Individual Development Plan (IDP) Guide

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Overview

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a collaborative roadmap between you and your manager to support your professional growth at NovaTech. This guide explains how to create, use, and maintain an effective IDP.

What is an IDP?

An IDP is a personalized plan that: - Identifies your career goals - Assesses current skills and competencies - Defines development activities - Sets timelines and success measures - Guides regular check-ins with your manager

IDPs are **not** performance reviews. They focus on growth and development, not evaluation.

Who Creates an IDP?

All employees are encouraged to maintain an IDP. IDPs are especially valuable when: - You're new to your role - You want to advance to the next level - You're interested in a career change - You want to develop new skills - You're preparing for leadership

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The IDP Process

Step 1: Self-Reflection

Before meeting with your manager, reflect on:

Career Aspirations - Where do you see yourself in 1-3 years? - What roles or responsibilities interest you? - What problems do you want to solve?

Current Strengths - What skills do you excel at? - What feedback have you received? - What achievements are you proud of?

Development Areas - What skills would help you grow? - Where have you struggled? - What's needed for your next role?

Learning Preferences - How do you learn best? (courses, reading, projects, mentoring) - What motivates you to learn? - What time can you dedicate to development?

Step 2: Manager Discussion

Schedule a dedicated IDP conversation with your manager:

Agenda: 1. Share your career aspirations 2. Discuss strengths and development areas 3. Align on priorities 4. Identify opportunities 5. Draft development plan

Manager's Role: - Listen and understand your goals - Provide honest feedback - Share organizational context - Suggest opportunities - Commit to support

Step 3: Create Your IDP

Document your plan using the IDP template in Workday:

Sections: 1. Career goals (short and long-term) 2. Current role assessment 3. Development objectives 4. Action items and timelines 5. Success measures 6. Support needed

Step 4: Execute and Review

- Work on development activities
- Track progress
- Meet with manager regularly (monthly recommended)
- Adjust plan as needed

IDP Template

Career Goals

Short-term (6-12 months): *Example: Move from L3 to L4 Software Engineer*
Long-term (2-3 years): *Example: Become a Technical Lead*

Development Objectives

For each objective, include:

Element	Description
Objective	What skill/competency will you develop?
Why	How does this support your goals?
Actions	Specific activities to build this skill
Timeline	Target completion date
Measure	How will you know you've succeeded?
Support	What help do you need?

Example:

Element	Example
Objective	Improve system design skills
Why	Required competency for L4 promotion
Actions	Complete system design course; Lead design for Q3 project; Get mentorship from Senior Engineer
Timeline	6 months
Measure	Successfully lead system design review; Positive feedback from mentor
Support	Manager to assign design-heavy project; Mentor pairing

Recommended Number of Objectives

- Focus on 2-4 objectives at a time
- Balance skill development and career progression
- Include both technical and soft skills

Development Activities

Formal Learning

Activity	Examples	L&D Budget
Online courses	Coursera, Udemy, Pluralsight	Yes
Certifications	AWS, Google Cloud, PMP	Yes
Conferences	Re:Invent, KubeCon	Yes
Books	Technical, leadership	Yes

On-the-Job Learning

Activity	Examples
Stretch assignments	Lead a new project
Job shadowing	Observe senior team members
Cross-functional projects	Work with other teams
Temporary assignments	Cover a different role
Teaching others	Run a workshop

Learning from Others

Activity	Examples
Mentorship	Formal or informal mentor
Coaching	External or internal coach
Peer feedback	360 feedback, code reviews
Networking	Professional groups, ERGs
Communities of practice	Join internal tech guilds

70-20-10 Model

Research suggests effective development follows: - **70%** On-the-job experiences - **20%** Learning from others - **10%** Formal training

Balance your IDP accordingly.

Career Framework Alignment

Using the Career Framework

NovaTech's career framework defines: - Level expectations (L1-L6) - Competencies per level - Promotion criteria

Use the framework to: 1. Understand requirements for your target level 2. Identify skill gaps 3. Set relevant development objectives

Level Progression Example

Current: L3 Software Engineer Target: L4 Senior Software Engineer

L4 Competency	Current State	Development Need
System Design	Contributes to designs	Lead system designs
Technical Leadership	Mentors 1 person	Mentor 2-3, lead initiatives
Cross-team Impact	Team-focused	Cross-team collaboration
Problem Complexity	Medium complexity	High complexity problems

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Manager's Guide

Supporting IDPs

As a manager, you should:

1. **Schedule IDP discussions** at least quarterly
2. **Create opportunities** for development
3. **Remove blockers** to learning
4. **Provide feedback** on progress
5. **Connect to resources** (mentors, projects, training)
6. **Advocate** for promotion-ready team members

Effective IDP Conversations

Do: - Listen more than talk - Ask open-ended questions - Share honest feedback - Make concrete commitments - Follow up on promises

Don't: - Impose your goals on them - Make promises you can't keep - Ignore organizational realities - Skip regular check-ins - Treat IDP as performance review

Questions to Ask

- What do you want to be known for?
- What would make your job more fulfilling?
- What skills do you want to develop?

- How can I better support your growth?
- What opportunities interest you?

L&D Budget

Available Resources

- **$2,500 annual budget** per employee
- No manager approval needed under $500
- Covers courses, conferences, books, certifications

Using Your Budget

1. Find learning resource
2. Purchase via Ramp (category: Learning & Development)
3. Include brief description
4. Track against your IDP

Additional Resources

- Company-paid Pluralsight subscription
- Internal training programs
- Leadership Academy (by nomination)
- Technical mentorship program

IDP in Workday

Creating Your IDP

1. Log in to Workday
2. Navigate to Career → Development
3. Click "Create Development Plan"
4. Complete sections
5. Share with manager

Updating Your IDP

- Update quarterly at minimum
- Document completed activities
- Add new objectives as needed
- Note changes in career goals

Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. **Too many objectives** - Focus on 2-4 priorities
2. **Vague goals** - Be specific and measurable
3. **All training, no practice** - Balance learning types
4. **Set and forget** - Review and update regularly
5. **Going it alone** - Engage your manager and mentors
6. **Only technical skills** - Include soft skills
7. **No timeline** - Set realistic deadlines

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is an IDP required?

A: IDPs are encouraged but not mandatory. However, they're strongly recommended for promotion discussions.

Q: How often should I update my IDP?

A: Review and update quarterly. Significant career changes may require more frequent updates.

Q: Can my manager see my IDP?

A: Yes, IDPs are shared with your manager to enable support. They're not shared more broadly.

Q: How does IDP relate to performance reviews?

A: IDPs focus on development; performance reviews evaluate current performance. They're complementary but separate.

Q: What if my goals change?

A: That's normal! Update your IDP to reflect new goals. Discuss significant changes with your manager.

Resources

- **Career Framework:** wiki.novatech.com/career-framework
- **L&D Catalog:** workday.novatech.com/learning
- **Mentorship Program:** wiki.novatech.com/mentorship
- **L&D Questions:** learning@novatech.com

Related Documents

- Career Framework (HR-CD-001)
- Promotion Process (HR-CD-010)
- L&D Policy (HR-CD-015)
- Mentorship Program (HR-CD-020)

Review Cycle: Annual Next Review: March 2025