of the plan and bring every breakout back on time.	My timing notes from both sessions and the senior trainer’s observation notes.
C2	Write a session plan with timed steps that someone else can run	Plans that only their author can run stop sessions when one person is away.	I edit plans that others write. My one draft, in August, ran 20 minutes over in the dry run.	Write a 60-minute plan that a colleague runs in a dry run without asking me how a step works.	The list of questions the colleague asks during the dry run, and the minutes it runs over or under.
C3	Turn feedback forms into changes to a session	We collect forms after every session, but nobody reads them across sessions.	I file the forms and count the returns. I do not look for patterns.	Summarise the forms of three sessions on one page with two proposed changes, and see one change made.	The one-page summary, and the change in the next version of the session plan.

Filled example: 70-20-10 activity planner

The same fictional plan, with the status as it stood at the second review on Thursday 28 January 2027. Planned hours: experience 22 (69%), others 5 (16%), structured 5 (16%), total 32. Four activities are done, three in progress and two planned. A8 is six days past its done-by date.

#	For	Activity (starts with a verb)	Type	Hours	Start	Done by	Status
A1	C1	Lead the first 15 minutes of two sessions that the senior trainer runs	Experience	4	2 Nov 2026	4 Dec 2026	Done
A2	C1	Lead two 60-minute onboarding sessions alone	Experience	8	21 Jan 2027	18 Feb 2027	In progress
A3	C1	Ask the senior trainer to observe my first session and give feedback on timing and breakouts	Others	2	21 Jan 2027	29 Jan 2027	Done
A4	C1	Complete the internal three-hour online facilitation course	Structured	3	9 Nov 2026	27 Nov 2026	Done
A5	C2	Write the plan for the February onboarding session	Experience	6	18 Jan 2027	5 Feb 2027	In progress
A6	C2	Ask a colleague to run my plan in a dry run and list every question they ask	Others	2	8 Feb 2027	12 Feb 2027	Planned
A7	C2	Read two facilitator guides from the team library and note what makes a step clear	Structured	2	2 Nov 2026	11 Dec 2026	Done
A8	C3	Summarise the feedback forms of three sessions on one page with two proposed changes	Experience	4	11 Jan 2027	22 Jan 2027	In progress
A9	C3	Talk the summary through with the programme owner and agree which change to make	Others	1	1 Mar 2027	12 Mar 2027	Planned

Filled example: support needed and review dates

Three of the four requests are agreed. S4 was asked on Monday 25 January and is not yet agreed. Review dates: Thursday 3 December 2026 and Thursday 28 January 2027 with the line manager (the senior trainer joined the second), and Friday 26 March 2027 at the end date.

#	What I need	From whom	For	By when	Asked or agreed
S1	Two sessions in November where I lead the first 15 minutes	Senior trainer	C1	30 Oct 2026	Agreed
S2	Three hours of work time for the online facilitation course	Line manager	C1	6 Nov 2026	Agreed
S3	Access to the feedback forms of the last three onboarding sessions	Programme owner	C3	8 Jan 2027	Agreed
S4	A colleague for a one-hour dry run in February	Learning team	C2	29 Jan 2027	Asked

Filled example: review sheet

The fictional learning coordinator's first two reviews. At the first review no activity with another person was done yet, so the next activity was to ask for an observer.

Question	Review 1	Review 2	Review 3
Date, and who was there	Thursday 3 December 2026, with my line manager	Thursday 28 January 2027, with my line manager and the senior trainer	Planned for Friday 26 March 2027
Activities done since the last review	A1 (led two openings) and A4 (the course). A7 half done.	A7 finished. A3: the senior trainer observed my first session on 21 January.	
What I can do now that I could not do before, with an example	I can open a session and set up the first breakout without notes.	I led a full session. It ended four minutes late; all three breakouts came back on time.	
What got in the way	Nothing from others yet: I had not asked anyone to watch me.	A8: the forms of the third session arrive late, so the summary is overdue.	
Mix check: hours done of experience, others and structured	Experience 4, others 0, structured 3	Experience 4, others 2, structured 5	
Decision for each capability: keep, adapt or stop	C1 keep. C2 keep. C3 keep.	C1 keep. C2 keep. C3 adapt: summary of three sessions by Friday 12 February.	
Next activity, with a date	A3: ask the senior trainer to observe in January (by 18 December).	A5: finish the February plan by Friday 5 February.	
Support I still need, and from whom	None new.	S4: a colleague for the dry run, asked on 25 January, not yet agreed.	

Facilitator run of show

1 Open: what the plan is and who sees it | 5 minutes

Say: “Today you each draft your own development plan for the next three to six months. It is your plan. It is not an appraisal and nobody will rate it. You choose what to share with your partner and with your manager.” Show the filled example for one minute so that people can see the size of a finished plan. Say that the session ends with a draft, not a perfect plan.

2 Write a direction | 7 minutes

Ask people to write one or two sentences in silence: where they want their work to go in the next 12 months. Give prompts: “What would you like to be trusted with? What do you want to do more of, or less of? What does your team need that you could grow into?” Allow five minutes for writing and two for anyone who wants to read theirs aloud. Passing is fine. A direction can be “stay in my role and do it better”.

3 Choose two or three capabilities | 10 minutes

Spend four minutes listing possible capabilities, then choose two or three. Read the vague and usable examples aloud. Say: “A capability is something you can do at work, written with a verb. ‘Communication’ is a topic. ‘Explain a policy change in a five-minute update that people can repeat’ is a capability.” Spend six minutes on the columns: why it matters, what you can do now with one real example, what you will be able to do by the end date and how you and others will see it.

4 Plan the activities with the 70-20-10 planner | 15 minutes

Spend three minutes on the activity types table. Say: “70-20-10 is a rule of thumb, commonly attributed to Lombardo and Eichinger and the Center for Creative Leadership. It is not a target. It reminds us that most learning at work happens in real work, some with other people and a little in courses.” Spend nine minutes writing two to four activities for each capability. Each activity starts with a verb and has a type, an hours estimate, a start date and a done-by date. In the last three minutes, add up the hours by type in the mix check line. If structured learning takes most of the hours, ask: “Where will you use this in real work in the week after?”

5 Name the support you need | 6 minutes

Ask each person to write up to six support requests. Each request names what is needed, one person to ask and a date by which to ask. Say: “Support is specific: time, access, a person to watch you or a task you are allowed to try. ‘My manager’s support’ is not specific enough.” Mark each request as asked or agreed later, after the conversation.

6 Pair check | 10 minutes

In pairs, or a trio, each person has four minutes. The partner reads the plan, or listens to the parts the owner chooses to share, and asks the six pair check questions. The partner asks; the owner decides what to change. Use the last two minutes for both people to make changes in silence. Online, use breakout rooms of two, or let people check their own plan against the questions in writing.

7 Set the review dates and close | 7 minutes

Ask each person to write three review dates: one after four to six weeks, one in the middle and one at the end date, each with the name of the person they will review with. Ask them to put the dates in a calendar now, or

write when they will. Say: “At each review you look at what you can do now, what got in the way and whether to keep, adapt or stop each capability.” Close with one line from each person, aloud or in the chat: the first activity they will start, and when. Passing is fine.

Reference tables

Vague and usable capabilities

Fictional examples. A usable capability starts with a verb and could be watched at work.

Vague	Usable capability	What you would see
Better communication	Explain a policy change to my team in a five-minute update that people can repeat	Two people can say the change back in their own words
Leadership	Run our weekly meeting so that every item ends with an owner and a date	The action list after four meetings
Get better at Excel	Build the monthly absence report from raw data without help	The report for March, built alone, checked by the finance lead
Confidence	Present a proposal of ten minutes to the department heads and answer their questions	The meeting happens; I note the questions I could not answer
Time management	Plan my week on Monday and protect two mornings for project work	My calendar for four weeks

Debrief and next steps

Questions for reflection

- Which capability was hardest to write as something you can do, and what helped?
- Where did most of your planned hours land, and does that match where you learn best at work?
- Which support request will you make first, and to whom?
- What could stop your first review from happening, and what will you do about it now?

Adapt the session

- For a small group of two to four, skip the pairs and run the pair check as a round: each person reads one capability and one activity, and the group asks one check question each.
- For a 30-minute version, send the direction and the capabilities as homework. In the session, spend 15 minutes on the activity planner, 5 on support, 7 on the pair check and 3 on the review dates.
- Online, share the plan as an editable document for each person, use breakout rooms of two for the pair check and collect the closing line in the chat. Cameras are optional, and people can type instead of speaking.
- For quiet participants and people working in a second language, allow the whole plan in writing and a written pair check: the partner writes questions in the margin. Nobody has to read their plan aloud, and anyone can keep a capability private.
- For one-to-one use with a manager, the person drafts the plan alone first, then the two use the manager conversation guide. The manager does not fill in the plan for the person.

After the session

Each person sends the support requests within a week and books the three reviews. Before each review, they update the status of each activity and fill one column of the review sheet. At the end date, they copy any

capability marked keep into a new plan. If you ran the session as part of a programme, ask in a follow-up message how many first reviews took place, without asking what the plans say.

Questions people ask

What should a personal development plan template include?

A direction for the next year, two or three capabilities with an example of where you are now and what you will be able to do by the end date, the activities that will get you there, the support you need from named people, and review dates. This template adds a 70-20-10 activity planner, a review sheet and a guide for the manager's conversation.

What is the 70-20-10 model in a development plan?

It is a rule of thumb that most learning at work comes from experience (about 70%), some from other people (about 20%) and a little from courses and reading (about 10%). It is commonly attributed to Michael Lombardo and Robert Eichinger, drawing on research at the Center for Creative Leadership in the 1990s. It is not a measured ratio. Use it to check that your plan does not rest on courses alone.

How is this different from the goal setting worksheet?

The goal setting worksheet plans one work goal with a measured baseline and finish line. This development plan covers two or three capabilities over three to six months and plans the learning activities, the support and the reviews. A capability in this plan can become a goal on the worksheet. For the skills a whole team needs, use the skills matrix template.

Is a personal development plan part of an appraisal?

Not in this kit. The person owns the plan and chooses what to share. The manager guide keeps ratings, pay, promotion and performance concerns out of the conversation. If your organisation links development plans to appraisals, follow its own process and say so to participants before they write.

How often should a development plan be reviewed?

This kit uses three reviews: one after four to six weeks, one in the middle and one at the end date, for a plan of three to six months. The first review comes early on purpose, so that a plan that has not started can be fixed. These are planning suggestions, not a rule.

What is included in the free and editable files?

The open PDF has the blank plan, the 70-20-10 activity planner, the support and review dates sheet, the review sheet, the pair check, the manager conversation guide, a filled example of each part and the 60-minute drafting session. Subscribers also receive the editable Word file, an Excel workbook with a plan sheet and an activity tracker that counts activities and hours by type and status and flags overdue activities, and a CSV of the example activity planner.

Use and sharing

Free to use and adapt in your own training sessions, including paid client work. Do not resell or redistribute the unmodified download as a standalone product. Share the resource page instead.