# EMPLOYMENT ZONE



Workforce of the Future - Career and Succession Planning Conversations

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Introduction

Having effective development and career planning conversations are an essential part of creating a workforce skilled to deliver our services, teams who are continually learning and improving and individuals who are focused and engaged.

### Please remember:

* All staff should be considered when applying the Career and Succession Planning Framework to teams, irrespective of whether they have the potential or desire to move into a promoted post or not.
* It is entirely normal for a member of staff to feel no desire or not equipped for promotion as it is for another to want to progress their career in a particular direction.
* There will be many personal reasons that may determine an individual’s view one way or the other.
* A significant proportion of our workforce is made up of those who perform their jobs extremely well and their career learning and growth continues without necessarily having an eye on promotion.
* The Career and Succession Planning Framework accommodates all these positions but requires good quality one to one conversations for both manager and employee to explore and establish future direction in a mutual and constructive way.

It is recommended that this conversation is part of PCR meetings.

Annual PCR – Career and Succession Planning

All members of staff are required to demonstrate that they are sustaining the knowledge and skills required for their current post. It is recognised that processes, technology, equipment etc. change over time, and staff are supported to continue to develop the knowledge and skills needed to perform their job well.

The application of career and succession planning in this process means the future direction of a person’s development as well as their current needs are explored. This means clarifying employees own career aspirations and considering the needs of the organisation moving forward. This will ensure we are developing the skills we need internally, particularly for more senior roles when they become vacant.

It is important to find time to plan and prepare for your development meetings.

## Prompt questions

Throughout the career and succession planning conversation the emphasis should be on asking questions to understand what individuals really want, needs etc. and enabling them to take responsibility for their actions.

***What do you want in the future?*** *(Understanding the individual’s preferred career path)* Helping to open up a picture of what employees really want generates energy and optimism.

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Some useful questions:

* And what do you still want to develop further?
* What does this tell you about yourself?
* So, looking ahead to five years from now (or three, or one if five years is too long…) what would be the ideal scenario for you if everything could be the way you want to be?
* Where would you be working?
* What would you be doing?
* What kind of responsibilities would you have?
* What would you be doing?
* So, what is your goal?
* How would you know when you’ve got there?
* What will be different for you when you’ve done this?

o How important to you is it? Why is that?

o What would it mean to you to achieve this?

* Out of all of that, what seams realistic?
* When do you want to achieve it by?

***What’s happening now?*** (Identifying evidence against the potential characteristics) Asking for examples of when they have been at their best and situations that they found particularly demanding.

Some useful questions:

* Tell me about a time when…?
* How did it feel when…?
* How does it feel now as you look back on…?
* How do you think others (colleagues, customers etc.) saw/would have seen it/you?
* Is there anything you’ve overlooked?
* What are you proudest of in this situation?
* And what would you do differently with hindsight?
* What did you learn from this experience?

o Is there any other way of looking at the situation?

***How will you get there?*** (Focus on development – individuals should be encouraged to take responsibility and identify the support they will need)

Having identified goals in stage 2, this stage is about possible strategies and specific actions, and considering what might hinder progress.

Some useful questions:

o How well placed are you right now to achieve that goal?

o What needs to change?

* How many different ways are there for you to do this?
* What might help?
* Who might help?
* What can you build on?
* What will you need to do more of?
* And less of?
* What has worked well for you in the past?
* Which is most likely to work for you?
* What are within your control?
* What might get in the way?
* How will you overcome that?
* What will you do first?
* When will that happen?
* Does this feel like the right thing for you to be doing?
* On a scale of 1-10 how likely are you to take this action by that deadline?
* What advice would you give yourself as you begin this?

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What is a nine-box grid?

### Aspiration:

o How far does the employee’s ambition currently extend?

The [nine-box grid](http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=56724&p=0) is a well-known succession planning tool in which employees can be appraised against nine groups, based on their performance and potential.

The tool is composed of nine boxes arranged on an x and y axis grid, with performance measured along the x-axis, and potential measured along the y-axis. Managers often pay attention to these two things when assessing employee performance. First, how well they perform today, and second, how well they are likely to perform in the future (i.e. their growth potential).

The [attached document](http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=56723&p=0) helps support managers using the nine-box grid and provides further information of evidence and descriptions within each box.

### Key points for the career conversation using the nine-box grid Performance in current role:

* + What have been the demonstrated strengths over the past year?
  + What does the employee view as their core strengths?
  + What factors would enable the employee to realise more of their strengths?
* To what extent does the employee own and seek out opportunities for learning & development and progression?
* What is the employee’s track record for fulfilling their career ambitions?

### Engagement:

* To what extent does the employee apply effort without prompting?
* To what extent does the individual demonstrate an emotional engagement with the organisation?
* To what extent is the individual’s engagement factors being fulfilled?

This tool is designed to assist managers to facilitate discussion regarding development, career aspirations and identify potential. Knowing which box an employee falls into shows managers how they can best support the employee toward reaching their next career goal.

### Ability:

* To what extent does the employee demonstrate the leadership behaviours?
* To what extent does the employee meet the range of technical or functional competencies and skills required?
* To what extent does the individual exhibit the attitudes and responses required for success at the next level?

### Focusing on possible next steps:

* What development objectives should be part of the employee’s development plan?
* What particular opportunities and activities would best support the achievement of these objectives?
* What can you do to support the individual achieve their career and development objectives?

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### Ongoing support to deliver in current role and realise potential

Remember, feedback and development conversations are just the start, the conversation never ends. individuals and managers need to keep it open and go back to it as often as they can. For example, in one to ones, informal discussions, opportune moments e.g. ‘corridor discussions’, open and transparently where appropriate, and in any other ways that demonstrate that individuals are valued by the organisation.