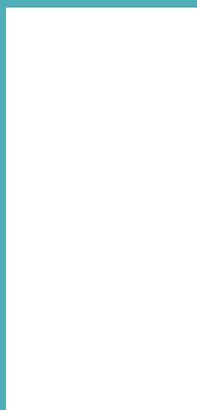# Office for Health management

Learning and Development Needs

Identification and Planning Toolkit

Resources for Creating a Learning and Development Plan

Identification and Planning Toolkit

Contents

Introduction

Welcome

The pace of today's environment demands that organisations develop their staff to keep up with new initiatives, new technologies and increased customer expectations. A changing economic and social environment has also brought about change in many public service employers - major changes such as social partnership and global competition for scarce human resources have spurred organisations to pay much closer attention to their people. Put simply, organisations have one choice - develop their staff or fall behind. Staff development and investment generally in people have become critical factors in organisational performance and success, along with a number of other good practices in human resource management, such as partnership, recruitment and succession strategies, and organisation development and change initiatives.

Training and development is an investment an organisation makes in itself and its people in order to ensure, at a minimum, its own survival and, more usually, to ensure the attainment of maximum potential for both individual staff and for the entity as a whole. As with everything, getting the best return on this investment means making sure to invest in the right areas.

Aim and Purpose of this Toolkit

This Toolkit provides you with the opportunity to play a part in ensuring that learning and development in your organisation is targeted and cost-effective.

It is designed to act as your guide to defining:

- **Corporate** Learning and Development needs,
- **Service** Learning and Development needs, and
- **Unit/Departmental** Learning and Development needs

so that your organisation will have integrated, coordinated and realistic Learning and Development plans at each of these three levels.

The intention is that this Toolkit will aid in the identification of Learning and Development needs which are in line with the requirements of the organisation, the service, and the department/unit. Then, based on these requirements, individuals can better plan for their own learning and receive the development that they require - rather than the frequently frustrating process of individuals attending training which, although personally satisfying, may not be in line with the needs of the organisation.

In case this seems all very top-down, it may be useful to bear in mind that the identification of learning and development needs is most effective when it attempts to match the needs of the organisation (or service or unit) with the needs of the individuals who work in it. This Toolkit focuses primarily on the organisational needs but Section 9 deals in some depth with Personal Development Planning, a process which complements the perspective of this Toolkit, whereby individuals take on responsibility for identifying their own development needs, based on their own personal/career aspirations as well as on the needs of the unit/service/organisation.

Ultimately it is hoped that the systematic identification of learning and development needs will lead to an improved standard of service delivery with improved team work and improved patient focussed care.

Users(*1) of the Toolkit

This guide is designed for you and all people managers throughout the health service, including:

- Corporate Management Team members
- General Managers
- Line Managers
- Human Resources Directors and professionals
- Corporate Learning and Development Managers

Some of you may already be well down this road of systematic identification of needs, others may not yet have approached the road. Hopefully, wherever you are, you will find this Toolkit useful as a basis for reaching better planning and management of staff learning and development.

(*1) As there are many levels and varying titles of management across the health sector, please try to choose the most appropriate for you. Apologies if this breakdown doesn't match your organisation.

Overview of Learning and Development Needs Identification and Planning

Training and Development: The Organisational Context

In most organisations, training and development 'sits within' the HR department and is an important tool to make sure that the organisation has people with the right knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to do their work to the right standard. Whilst, on paper, this appears reasonable and even logical, in the context of many health services organisations where staff numbers run into the thousands, it can be very difficult to do. In addition, whilst the health services are rightly perceived as being comparatively good at investing in education, training and development, it must be acknowledged that, for a variety of reasons (not the least of which is their size), many health service organisations are not yet at the stage of formally linking their training and development to performance, or of ensuring widespread and equitable access to training and development.

This Toolkit is designed to contribute a key part of helping organisations get best value from their investment in training and developing their people, that is, in identifying the overall need and in planning to meet that need. The process of needs identification and planning which is proposed in this Toolkit is one which relies on many people playing a part, from the central HR department to local line managers. In outlining the roles for these different people, questions may be thrown up for the organisation about what aspects of training and development are best addressed at central and at local levels, and what might be the most useful role of a central function in relation to different aspects of training and developing people (for example, to direct, to control, to coordinate, to promote linkages, to facilitate, to act as internal consultants, to be expert in, to bullet-proof, to ensure compliance with policies and procedures, etc.).

If you are not sure of the answers to these questions (and there is a good chance that you may not be as (i) there is no 'one size fits all' answer and (ii) most organisations are only in the process of addressing them at this time and, in any event, the answer changes as circumstances change), it might be good to start the discussion of training and development in your organisation with a more general discussion about these issues.
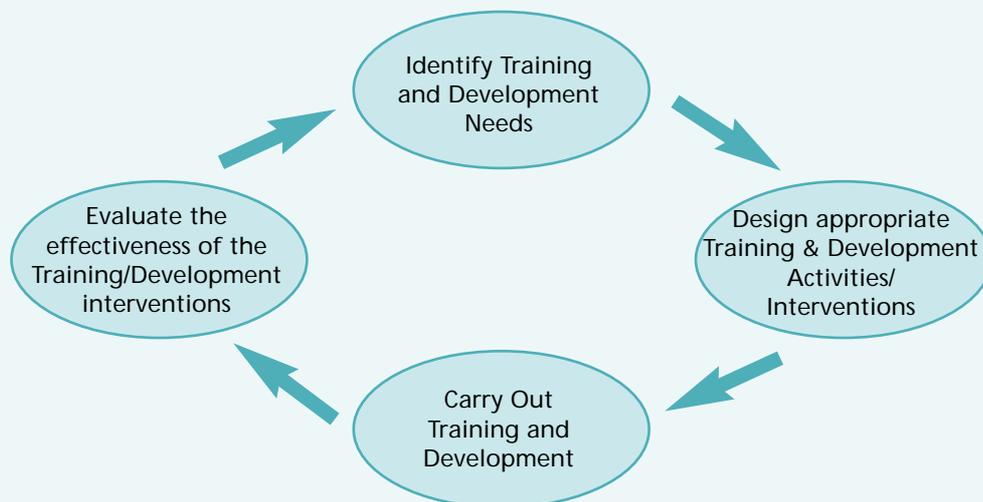
Finally, the identification of learning and development needs is not an activity that can be divorced from other good practices in human resource management, such as recruitment and selection (ensuring good job descriptions, role profiles and competency 'audits' of newly-appointed staff so that any training or development which they might require is very quickly identified), succession planning, managing performance generally, and ensuring employee well-being. This Toolkit is primarily (though not exclusively) oriented towards helping managers and their staff to address their ongoing developing needs, but account must be taken of the need to integrate this with these other aspects of how people are managed.

Learning, Development and Training: Terminology

To an extent, these three terms are used interchangeably throughout the literature and in this Toolkit. In general, learning is the most broad of the three terms (it covers all learning, growth, direct and indirect acquisition of new skills, insights, competences, behaviours, knowledge, etc.). Development could be said to cover the conscious, often self-directed acquisition of new competences (knowledge, skills and attributes/attitudes). Traditional training could be said to be the most narrowly-focused of the three and is often associated with the acquisition of new skills or behaviours with third-party assistance/guidance. All training and development implies learning, but the opposite is not necessarily true! For the purposes of this Toolkit, the three are treated more or less as if they were equal.

The Training and Development Cycle

Training and development has been described as a cyclical process of which the identification of learning needs is the first step (for a comprehensive listing of references and resource materials covering the theory and practice of training and development, please see Section 10 and 11 of this Toolkit).

Identify Training and Development Needs

Design appropriate Training & Development Activities/ Interventions

Carry Out Training and Development

Evaluate the effectiveness of the Training/Development interventions

Identifying needs is crucial to the whole context of learning and development because it ensures that training and development occurs when there is most relevance for it, thus contributing to the most efficient and effective use of resources.

Learning & Development Needs Identification

Very simply, the analysis of learning and development needs is concerned with defining the gap between what is happening and what should be happening (see figure below).

What is	Training Gap	What should be
Corporate results Competencies (knowledge, skills and attributes) **possessed** Actual performance	⟷	Corporate standards Competencies (knowledge, skills and attributes) **required** Desired level/standards of performance

The identification of learning and development needs has also been described as a process whereby organisations decide the nature and level of investment to make in the training and development of their staff. The output of the process is a learning and development plan of action highlighting what level and type of development is needed, when and for whom.

There are many benefits to using a systematic approach to the identification of needs, such as the one outlined in this Toolkit:

- Training, learning and development is **targeted** towards meeting the needs of the organisation and its people
- Learning and development needs are identified in **sufficient time** to ensure they can be met in the most appropriate way
- It allows for **prioritising** of learning and development to take place in a rational way
- It allows **budgets** to be prepared in a rational way
- It enables training and development to be properly **planned**
- It enables training and development **resources** to be used efficient and effectively
- It sets the foundation for the **evaluation** of the training and development
- It encourages **ownership** of the training and development by all those involved

Approaches to Learning & Development Needs Identification

There are two main approaches to identifying learning and development needs, which are by level and by time.

By Level

Organisational Level

↑ ↓

Departmental Level

↑ ↓

Individual Level

Learning and development needs can be analysed at a number of different levels, each of which should be connected to the levels above and below. In other words, there is a cascading of needs down from the top (the analysis of corporate needs will lead to the identification of departmental needs and so on down), and there is a feedback mechanism in place to capture the needs arising at the level of service delivery so that these 'bottom-up' needs can be coordinated and managed across the wider organisation.

It is because of the interconnectedness of the different levels that managers need to be involved in this process. This approach to the identification of learning and development needs is particularly good for vertical coherence within the organisation but particular attention needs to be paid to ensuring that it is not just a one-way, top-down specification of needs.

By Time (Present and Future Needs)

Another commonly used approach suggests that learning and development needs should account for both present and future needs.

– **Present needs** - arising from the current job or from immediate changes in the environment. For example, what needs are suggested by:

  • Issues relating to quality of service or performance (e.g. waiting list)
  • Financial or budgetary issues
  • HR issues (e.g. attraction and retention)
  • Environmental changes

– **Future needs** - arising from sectoral or organisational changes and longer-term objectives. To diagnose these it is suggested that the following be taken into account:

  • Changes in service requirements
  • Changes in technology
  • Changes in legislation or standards
  • Reorganisation and other internal initiatives
  • Significant reorientation of the "business" (e.g. prioritising primary care).

The present and future needs approach can be cross-referenced with the levels approach to give a really comprehensive map of needs.

Organisation-Oriented

Present ← → Future

Individual-Oriented
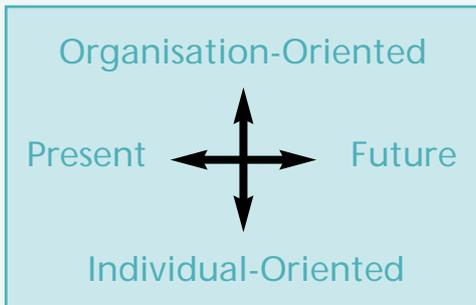
In developing a learning and development plan, it is important to be careful that it doesn't turn into a 'wish list'. Although all needs identified may be important, realistically, there is a finite budget for learning and development. Therefore you must distinguish those activities that are more urgent and/or important and which provide a greater return on investment - in other words, you must prioritise. In prioritising learning and development needs, you need to balance both short-term and long-term needs along with organisation-oriented and individual-oriented training. Ideally you should have some activities in each quadrant in the diagram above.

Elements Feeding into the Identification of Learning & Development Needs

In order to fully identify training requirements in their widest sense, it is useful to be aware of a number of elements that feed into the process - both internal and external.

Elements Feeding into the Learning & Development Needs Identification Process
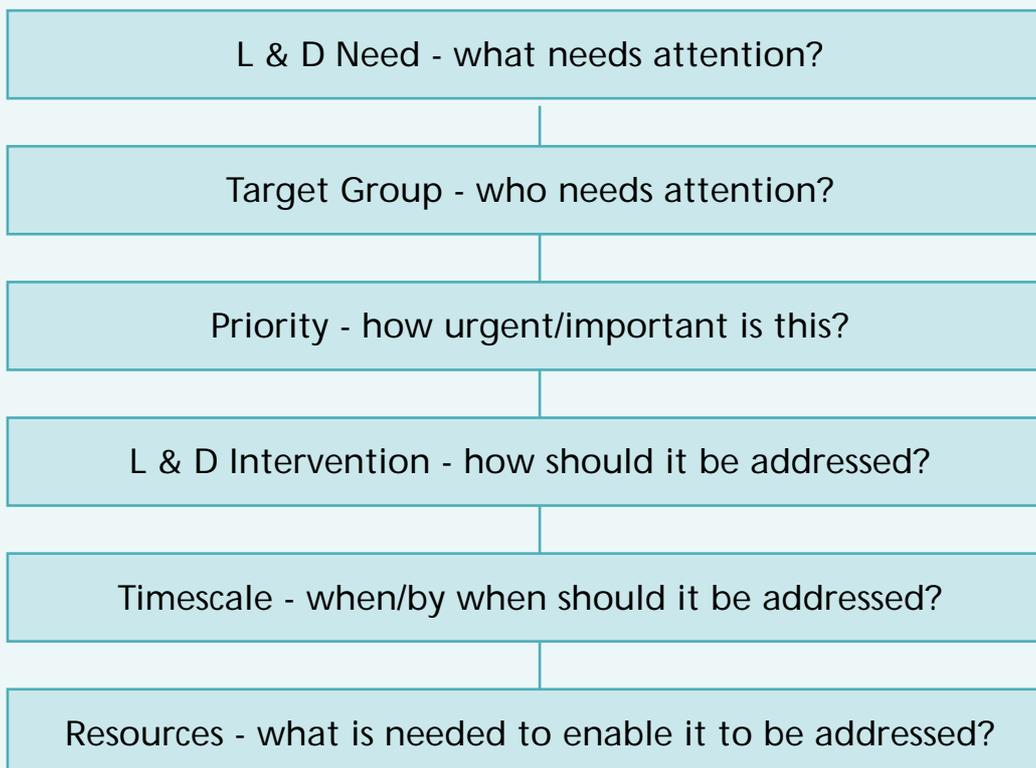
- National Health Strategy(ies)
- Corporate strategy
- Service plan
- Personal development plans
- Financial results
- Customer feedback survey
- Employee attitude survey
- Quality reports
- New legislation, standards and regulations

- Organisational restructuring
- Introduction of new technology
- Staff recruitment/manpower plans
- Succession plans
- Staff turnover
- Competency/Skills shortages
- Customer complaints
- Training reports
- Exit and transfer interviews

Developing a Learning and Development Plan

On completion of needs identification, a number of problem areas and training implications will have been recognised. The next stage is to use these implications as the basis for constructing a learning and development plan which specifies the development required and the priorities assigned.

Elements of a Learning and Development Plan

A learning and development (L&D) plan should address the following areas.

L & D Need - what needs attention?
Target Group - who needs attention?
Priority - how urgent/important is this?
L & D Intervention - how should it be addressed?
Timescale - when/by when should it be addressed?
Resources - what is needed to enable it to be addressed?

Firstly, the Plan should highlight the identified learning and development need - in what area is development required. Sometimes this is referred to as the learning and development objective - what you hope to achieve by undertaking this development. The Plan should then indicate for whom the development is required. Depending on the level of the learning and development Plan this may indicate broad target groups, smaller teams, or even individuals if the Plan is designed at a departmental level.

Each learning and development objective should be prioritised in terms of importance and urgency. Based on this, the preferred learning and development intervention should be specified, after which the target date should be set and the resources required for development outlined.

Types of Learning and Development Interventions

There is a wide range of learning and development interventions - from those which can be carried out internally in your organisation at a relatively minimal cost (on-the-job interventions) to those which are external to the organisation (off-the-job interventions). Many factors determine the choice of which intervention to use including the subject area for development, the individuals participating, and the possibility for/plausibility of internal opportunities and other on-the-job interventions.

It is important to note however that on-the-job interventions are often not used to their full potential and can be a cost-effective means of developing staff within your organisation. They also allow for active practice, immediate feedback and transfer of learning (Garavan et al, 1997).

Off-the-Job Interventions

– Training Courses / Seminars / Workshops
– Further Education

On-the-Job Interventions

– Coaching from line manager (internal)/ or other (internal/external) expert
– Mentoring
– Internal Opportunities
  • Shadowing
  • Job rotation
  • Project Work
  • Transfer
  • Promotion
  • Secondment
  • Temporary posts

Self Instruction

– Reading
– Videos
– Computer-based training
– Internet / Web-based training
– Think of experts in the field to whom you could talk
– Learning groups with your peers where each of you researches a subject and presents back to the group on the outcome

Of course, organisations get best value for money from their investment in training and development when the learning is brought back to the workplace, disseminated and implemented as widely as possible. This is particularly the case in off-the-job training which is often received by a small number of individuals and involving a significant investment of time and money.

The table below summarises how different types of learning can be acquired and also how that learning can be brought back to the team or unit and applied on the job.

Sources of Learning and Means of Application

Type of Learning	Sources	Means of Transfer or Application
New Knowledge	• Reading / other personal study • Courses and programmes • Seminars and conferences • Personal discussion	• Seminars, meetings • Reports, summaries, papers • Group work, intranet • Application to decisions and actions
New/ Enhanced skills	• Coaching, imitation/simulation • Training courses and programmes • Experimentation	• Changed performance and competence levels
Changed Attitudes	• Training courses and workshops • Reading and personal study • Influence of individuals, peers, experts • Exposure to new and diverse situations • Experience	• Influencing others • Application to actions and decisions • Changed behaviour
New Experience	• Situations • Projects • Problem solving • Action learning	• Presentations • Reports, summaries, papers • Group work, intranet • Application to actions and decisions
Increased Networks	• Courses and programmes • Seminars and conferences • Use of internet • Professional associates	• Drawing on experiences and best practice • Ongoing sharing through meetings/ internet

Your Role in Identifying and Planning for Learning and Development Needs

Introduction

In identifying training requirements, it is important that the key individuals are involved. Each has a different view of the needs of the organisation, and as such each has a role to play in the identification of learning and development needs and the subsequent development of a plan of action to meet those needs. Also it is important to remember that learning and development covers all staff across all areas of the organisation, and not just the professional groups.

Who Has a Role?

For the purposes of simplicity, we shall discuss the roles of those involved in the identification and planning of learning and development under the following headings(*):

- Corporate Management Team members - CEOs and Assistant CEO level
- General Managers - of service areas, care groups, community care and acute services(**)
- Line Managers - of departments or units
- Individual members of staff
- Human Resource Directors
- Corporate Learning and Development Managers
- The Office for Health Management.

Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 of this Toolkit deal separately with the roles of the Corporate Management Team, General Managers, Line Managers and individual members of staff in more depth. You need only concentrate on that area affecting you. If you do decide to read through the other sections, you will notice some overlap as the identification of learning and development needs is similar across the levels.

(*) As there are many levels and varying titles of management across the health sector, please try to choose the most appropriate for you. Apologise if this breakdown doesn't match your organisation.
(**) For simplicity these have been referred to as Service Areas throughout the document, again, apologies if this breakdown doesn't match your organisation.

The Role of the Corporate Management Team in Identifying Learning and Development Needs
(see Section 5 of Toolkit for more in-depth treatment)

The role of the Corporate Management Team in this regard relates to:

- the identification of learning and development priorities at the strategic/corporate level for assimilation into a Corporate Learning and Development Plan
- liaising with the Corporate Learning and Development Manager to ensure all that the Corporate Learning and Development Plan includes all relevant information.

This Plan can act as the foundation upon which other plans are built, thus ensuring that each level of plan is tied to corporate needs. Of course, Learning and Development plans for other levels of the organisation can be developed without there being a Corporate Plan in place.

The Role of the General Manager
(see Section 6 of Toolkit)

The role of the General Manager is in:

- the identification of learning and development needs for their Service Area,
- the assimilation of these needs into a Service Area learning and development plan.

This plan can act as the basis upon which the departmental/unit plans within the service area are developed - although, if necessary other plans can be developed without this being in place.

The General Manager will also have a role to play in communicating both the Corporate learning and development plan and the Service learning and development plan to their line managers.

The Role of the Line Manager *(see Section 7 of Toolkit)*

The role of the Line Manager is in:

- the identification of learning and development needs for their Department/Unit,
- the assimilation of these needs into a Departmental/Unit learning and development plan.

This plan details the training and development which individuals/teams will receive over the coming year. This plan can also act as the basis upon which individual Personal Development Plans *(see Section 9 of this Toolkit)* within the department/unit are developed.

The Line Manager also has a role to play in contributing to the development of the Service Learning and Development Plan. Their General Managers may want to speak with them in order to get a broad overview of the learning and development needs for the Department/Unit so that this information can inform the higher level plan. In addition, the communication of the relevant Plans to staff is also a key function of line managers too.

The Role of the Individual Member of Staff *(see Section 9 of Toolkit)*

You as an individual also have a role to play - though on a voluntary basis. You can choose to engage in the process of Personal Development Planning, which is a structured process whereby you take responsibility for your own development.

The Role of the Human Resources Director

Similar to the role of the Corporate Learning and Development Manager (see below), the role of the Human Resources Director is to:

- ensure that learning and development is helping the organisation and its staff to meet identified competency needs and maximise potential at all levels,
- act in an advisory capacity to the Corporate Learning and Development Manager.

The Role of the Corporate Learning and Development Manager

The role of the Corporate Learning and Development Manager is to:

- promote and support appropriate learning and development within the organisation,
- work closely with the Corporate Management Team in order to develop the Corporate Learning and Development Plan,
- facilitate the development of learning and development plans at the Service level and the Department/Unit level.

As this is a relatively new role in most health service organisations, it is expected that there may be some evolution of the role over the coming years.

The Role of the Office for Health Management

The primary role of the Office for Health Management is to facilitate management and organisational development for the health and personal social services. In the context of learning and development planning, the role of the Office for Health Management is to:

- act in an advisory capacity to the Human Resources Directors and the Corporate Learning and Development Managers, and
- to update this Toolkit and any other materials that it designs to facilitate the identification of learning and development needs.

Identifying and Planning for Learning and Development Needs: A Proposed Process

Levels of L&D Needs Identification and Planning

It is proposed that Learning and Development needs be identified at four different levels within health and personal social services organisations (as described in Section 2). The diagram below illustrates these levels. A learning and development plan should be devised for each of these levels.
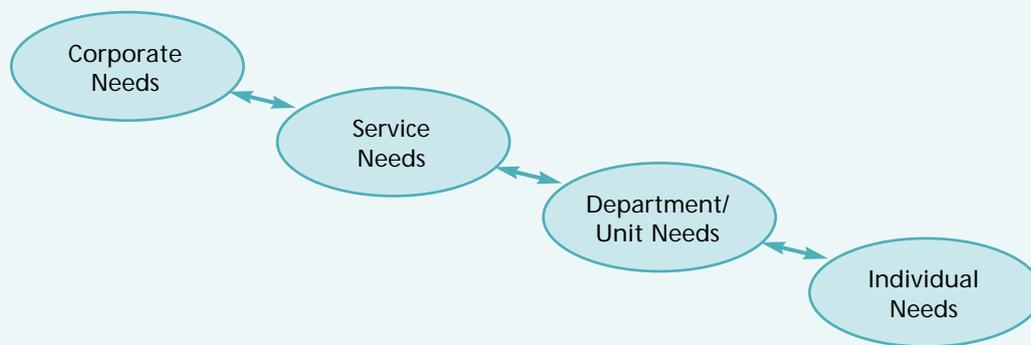
As you can see, the levels are interconnected.

- The analysis of corporate needs will take account of service needs, and also play a part in the identification of service needs
- The analysis of service needs will take account of both corporate needs and departmental/ unit needs, and will also influence the identification of corporate and departmental/unit needs
- The analysis of departmental/unit needs will take account of corporate, service and individual needs, and will also influence the identification of service and individual needs
- The analysis of individual needs will take account of departmental/unit needs and will also influence their needs.

Order of L&D Plan Development

There is no specific or absolute order which must be followed in developing L&D Plans as such. In a perfect world, the Corporate Learning and Development plan should be developed prior to the Service Learning and Development Plan and so on down the levels. This would help to ensure that all learning and development plans are coherent with corporate needs. However, conditions and timing may mean that this does not occur, and please do not let this deter you from developing a plan for your own area.

Proposed L&D Needs Identification Process

Below is an overview of the proposed process for learning and development needs identification and planning within the health and personal social services. A further breakdown of the process is outlined in later sections.

Level	Responsibility	Overview of Process
Corporate L&D Plan	1. Corporate L&D Manager 2. Corporate Management Team 3. General Managers	– Each member of the Corporate Management Team broadly outlines their thoughts on L&D requirements over the next year (or years), based on their assessment of corporate priorities and direction – There are a number of tools and a checklist available to aid in this process - to be used at their discretion. They may also decide to meet with their General Managers to discuss service areas needs (optional). – Corporate L&D Manager meets with each member to discuss L&D themes. – The Corporate L&D Plan designed by the Corporate L&D Manager for review and agreement by members of the Corporate Management Team.
Service L&D Plan	1 General Managers 2. Line Managers	– General Managers complete GM L&D Needs Identification checklist and other diagnostic tools for their service area. – Each General Manager meets with their Line Managers to discuss needs within their departments /units according to Service Area meeting agenda. – Each General Manager designs L&D plan for their Service area taking into account, if possible, the Corporate L&D plan.
Department/ Unit L&D Plan	1. Line Managers 2. Teams	– Line Managers complete LM L&D Needs Identification checklist and other diagnostic tools for their department/unit. – Each Line Manager meets with their team to discuss the main development needs within their departments /units according to the Departmental meeting agenda. – Each Line Manager designs L&D plan for their department/unit taking into account, if possible, the Service L&D plan and the Corporate L&D plan.

Level	Responsibility	Overview of Process
Personal L&D Plan	1. Individuals 2. Line Managers	– Individuals engage in the process of Personal Development Planning using the PDP Workbook. This is done on a voluntary basis. – This process includes one-to-one discussions between individuals and line managers in order to develop a Personal Development Plan.

Elements Which Feed into L&D Needs Identification in the Health Services

In order to ensure that the Learning and Development Plans take account of all needs, all the elements listed below need to be considered. Any of these elements can have an impact on the required development for the coming year.

By considering these elements, you are ensuring that you are looking at both present needs and future needs.

Health Strategy

Clinical Needs

Individual/ Personal Needs

Learning & Development Needs

Service Needs

Legislation

Corporate Strategy

Each level/division of the organisation should have its own Learning and Development Plan. At the Service level, the aim is that the Learning and Development Plan will become an integral part of the Service Planning process.

Prioritising Learning and Development Needs

Once you have identified and analysed the learning and development needs for your area, you must then prioritise them according to importance and urgency. Another important consideration will be the budget which is available for learning and development for your area.

Budgetary Consideration

It can happen all too easily that the needs identified for learning and development become an unrealistic or aspirational wish list. In order to make your Learning and Development Plan as realistic as possible, it will be useful to have the following questions answered as accurately as possible.

– What is the approximate amount spent by your division on staff development each year?
   • What was spent last year?
   • Did you use your full entitlement?
– Do you know your budget for this year?
   • You may need to discuss this with your manager or with the Corporate Learning & Development Manager
– A typical amount spent on training and development by Irish organisations Ireland is between 1% - 3% of payroll
   • What would this mean for your organisation / Service Area / Department/Unit?
– How much will it cost to deliver the proposed learning and development activities?
   • You may need to seek advice on this through discussions with your manager or with someone from your local Learning & Development department or directly with the deliverer/provider of the training programme.
– On average, how many days development did your staff members receive last year?
   • Will this increase or remain the same this year?
   • Are there associated costs, both financial and other, which need to be taken into account (e.g. locum cover or replacement costs, reduced service levels due to absence, etc.)?

Breakdown of Spend by Need

When you have thought about the required / actual budget for development of your staff, you should then consider how you might divide this budget across the different learning and development needs arising. For example,

- What percentage of your development budget might be spent on meeting organisational / top level requirements (such as training on health and safety, induction, senior management development, change management, etc.)?
- What percentage of your development budget might be spent on meeting on service needs (e.g. changes in the standard of care / service manager development)?
- What percentage of your development budget might be spent on meeting individual needs (e.g. time management)?
- What percentage of your development budget might be spent on technical needs versus personal development?

When you have thought about this, you could complete a grid like the one below.

Example

Learning and Development Need	% of Budget	Actual Budget
Organisation Needs • e.g. health and safety • other	20% • 10% • 10%	(20% of x =)
Service Needs • technical/clinical • management • other	50% • 25% • 15% • 10%	(50% of x =)
Individual Needs • further education • other	30% • 5% • 15%	(30% of x =)

Elements of the Learning and Development Plan

The aspects that you may consider putting into your learning and development plan are listed below. The plan does not need to be a lengthy document, indeed you may find it easier to develop the bulk of your plan in the form of a table. A template for this table is included in the section concerning you.

Learning and Development Plan - Elements To Be Included	
1. Introduction • Purpose of learning and development plan • Background to findings • Commitment to training 2. Breakdown of Service Area • Number of employees, broken down by grade/title 3. Learning & Development Goals 4. Learning & Development Budget • Breakdown of budget into areas for development (% table) 5. Learning & Development Needs 6. Target Group 7. Priority - high, medium or low	8. Details of Learning & Development Intervention • Training course (off-site/on-site) • Mentoring • Job Rotation • On-the-job training • Internal seminar • Buddy system 9. Timeframe 10. Potential Provider 11. Length of Course 12. Budgetary Requirements 13. Action Points 14. Proposed Method of Evaluation

Requirements for Success of the Planned Process

In order for this process to be successful, it requires:

• Recognition by you and all other managers of the importance of the process
• Commitment to the process - all levels of manager actively engaging in the process
• That learning and development needs identification and planning becomes a regular process, conducted formally once a year, but with an ongoing review of progress
• That all individuals take responsibility for their own development
• That Line Managers play an active part in the development of personal development plans for their employees.

Guide for Corporate Management Team Members

Introduction

It is a consistent finding that the role and part played by the corporate team or board of managers in identifying, supporting and resourcing training and development is a critical one (see, for example, IMS Report No.164).

All members of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) have a role to play in the development of a Corporate Learning and Development Plan. This Plan is the basis for making sure that all learning and development is in line with corporate needs. The CMT can ensure that the organisation's investment in training and development is relevant (i.e. is likely to enable the organisation to meet its agreed or established strategic/corporate mission and objectives) and is as integrative and as consistent as possible (i.e. the training and development is founded on and seeks to promote the same high-level values and attitudes across the board).

Corporate Management Team Process in Devising the Corporate L&D Plan

The Corporate L&D Plan - Role of CMT Members

As a member of the Corporate Management Team you should:

1. Consider the L&D requirements for your area over the next year.
2. You may find the CMT L&D Needs Identification Checklist useful as a prompt (see next page).
3. At your discretion, you may also decide to use other methods to aid you in identifying learning and development needs, for example, you may wish to:
    • Conduct a SWOT analysis of the organisation (see below)
    • Use the Balanced Scorecard (see below)
    • Meet with the General Managers reporting to you to gather their views on the learning and development needs for the area
    • Roughly complete the template suggested for Corporate L&D Plan (see below).
4. Meet with the Corporate L&D Manager to outline your thoughts on the corporate requirements for learning and development.
5. Based on all information collected, the Corporate L&D Manager will develop a draft Corporate Learning and Development Plan.
6. All Corporate Team Members should review the plan and modify as they feel appropriate.
7. The Corporate L&D Manager will amend as appropriate and produce the final Corporate Learning and Development Plan.

CMT L&D Needs Identification Checklist

Areas for Consideration	Comments
HEALTH STRATEGY • What are the main aspects of the 2001 health strategy(ies) which are likely to affect the organisation? • Is the organisation immediately prepared to meet the demands? • What areas do you need to concentrate on within the next year? • What additional knowledge is required by staff? • How can they get this knowledge? • Any development required as a result of the health strategy?	
CORPORATE STRATEGY • What are the main aspects of the corporate strategy likely to require development for staff? • Is the organisation immediately prepared to meet the demands? • What areas do you need to concentrate on within the next year? • What additional knowledge is required by staff? • How can they get this knowledge?	
LEGISLATION/REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT • Any recent legislation that will affect the organisation? • Who specifically will be affected? • How will you impart knowledge of this legislation? • Any development required as a result?	
OTHER EXTERNAL FORCES • Anything else which will have an impact on the organisation? • Any upcoming event which will impact in the next year? • Any development required as a result?	
ANY OTHER AREAS REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT?	

GUIDE FOR CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS

GUIDE FOR CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS

SWOT Analysis

You may wish to conduct a SWOT analysis to aid you in identifying the learning and development needs for your organisation. Below are some questions that you should consider for each of the boxes. A blank template is suggested overleaf.

SWOT Analysis - Questions For Consideration

STRENGTHS (INTERNAL, POSITIVE)

- What are we good at?
- What do we do best?
- What are our assets - finance, people, equipment, information, learning, processes, systems, reputation, relationships?
- How do these compare to others?
- How do we compare to other health boards / agencies?

WEAKNESSES (INTERNAL, NEGATIVE)

- What do we not do well?
- Where do we let ourselves down?
- What are our weaknesses - finance, people, equipment, information, learning, processes, systems, reputation, relationships?
- How do these compare to others?
- How do we compare to other health boards / agencies?

OPPORTUNITIES (EXTERNAL,POSITIVE)

- What changes do we expect to see over the next five years that will present us with opportunities?
- What new openings will arise?
- What shifts (in power, politics, emphases, population, etc.) will or may occur which might be good news for us?
- What do we not do now which we could be doing in five years' time?

THREATS (EXTERNAL, NEGATIVE)

- What do other people have that is better than what we have?
- What do they do better than us?
- How easily can others compete with us for scarce human/ financial/other resources?
- What changes are coming that will affect us negatively - in particular, what changes that will present us with problems?

Corporate SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Implications for Learning & Development?	Implications for Learning & Development?
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Implications for Learning & Development?	Implications for Learning & Development?

GUIDE FOR CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS

The Balanced Scorecard Approach

The balanced scorecard approach (Kaplan and Norton, 1992) was developed as a means of translating an organisation's strategy into a set of goals and performance measures, to help it avoid the trap of focusing purely on the financial performance of the organisation. It is a useful tool in the diagnosis of learning and development needs for this reason.

Corporate Balanced Scorecard	
1. **FINANCIAL** How does the organisation compare to its financial projections?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*
2. **OPERATIONAL** At what processes must the organisation be most successful?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*
3. **CUSTOMERS** How is the organisation seen by its customers/clients/service users?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*
4. **INNOVATION AND LEARNING** How can the organisation improve performance?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*

In addition to completing the SWOT analysis and the Balanced Scorecard, it is also suggested that the Corporate Team use, if necessary, some of the other tools and techniques which are associated with strategic management and which help management teams form a view on the challenges the organisation will face in the coming year (arising both out of the 'business as usual' and out of any new developments). The identification of challenges facing the organisation will be a key part of helping General and Line managers to 'scope' the size of the challenge facing their service/unit/department and, as a result, to identifying the place and contribution which training and development might make to meeting those challenges.

These strategic management tools can include stakeholder analysis, visioning, scenario or 'futures' planning, needs assessment, mapping key business processes and others. These techniques do not need to be very sophisticated in order to yield their benefit - it is often the simple asking of the questions which is enough (Who are our stakeholders of the future/How will they impact on us? How do we want to be? What is important in the way we work? What would happen if… ? How do our customers negotiate their way around our services?). However, for a more detailed introduction to these techniques and others, see Johnson & Scholes, 1999.

GUIDE FOR CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS

GUIDE FOR CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS

Corporate Learning and Development Plan

For: Date: Prepared by:

Development Objective	Target Group	Priority (H/M/L)	Learning & Development Intervention	Timescale	Resources Required

Guide for General Managers (GMs)

Introduction

As a General Manager you are likely to have a thorough understanding of the high-level internal and external requirements of the health service in which you are involved. It is this knowledge which you should collect and share in the identification of Learning and Development needs.

Suggested Process for General Managers: Devising a L&D Plan for your Service Area

The Service Area L&D Plan - Role of General Managers

1. Complete the GM L&D Needs Identification Checklist (see next page).
2. Conduct a SWOT analysis of your Service Area (see below).
3. Use other diagnostic tools in identifying learning and development needs for your Service Area
    •   For example, the Balanced Scorecard (see below).
4. Meet with Line Managers from your Service Area to gather their views on the learning and development needs for the area (an agenda template for this meeting is provided below (Service Area Learning & Development Needs Identification Meeting Template)).
5. Collate all information gathered to form a list of learning and development needs.
6. Consider the Corporate Learning and Development Plan to ensure your needs are in line with the corporate needs. Modify your list as required.
7. Prioritise the needs and consider the budget.
8. Develop your Learning and Development Plan.
9. Agree the Plan and ensure it is signed off with/by the relevant people.
10. Send a copy of the plan to the Corporate Learning & Development Manager and make sure it is communicated to all Line Managers/staff in your Service Area.

GUIDE FOR GENERAL MANAGERS

General Manager L&D Needs Identification Checklist

Areas for Consideration	Comments
HEALTH STRATEGY • What are the main aspects of the 2001 Health Strategy(ies) likely to affect your service area? • Is your service area ready now to meet the demands? • What areas do you need to concentrate on within the next year? • What additional knowledge is required by your staff? • How can they get this knowledge? • Any development required as a result of the health strategy?	
CORPORATE STRATEGY • What are the main aspects of the corporate strategy likely to affect your service area? • Is your service area immediately prepared to meet the demands? • What areas do you need to concentrate on within the next year? • What additional knowledge is required by your staff? • How can they get this knowledge? • Any development required to meet the corporate objectives?	
SERVICE AREA NEEDS • What are the business needs of the Service Area? • What are its goals and objectives? • Any development required to ensure you meet the objectives?	
LEGISLATION/REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT • Any recent legislation that will affect your service area? • How will you impart knowledge of this legislation? • Any development required as a result?	
OTHER EXTERNAL FORCES • Anything else which will have an impact on your service area? • Any upcoming event which will impact in the next year? • Any development required as a result?	

GM L&D Needs Identification Checklist

Areas for Consideration	Comments
TEAM DEVELOPMENT NEEDS • Are new teams being formed within your service area? • Do they need basic education and training? • Do they need professional development? • Are there dysfunctional teams operating? • Does the team as a whole need to be re-trained? • Would training in interpersonal communication be effective in increasing teamwork within/across teams or general staff? • In what other areas do your team need development?	
ANY OTHER AREAS REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT	

GUIDE FOR GENERAL MANAGERS

SWOT Analysis

You may wish to conduct a SWOT analysis to aid you in identifying the learning and development needs for your service area(s). Below are some questions that you should consider for each of the boxes. A blank template is suggested overleaf.

SWOT Analysis - Questions For Consideration

STRENGTHS (INTERNAL, POSITIVE)

- What are we good at?
- What do we do best?
- What are our assets - finance, people, equipment, information, learning, processes, systems, reputation, relationships?
- How do these compare to others?
- How do we compare to other services / health boards / agencies?

WEAKNESSES (INTERNAL, NEGATIVE)

- What do we not do well?
- Where do we let ourselves down?
- What are our weaknesses - finance, people, equipment, information, learning, processes, systems, reputation, relationships?
- How do these compare to others?
- How do we compare to other services / health boards / agencies?

OPPORTUNITIES (EXTERNAL,POSITIVE)

- What changes do we expect to see over the next five years that will present us with opportunities?
- What new openings will arise?
- What shifts (in power, politics, emphases, population, etc.) will or may occur which might be good news for us?
- What do we not do now which we could be doing in five years' time?

THREATS (EXTERNAL, NEGATIVE)

- What do other people have that is better than what we have?
- What do they do better than us?
- How easily can others compete with us for scarce human/financial /other resources?
- What changes are coming that will affect us negatively - in particular, what changes that will present us with problems?

Service Area SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Implications for Learning & Development?	Implications for Learning & Development?
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Implications for Learning & Development?	Implications for Learning & Development?

GUIDE FOR GENERAL MANAGERS

The Balanced Scorecard Approach

The balanced scorecard approach (Kaplan and Norton, 1992) was developed as a means of translating an organisation's strategy into a set of goals and performance measures, to help avoid the trap of focusing purely on the financial performance of the organisation. It is a useful tool in the diagnosis of learning and development needs for this reason.

Service Area Balanced Scorecard	
1. **FINANCIAL** How does the organisation compare to its financial projections?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*
2. **OPERATIONAL** At what processes must the organisation be most successful?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*
3. **CUSTOMERS** How is the organisation seen by its customers/clients/service users?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*
4. **INNOVATION AND LEARNING** How can the organisation improve performance?	*Implications for Learning & Development?*

Service Area Learning & Development Needs Identification - Meeting with Line Managers

Attendees

You (General Manager for Service Area), along with service-specific HR/training specialists, if you have them in your organisation, Line Managers and (if necessary) an external facilitator. You may wish to meet the line managers as one large group or a number of smaller groups, depending on the number of line managers, the likely overlap in their interests, and the time available.

Preparation

As you can imagine, the meeting is more likely to be productive if all parties have had adequate opportunity to prepare in advance so it will be useful to circulate the agenda prior to the meeting and for both you and the line managers to complete the L&D Needs identification Checklists before the meeting.

Service Area L&D Needs Identification Meeting Template

1. **Introduction**
   - Purpose of meeting is to identify the Learning and Development needs of our service area
   - Time allowed 2 hours
   - Note taker / flip chart
2. **Top Down**
   - General Manager to discuss what is required from the GM checklist
   - Agreement from Line Managers?
   - Anything to add?
3. **Bottom Up**
   - Each individual line manager to discuss what is required based on LM checklist
4. **Discussion on management training and development**
   - What do the managers require?
5. **Commonality Check**
   - Informal grouping of requirements
   - Anything to add?
   - Discussion on importance and urgency
   - Top level discussion on training budget breakdown
6. **Next steps**
   - General Manager to summarise notes and develop draft learning and development plan
7. **Further comments**

GUIDE FOR GENERAL MANAGERS

Breakdown of Spend by Need (see Section 4)

Learning & Development Need	Proposed % of Budget	Actual % of Budget

GUIDE FOR GENERAL MANAGERS

Service Area Learning and Development Plan

For:

Date:

Prepared by:

Development Objective	Target Group	Priority (H/M/L)	Learning & Development Intervention	Timescale	Resources Required

Guide for Line Managers (LMs)

Introduction

As a Line Manager you have a very important role to play in determining the learning and development needs of your Department/Unit in that you are close to the ground and the front-line people manager for your team. You are most likely to have a full understanding of your Department/Unit needs and the recent advances that will impact your staff.

Suggested Process for Line Managers: Devising a L&D Plan for your Department/Unit

The L&D Plan for your Department/Unit - Role of Line Managers

1. Complete the Line Manager L&D Needs Identification Checklist (see below).
2. Conduct a SWOT analysis of your Department/Unit (see below).
3. Use any other relevant diagnostic tools to identify learning and development needs for your Department/Unit (you may have your own, perhaps related to clinical or professional development if this is the nature of your Unit, or you may find some in Section 9 of this Toolkit).
4. Meet with your team to gather their views on the learning and development needs for the area (an agenda template for this meeting is provided below (Department/Unit Learning & Development Needs Identification Meeting Template)).
5. Collate all information gathered to form a list of learning and development needs.
6. Look at the Service Area Learning and Development Plan and the Corporate Learning and Development Plan to ensure your needs are in line with the corporate needs. Modify your list as required.
7. Prioritise the needs and consider the budget.
8. Develop your Learning and Development Plan.
9. Agree plan with your General Manager and Corporate Learning and Development Manager.
10. Send a copy of the finalised plan to the Corporate Learning and Development Manager.

Line Manager L&D Needs Identification Checklist

Areas for Consideration	Comments
DEPARTMENTAL/UNIT NEEDS • What are the objectives of your Department in the coming year? • Is your Department prepared to meet the demands? • What areas do you need to concentrate on? • What additional knowledge is required by employees? • How can they get this knowledge? • Any development required?	
TEAM DEVELOPMENT NEEDS • Are new teams being formed within your Department/Unit? • Do they need basic education and training? • Are there dysfunctional teams operating? • Does the team as a whole need to be re-trained? • Would training in interpersonal communication be effective in increasing teamwork within/across teams or general staff? • In what other areas does your team need development?	
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS • Any recent developments that will affect your Department? • How will you impart knowledge of these developments? • Any development required as a result?	
CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT • Any recent developments on the clinical side that will affect your Department? • How will you impart knowledge of these developments? • Any development required as a result?	
UPCOMING DEVELOPMENTS • Any upcoming event which will impact your Department/Unit in the next year? • Any development required as a result?	
ANY OTHER AREAS REQUIRING DEVELOPMENT?	

GUIDE FOR LINE MANAGERS

GUIDE FOR LINE MANAGERS

SWOT Analysis

You may wish to conduct a SWOT analysis to aid you in identifying the learning and development needs for your service area(s). Below are some questions that you should consider for each of the boxes. A blank template is suggested overleaf.

SWOT Analysis - Questions For Consideration

STRENGTHS (INTERNAL, POSITIVE)

- What are we good at?
- What do we do best?
- What are our assets - finance, people, equipment, information, learning, processes, systems, reputation, relationships?
- How do these compare to others?
- How do we compare to other Units / services / health boards / agencies?

WEAKNESSES (INTERNAL, NEGATIVE)

- What do we not do well?
- Where do we let ourselves down?
- What are our weaknesses - finance, people, equipment, information, learning, processes, systems, reputation, relationships?
- How do these compare to others?
- How do we compare to other Units / services / health boards / agencies?

OPPORTUNITIES (EXTERNAL,POSITIVE)

- What changes do we expect to see over the next five years that will present us with opportunities?
- What new openings will arise?
- What shifts (in power, politics, emphases, population, etc.) will or may occur which might be good news for us?
- What do we not do now which we could be doing in five years' time?

THREATS (EXTERNAL, NEGATIVE)

- What do other people have that is better than what we have?
- What do they do better than us?
- How easily can others compete with us for scarce human/financial/ other resources?
- What changes are coming that will affect us negatively - in particular, what changes that will present us with problems?

Unit/Department SWOT Analysis	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Implications for Learning & Development?	Implications for Learning & Development?
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Implications for Learning & Development?	Implications for Learning & Development?

GUIDE FOR LINE MANAGERS

Agenda: Departmental/Unit L&D Needs Identification Meeting

Attendees

You (Line Manager for Department/Unit), staff members from the Departmental/Unit team, and (possibly) an external facilitator. If possible, meet as one large group but, if you think the group might be too large to warrant this or to handle, break it into a number of smaller groups.

Preparation

The meeting is likely to be more productive if participants have been sent the agenda in advance and asked to begin thinking about their own/the Department's learning and development needs. You should also try to make sure you have completed the LM L&D Needs Identification Checklist (above). A meeting template/suggested agenda is outlined below.

Department/Unit L&D Needs Identification Meeting Template

1. **Introduction**
   - Purpose of meeting is to identify the Learning and Development needs of our Department in context of Corporate priorities
   - Not so much on a personal basis but for the Department/Unit as a whole
   - Not a wish list - priority to be given to Departmental/Unit objectives
   - Time allowed 1 hour
   - Note taker
   - Facilitated by Line Manager

2. **The Corporate Learning and Development Plan**
   - Summary
   - Implications for us

3. **The objectives of our Department/Unit**
   - How well are we meeting them?
   - What are we doing not so well?
   - What can we do to improve that?

4. **New challenges and recent developments facing our Department/Unit, both internal and external**
   - What are they?
   - How can we ensure we meet them?

5. **Clinical Advances**
   - What are they?
   - How can we ensure we meet them?

6. **Personal/Individual development**
   - As individuals doing these jobs - what areas do we need to improve?
   - What training do we need?

Department/Unit L&D Needs Identification Meeting Template

(Continued…)
- Ideas for discussion: people management; communication (oral/written); patient/customer care; organising/planning; budgets/finances; computers

7. Methods of training
- What are your preferred ways of learning?
- What works best for you?
- If there isn't enough money to meet all of our identified needs, how will we prioritise them?
- Ideas for discussion: external training courses (off-site/on-site); on-the-job training; coaching from line manager/peers; mentoring; reading; distance learning; computer-based training; internet training; buddy system; job rotation.

8. Next steps
- Line Manager to develop Learning and Development plan for Department/Unit

9. Further comments

Breakdown of Spend by Need (if information is available)

Learning & Development Need	Proposed % of Budget	Actual % of Budget

GUIDE FOR LINE MANAGERS

GUIDE FOR LINE MANAGERS

Department/Unit Learning and Development Plan

For:

Date:

Prepared by:

Development Objective	Target Group	Priority (H/M/L)	Learning & Development Intervention	Timescale	Resources Required

Guide for Corporate Learning and Development Managers

Introduction

The role of the Corporate Learning and Development Manager is to:

- promote learning and development needs identification within the health service;
- work closely with the Corporate Management Team in order to develop the Corporate Learning and Development Plan;
- work with the HR Director (or equivalent) to ensure that the right structure is in place to support line managers to meet training and development needs, and to help to clarify roles and relationships (for example, central HR, General managers and local managers) relating to training and development needs identification, sourcing and delivery of solutions, budgeting, etc.
- facilitate the development of learning and development plans at the Service level and the Department/Unit level.

The role of the Corporate Learning and Development Manager is likely to evolve as they become more and more integrated into the HR management process. It is expected that greater involvement will be required in initial stages of the overall learning and development planning process, and that the level of involvement will decrease in coming years.

Responsibilities

Some of the responsibilities of the Corporate Learning and Development Manager in relation to this process are as follows:

- Co-ordination of the development of Learning and Development Plans at the Corporate, Service and Departmental/Unit level.
- Ensuring that all areas and roles within the organisation are covered by a plan.
- Ensuring that staff in the Learning and Development Department are briefed and skilled up to aid the process.
- Being available (or having someone else from the Learning and Development Department available) to give advice on the process, the reasons and the benefits to all managers and staff.
- Staying abreast of and briefing appropriate parties in relation to national training and development issues or health sector developments which may be emerging and which will have implications for people management in the health services.

- Being available (or have someone else from the Learning and Development Department available) to facilitate at learning and development needs identification meetings if requested. This may require chairing the meeting and keeping a record of what is being said.
- Working with the Corporate Management Team in developing the Corporate Learning and Development Plan.
- Being available (or having someone else from the Learning and Development Department available) to review the Service level and Departmental/Unit learning and development plans to ensure that the plans tie together.
- Gathering all learning and development plans as a means of monitoring and tracking expenditure and of devolving budgetary control to Services Areas.

Devising the Corporate L&D Plan (Information for CL&D Manager)

Devising the Corporate Learning and Development Plan

1. Contact each member of the Corporate Management Team to:
   - explain the process, the benefits and their role;
   - request that they broadly consider learning and development needs at a Corporate level;
   - suggest that they may find the information contained in Section 5 useful as a means of guidance and talk them through the information contained in it.
2. After a period of time, meet with each member of the Corporate Management Team to gather their thoughts, or arrange to meet the Corporate Management Team as a group (a template for this meeting is suggested below).
3. Collate all the information gathered to form a list of learning and development needs, complete a breakdown of spend by need, and develop a draft Corporate Learning and Development Plan.
4. Send a copy of the draft to all Corporate Team Members for their review.
5. Make amendments as appropriate and sign off on the Corporate Learning and Development Plan.
6. Send a copy of the plan to all General Managers and ask them to circulate it to all line managers within their areas.

Corporate Learning & Development Needs Identification

Attendees

CEO, Assistant CEOs and members of the Corporate Team, and the Corporate Learning & Development Manager.

Preparation

Prior to attending, each member of the Corporate Team will have been briefed by the Corporate Learning & Development Manager. Each member should come prepared with a broad outline of learning and development needs for their area.

Corporate Management Team
Learning & Development Needs Identification Meeting Template

1. **Introduction**
   - Purpose of meeting is to identify the Corporate Learning and Development needs of our organisation
   - Time allowed 1-2 hours
   - Note taker / flip chart
   - Facilitated by Corporate Learning and Development Manager
2. **Input each Team member**
   - Each team member to discuss their findings
   - Agreement from other managers?
   - Anything to add?
3. **Grouping**
   - Informal grouping of requirements
   - Anything to add?
   - Discussion on importance and urgency
4. **Learning and Development Budget Discussion**
   - Discussion on learning and development budget breakdown
   - Breakdown of budget by needs
5. **Next steps**
   - Corporate Learning and Development Manager to summarise notes and develop draft learning and development plan for review by Corporate Management Team
6. **Further comments**

GUIDE FOR CORPORATE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGERS

Corporate Learning and Development Plan

For:		Date:	Prepared by:	
Development Objective	Target Group	Priority (H/M/L)	Learning & Development Intervention	Timescale	Resources Required

Matching Personal Development/ Individual Needs with Organisation Needs

Introduction

One very effective way of matching individual needs to service and organisation needs is through the process of Personal Development Planning. The next few pages provide an overview of this process.

For those interested in undertaking this process, an in-depth Personal Development Plan Workbook has been developed for use by individuals which walks them through the process of identifying their needs and developing a Learning and Development Plan for themselves.

What is Personal Development?

Personal Development is an approach that encourages individuals to proactively manage their own learning and development.

It also emphasises the importance of lifelong learning.

What is a Personal Development Plan?

The Personal Development Plan (PDP) is a means by which individuals take responsibility for their own personal development.

As Armstrong (2001) describes it:

"A personal development plan sets out the actions people propose to take to learn and develop themselves. They take responsibility for formulating and implementing the plan but they may receive support from the organisation and their managers in doing so."

It provides individuals with a clear framework for:

- assessing their current situation
- identifying where they would like to be in the future
- developing a plan outlining the learning and development required to get there, and
- implementing the actions that need to be taken (including, for example, negotiation with budget holders) to ensure agreed/planned learning and development takes place.

Responsibility for Personal Development Planning

As emphasised above, it is the individual who is primarily responsible for his or her Personal Development Plan. It is the individual him or herself who determines the scope of the Plan.

However, individuals should work with those around them (line manager, peers and direct reports) to identify their needs, and the learning and development "solutions" should be agreed with the line manager. The PDP cannot simply be treated as a "requisition order" for training and development: it is more effective when it is seen as a powerful tool to faciliate negotiation and prioritisation.

The Focus of Personal Development Plans

Personal Development Plans can vary in focus:

* **Directly Job-Related Development** (focusing solely on the individual at work). The development objectives are closely aligned with departmental or organisational objectives and the Plan may focus on the individual development needs required for enhanced performance in his or her current job.
* **Career Development** (focusing on the career development of the individual). Aims to ensure the alignment of individual career planning and organisation career-management processes so that the optimal match of individual and organisation needs is achieved (Walton, 1999). Many organisations offer opportunities for career-related training as a means to attract and retain ambitious and highly motivated staff.
* **Non Work-Related Development** (focusing on the development of non work-related skills that may be limiting the overall personal effectiveness of the individual).
  Examples include learning a foreign language, going to the gym, etc., and can help to decrease stress-related illnesses and aid in the achievement of work-life balance for the individual.
* **Holistic Development** (combining a mixture of all three development approaches mentioned above, emphasising the person as a whole in all aspects of their life).
  Some argue that this holistic approach elicits higher levels of employee commitment and motivation. Others argue that this approach is too broad and is difficult to resource. In general, people feel more comfortable being able to choose between the various approaches.

The Potential Benefits of Personal Development Plans

To the Organisation

- **Facilitate the Achievement of Organisational/Corporate/Service Goals**
As a manager, you are responsible for the achievement of organisational / service goals, and the delivery of a quality service to a set standard. Training and Development can ensure that your staff reach and maintain the required standard, and help you in the achievement of goals.
The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (1998) collected evidence over a seven-year period within 100 medium-sized organisations which showed that human resource management practices that incorporate a highly-developed approach to employee development (such as Personal Development Planning) can yield extensive gains for the organisation, with an impact which far outstrips investment in either technology or research and development.

- **Development-Focused on Job-Related Needs**
Where Personal Development Plans are agreed between a Line Manager and the individual members of his/her team, they have the potential to focus development resources and activities on job-related learning needs.

- **Show that the Organisation Cares**
The presence of Personal Development Planning also serves to demonstrate the value the organisation places on its employees. Its presence alone conveys a positive message to employees, serving to engender employee commitment and motivation, and can help to create the reputation of the organisation as a 'developer of people'.
Beaucoup (cited in Shechtman, 1999) suggests that "...companies succeeding in the competitive (labour) market are those that recognise and respond to their employees' life needs, not just their professional requirements ... [and] investment in personal growth and development create a culture that cares for its employees - one that embodies trust, honesty, integrity, opportunity and accountability".

- **Key Component of Developing a Learning Organisation**
PDPs can help in making training and personal development an integral part of daily activities, where learning becomes a continuous process, closely related to actions in the workplace.

- **Increase Employee Retention**
Argyris (1998) and Altman (1998) provide evidence for this indicating that employee retention is achieved through the enhanced levels of organisational commitment and employee motivation that Personal Development Planning tends to generate.

- **As a Return on Investment**
  Training initiatives are likely to yield a higher return on investment and be more effective in an environment where Personal Development Planning is in operation for a number of reasons:
  - **Focused Training and Development Initiatives** - The structure of training and development can be focused specifically on the needs of the individual and the needs of the job.
  - **Motivated to Learn** - It has been suggested that individuals tend to be more motivated to learn when they are managing their own learning. This, in turn, implies that individuals will be motivated to extract as much as possible from learning initiatives (Bond, 1994).
  - **Cost Effective** - Personal Development Planning can provide a cost-effective means of staff development in that plans do not necessarily refer directly to training courses, rather are more likely to stipulate other less costly development interventions (such as shadowing, job rotation, on-the-job coaching, etc.).

To the Individual

- **Gives the Individual Greater Control over their Destiny**
  Personal Development Planning is about giving choice to individuals to manage their own development and their own careers. The process helps individuals to formalise their various development needs and encourages them to devise an action plan detailing the activities they must undertake to fulfil those needs.
- **Achieving Work-Life Balance**
  If a holistic, person-centred approach is adopted, the process will assist the employee in considering all aspects of his or her life and will highlight those areas where changes may be necessary. In doing so, the process may assist the individual in striking an effective work-life balance.
- **Enhanced Employability**
  Personal Development Planning may serve to enhance an individual's employability and marketability internally and externally through the provision of development opportunities that enable him or her to acquire transferable skills and competencies.

Other Benefits

- Aids individuals to acquire more quickly and comprehensively the skills and knowledge needed for their role. It can lead to a growing ability to take on a greater variety of tasks.

- Allows time for the individual and the manager to get better acquainted.
- May help people to develop a greater interest in, and sense of responsibility for, their work.
- Can help the individual to focus their career plan within the organisation.

The Personal Development Plan Process for the Individual

In engaging in Personal Development Planning, the individual should proceed through the following steps.
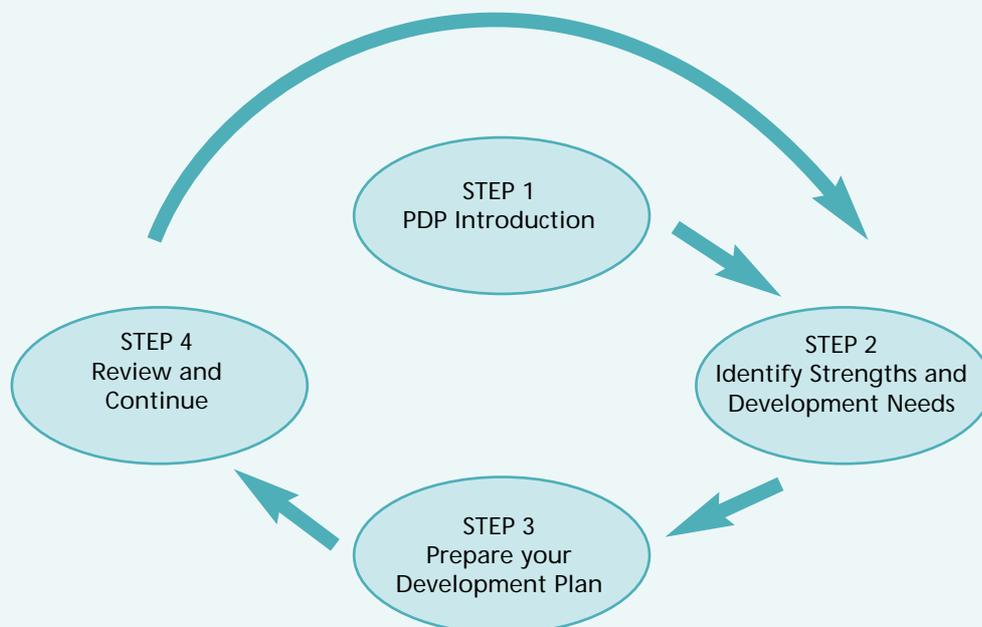
The Personal Development Plan Process in More Detail

Step 1
PDP Preparation

- The starting point for PDP is to contact the PDP Co-ordinator for your organisation who will provide you with all necessary information.
- Arrange to attend the next Personal Development Planning workshop in your area/agency.
- Read the introductory sections of your Personal Development Planning workbook.

Step 2
Personal Evaluation

- Begin to complete your Personal Development Planning workbook.
- Identify your strengths and development needs. In order to do this you may wish to:
  – Complete self discovery instruments
  – Ask others for feedback on your performance
  – Use a 360 degree questionnaire in getting feedback.

Step 3
Agree Development Plan

- Meet with line manager to:
  – Receive feedback
  – Share your PDP workbook
  – Discuss and agree development opportunities
  – Design your development plan based on information received.

Step 4
Review and Modify

- Personally review your plan every 3-4 months and ensure you are monitoring progress in completion of your plan.
- Arrange to meet with your manager every 6-12 months to discuss your plan.
- Modify and update your plan on an ongoing basis.
- Return to Step 2.

Implementation of Personal Development Planning

The decision to implement a Personal Development Planning initiative requires up-front planning and demands that a number of issues be addressed. From research carried out by the Office for Health Management (Smith, 1999) the major issues to be addressed include:

- **Participant Support**
  Piloting of Personal Development Planning in the health sector has indicated that participants appreciate being able to attend an introductory session on the Personal Development Plan process and appreciate having access to someone who can provide direction on the process (PDP Co-ordinator).
  At a local level, workshops on Personal Development Planning should be run on a regular/as needed basis to ensure full understanding of the process and the benefits of Personal Development Planning.

- **Line Manager Support**
  Ideally, individual team members partaking in Personal Development Planning need to receive feedback from their line managers as part of their development. They should also discuss and agree their development plans with their manager.
  Line managers may thus require training in such areas as giving (and receiving) feedback; managing expectations; negotiation; building trust; conducting one-to-one meetings.

- **Time**
  One of the main reported areas of difficulty in completing the Personal Development Plan was time. If team members are partaking in this process, line managers and team members need to come to an arrangement over time given to the process.
  Line managers should introduce the notion of 'protected time' for one-to-one discussions about individual personal development. These discussions are likely to last one hour and should be during the working day of both manager and team member.

- **Resources**
  One of the outcomes from this process will be training or/and development for each participant. This requires both time and money. Prior to completion of the Personal Development Plan, each participant should have a meaningful conversation with their manager regarding what is feasible.

Frequently Asked Questions about Personal Development Planning

Possible Questions from Staff Members

- **What's in it for me as a staff member?**
  Personal Development Planning gives you the opportunity to take an active role in your own learning and development. You decide what you need in order to develop and progress within your career. Using the Personal Development Planning process, you can discuss and agree with your line manager access to the learning and development that gives you the best chance to advance your career and achieve your goals, both short and longer term.

- **What happens if I choose not to complete a Personal Development Plan?**
  Nothing. The Personal Development Planning process is voluntary. It is hoped that, over time, more and more people will become involved, as it is a good starting point for negotiating on individual learning and development.

- **What happens if I don't trust my Line Manager?**
  If you don't trust your line manager, you can still go ahead with your PDP. We would advise that you still discuss your PDP with your line manager in order to gain agreement for your development, however, you should concentrate on gathering feedback on your performance from a range of other sources including colleagues with whom you directly work, your peers and direct reports. Asking for examples is a good way to validate the feedback you receive.

Possible Questions from Line Managers

- **Whose job is staff development?**
  Everyone has a role to play in development. You have a role to play in your own development, and the development of those around you. Whether you are a manager, a colleague or a direct report, you can provide useful information about others. As a line manager you should partake in the development of the Personal Development Plan for your team members.

- **How am I as a line manager to make time for all this development work?**
  Obviously no one wants learning and development to impact negatively on the quality of patient care. Chances are, however, that you are already spending a good deal of time on staff learning and development, and all the Personal Development Planning process will do is to provide you with a more structured way to discuss and decide on staff development.

If you have a large number of staff reporting into you, you may need to stagger the personal development discussions over the course of a few months. If the outcomes require off-the-job development, then you may need to consider the use of locums/agency staff to act as cover for staff.

- **What support is available to me as a line manager in this new role?**
  If you feel that you need support in this role, you should contact the PDP Co-ordinator for your organisation who can give you advice, talk you through the process and provide you with details on relevant training. The Office for Health Management also has a website with useful information:
  http://elearning.officeforhealthmanagement.ie

Other Possible Questions

- **Can all staff partake in Personal Development Planning?**
  Yes, and choosing to partake is voluntary.
- **What if training doesn't happen due to budget constraints?**
  This may occur. If it does, you should try to think of alternate ways of receiving the same experience in a more cost effective way. For instance job rotation / on-the-job coaching rather than attending a seminar.

Possible Questions at Organisation Level

- **As an organisation, are we ready for Personal Development Planning?**
  Not every organisation is currently fully ready, indeed it may take a number of years for the entire process to get off the ground.
- **Are we creating expectations which we can not meet?**
  One of the reasons the process suggests that the individual meet with the line manager is so that this creation of false expectations does not occur. It is the role of the line manager to ensure that the Personal Development Plans of their staff are realistic in line with the training budget.
- **How does Personal Development Planning link to Service Planning?**
  Currently there is no formal link between the two, however, individuals completing their PDP should be aware that they are more likely to receive development if they can link their needs to the service plan. In reviewing the PDP, line managers should also strive to ensure that individuals PDPs are in line with the service plan.
- **How does Personal Development Planning differ to Performance Appraisal?**
  The focus of Personal Development Planning is on development only. It is done purely on a voluntarily basis and there is no link to financial reward.

The Way Forward

To date Personal Development Planning has been piloted on two occasions over the course of 3 years with almost 200 health service employees participating. The feedback from the process has been very positive indicating that it can and does work within the health service in Ireland.

Your Role as a Manager

You can play a role in introducing the Personal Development Planning process to the health service. You can

- pilot Personal Development Planning within your own organisation / your own department;
- ensure that 'protected time' is allowed for implementing the process;
- ensure that you attend the necessary training to feel comfortable with the process (such as training on giving and receiving feedback).

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Further Linkages and Resources

Potential Areas for Learning and Development

The following list represents some potential areas for learning and development grouped by category. Reviewing this list may act as a trigger in identifying the learning and development needs. It is suggested that you use the other methods described in this Toolkit first, and then perhaps use this as a means of checking that you haven't overlooked any area. A useful way of thinking about training and development is to categorise generic areas under the following four headings:

1. New entrant training
2. Technical/job-specific training
3. Management development
4. General 'business'/organisational topics.

Competencies

There is growing interest in training and development (and in human resource management in general) to the identification and use of competencies (or competences - the words are used interchangeably and the spelling variation just depends on whether you are using a UK or a US source). A broad definition is that competencies are those behaviours which distinguish effective from ineffective performance in a particular role - in other words, what it is that an effective performer knows, does, says or is like. If you are thinking through what makes for competent performance in relation to any particular job or role, the matrix below is a tried-and-tested way of categorising the different ways in which competency can be seen:

Competencies	Must Have (to enable effective performance)	Would be desirable (would contribute to effective performance)
Knowledge - what a competent or effective performer in this job **KNOWS**	What qualifications or work experiences must the person have had in order to be able to perform effectively?	Additional or complementary qualifications or experiences which might contribute to effective performance

Competencies	Must Have (to enable effective performance)	Would be desirable (would contribute to effective performance)
Skills and Abilities - what a competent or effective performer in this job **CAN DO**	What are the specific skills and abilities that are associated with this job, both technical (e.g. must be able to administer IV drugs) and process-oriented (must be able to work collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary environment).	Additional or complementary skills and abilities which may contribute to effective performance (e.g. computer skills, language skills, etc.)
Attributes and Attitudes - what a competent or effective performer in this job **IS LIKE**	What sort of a person is an effective performer in this role, what values/attitudes/inter-personal behaviours are associated with this job?	Additional or complementary ways of being or working which may contribute to effective performance.

The Office for Health Management has already mapped out management competencies for nurses and is (at the time of writing) doing a similar generic competency identification map in relation to clerical and administrative work, and to the work of health and social services professions. Many of these competency 'specifications' are applicable, at least in part, to other categories of work/ disciplines/professions, and it may be worthwhile to consult these documents for anyone in a management/administrative role, especially as they include specific guidance on the development of these competencies (for example, the ability to negotiate is a competency that is identified for nurse managers but it is, of course, relevant to other managers too and the development activities associated with improving this competency may be relevant to anyone who is interested in improving their negotiation ability).

For further details of this Office for Health Management work, see the OHM's website (www.officeforhealthmanagement.ie) or contact the Office for a copy of the relevant publications.

Below is a prompt list of areas for general consideration for inclusion in training and development programmes/initiatives. It is best if you analyse the job and try to establish what competencies are needed for it, and then use this list as a checklist to ensure that you have identified all the key requirements for the job.

- Assertiveness
- Building partnerships
- Budget preparation and analysis
- Career planning and development
- Change management
- Communications skills
- Computer skills
- Conflict resolution
- Cost-benefit analysis for programmes, services, products
- Crisis management
- Culture: Developing a positive workplace culture
- Customer service
- Data: gathering, analysing, using
- Decision-making
- Dealing with internal customers
- Delegation skills
- Ethics in the workplace
- Facilitation skills
- First Aid for the workplace
- Hiring, attracting and retaining staff
- Health and Safety
- Interviewing Skills
- Managing workforce diversity
- Management skills
- Measuring results
- Media/PR skills
- Mentoring skills
- Motivation
- Negotiation skills
- Planning
- Problem-solving
- Presentation skills
- Project management
- Research skills
- Retirement (preparation for)
- Risk management
- Service Planning
- Statistics and data collection and uses
- Strategic Planning
- Stress Management
- Team working and new team development
- Telephone skills
- Time management
- Understanding what the public wants
- Violence in the workplace - prevention
- Work life balance
- Writing skills

It is also worth bearing in mind that there are many ways in which training and development can be effected, and a rough rule-of-thumb is that the closer the delivery (of training/ development) is to the job/workplace, the more likely it is to be applied on the job. In other words, consider the on-the-job options for competency development first as they are not only likely to be more effective but can also represent a more efficient use of resources. Common forms of on-the-job development include coaching, mentoring, deputising, delegating, opportunities to participate in specific one-off projects, job or work rotation, shadowing, peer-assisted learning groups (such as action learning sets or quality improvement groups), access to workplace 'libraries' or learning areas (for self-instruction), buddying of 'masters' with 'apprentices', reviewing of critical incidents and significant successes, etc. (see Section 2 of this Toolkit too).

Other Systems / Approaches to Training and Development

There are two other widely-used standards-based frameworks for identifying and managing an organisation's training and development function, Excellence Through People (used in many organisations, both public- and private-sector in Ireland, including the NWHB) and Investors in People (widely used in the UK). Both are very similar, and have their antecedents in quality assurance: as a result, both are highly systematised and formalised approaches to training and development and can lead to an organisation having its training and development accredited (i.e. certified that it has reached a required standard).

A common finding in large organisations is that one of the main benefits of ETP/IiP is that they enable much closer monitoring and evaluation of an organisation's investment in people development, in that they begin with an audit, entail close record-keeping, and are frequently closely aligned with other forms of performance management and HR management initiatives. They can also complement other HR initiatives, such as Partnership, in that they are based on ongoing involvement of staff at all levels in the identification of training needs and solutions.

The contact point for further information on ETP is the FÁS excellence Through People Section, Services to Business Administration Unit, PO Box 456, 27-33 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4 (or via their website: www.fas.ie).

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Further Reading and References

(see also Section 9 for further references relating to Personal Development Planning)

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Please note that these sites were in operation at the time of writing but websites are not always durable!