EDUC 602 December 15, 2009

Christine Hipple Final Project

Engaging Employees in Development Dialog

# Course Design Plan

## Rationale

As organizations seek to improve outcomes through building the skills of their workforce, they are building elaborate competency models, launching skills assessment and development planning initiatives and integrating career and succession management.  Yet, too often they expect managers to implement and integrate employee development into their workload with little training or support.

Avilar, the Competency Company, has worked with dozens of organizations to implement web-based skills assessment and development planning programs.  One of the key factors in successful initiatives is the ability and willingness of managers to engage their employees in productive conversations about the employee’s development needs and plans.  In a recent informal survey of managers in organizations who were implementing new employee development programs, over 60% were somewhat or very reluctant to play a more active role in employee development.  Of these reluctant managers, the top two reasons cited were lack of time and lack of confidence in their ability to do it well.

Based on the principles of dialog as a two-way communication technique, this course is designed to precede the rollout of an organization-wide employee development initiative.  It is intended to help managers recognize the benefits of taking an active role in supporting employee development and to learn effective and efficient means of integrating employee development into their busy schedules

## Target Population

The course is appropriate for managers who are responsible for taking an active role in developing their employees.  Employee development program staff in HR and Training departments are also eligible to participate.

## Description

“Engaging Employees in Development Dialog” is a two-hour course, designed to be taught just prior to an organization’s employee development initiative.  Instructional methods include video demonstration, lecture/discussion, group discussion and role play.  Participants will be provided with a workbook containing checklists for dialog preparation, holding a dialog, and post-dialog follow up.  A post-training exercise and evaluation form will be provided to help participants apply development  dialog skills on the job and create a plan for further development.

## Objectives

**Terminal objective:**

Given a video demonstration, checklists and role play, the participant in “Engaging Employees in Development Dialog” should be able to hold a discussion about skill development with an employee.  The discussion should  address the employee’s skill gaps from both the employee’s and manager’s point of view, establish specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time bound (SMART) development goals, and encourage the employee to take the lead in his/her development.  The participant’s self assessment on the first development dialog, to be held within two weeks of the training session, should be at least 4 on a 5-point rating scale.

**Enabling objectives:**

* Given a checklist, an exercise on eliminating bias from skills assessments and a lecture/discussion, the participant will be able use a dialog planning worksheet to describe his/her perception of an employee’s development needs and identify potential indicators of bias.
* Given a lecture/discussion and a dialog with a partner, the participant will be able to use the dialog planning worksheet to anticipate development issues from an employee’s perspective.
* Given a lecture discussion and job aid, the participant will be able to set tentative specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound development goals prior to holding a development dialog with the employee.
* Given a video demonstration and checklist, the participant will be able to identify at least three factors that can establish an atmosphere of trust and facilitate active employee participation in a development dialog.
* Given a video demonstration and checklist, the participant will be able to identify at least three factors that can encourage two-way communication with an employee during a development dialog.
* Given a video demonstration, checklist and role play, the participant should be able to role play the manager’s role in a development dialog.  Observers should be able to rate the manager as at least a 4 on a 5-point scale on establishing trust, listening mutual establishment of SMART goals and getting commitment.

## Evaluation Strategy

During the role play, observers will use the provided checklist to evaluate and provide feedback to each participant.  The facilitator will circulate among the groups to offer additional feedback.  One week after their next development discussion, Participants will use the Level 3 checklist developed for this course to evaluate their behaviors before, during and after the development discussion.  A participant reaction survey (Level 1) will be administered at the end of the session; feedback from these surveys will be used to modify and refine the program for future groups.

## Participant Prerequisites

Any participant who is a manager responsible for employee development is eligible to participate in the program.

## Facilitator Prerequisites

Facilitators should have hands-on experience with employee development, should understand the principles of dialog as a communication strategy and should be comfortable facilitating discussions during the training session.  Ideally, the facilitator will also have management experience in order to relate to the managers’ interests and concerns.

## Deliverables

* Design Plan
* Demonstration video, illustrating the dialog approach to development conversation
* Facilitator’s Guide
* PowerPoint Presentation with graphics
* Participant workbook, including checklists for preparing for, conducting, and following up on a development dialog
* Level 1 evaluation form
* Level 3 checklist

# Lesson Plan

## Session Length

Two hours and 30 minutes  
Materials:

* Video of development dialog between manager and employee
* Participant work book for each participant plus three extras for unexpected participants
* Facilitator’s guide
* Session evaluation form for each participant

## Equipment:

* Laptop with Development Dialog Power point presentation installed
* LCD projector
* Extra LCD bulb
* Screen or surface for projection of presentation
* Extension cords
* Flip chart and markers
* Masking tape

Room Arrangement:

Preferred arrangement is small tables with room for triads to work, spaces with sufficient space for facilitator to circulate among participants.

Pre-class Check List

* Arrive at least 30 minutes before starting point
* Set-up presentation and projector
* Tape two blank flipchart pages to the wall; label one RISKS and the other REWARDS
* Make sure tables and chairs are properly placed so participants can see the screen
* Place participant workbooks at each participant workspace
* Advance to Slide 1 5 minutes before start time
* Greet participants as they arrive

## Element One – Gaining Attention

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| Element  Time  :10 | Total  Time  :10 | * Introduce yourself and the course title * Advance to Slide 2: Purpose of this Course   + Explain: Goal is to build skills in having productive discussions with employees about development * Advance to slide 3: Show “Tell and Sell” video clip * Ask participants if they could relate to either the manager or employee in the clip. * Advance to Slide 3: “Tell and Sell vs Dialog” and discuss key differences:   + Tell & Sell     - One way     - Ignores feelings     - Role based     - Focuses on incentives   + Dialog     - Two way     - Allows both facts and feelings     - Authentic     - Focuses on trust and respect |

## Element 2: Direction (Stating Objectives)

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| Element  Time  :05 | Total  Time  :15 | * Advance to Slide 4: Objectives * Ask participants to read objectives to themselves * Ask participants how these objectives could help them in their role as a manager |

## Element 3: Recall (Recalling prerequisite information)

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| Element  Time  :10 | Total  Time  :25 | * Advance to Slide 5: Risks and rewards * Ask participants to consider their own experience with discussions about development as both a manager and an employee * Select two volunteers to record responses on the posted RISK and REWARD chart pages * Elicit one risk or reward from each participant and have volunteers record on flip charts * Advance to Slide 6: Frequently identified risks and rewards * Compare previously identified risks and rewards to what group has identified |

## Element 4: Content

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| Element  Time  :30 | Total  Time  :55 | * Advance to Slide 7: Key Success Factors * Briefly describe each of the key success factors and explain that participants will have the opportunity to watch and identify each of the factors in action in the video  1. Establish and maintain an atmosphere of trust and 2-way communication 2. Describe skill gaps in bias-free way 3. Anticipate development needs from both employee and manager’s perspectives 4. Mutually set development goals that are:    * + Specific      + Measurable      + Attainable      + Relevant      + Time-bound  * Show video clip of manager and employee holding a development dialog * Ask participants to complete the Video Reaction Worksheet in the Participant Workbook * Ask volunteers to report on how the manager:  1. Established and maintained an atmosphere of trust and 2-way communication   (Be sure they note-)   * + Was genuine in welcoming employee   + Sat together at table   + Asked employee’s thoughts first   + Listened and responded to employee’s thoughts  1. Describe skill gaps in bias-free way   (Be sure they note-)   * Focused discussion on employee, not co-workers * Addressed both strengths and weaknesses  1. Anticipate development needs from both employee and manager’s perspectives   (Be sure they note-)   * Responded openly to employee’s career goals and interests * Assertively addressed concerns about current skill levels  1. Mutually set SMART development goals   (Be sure they note-)   * Specific skills that need to be developed rather than general need for improvement * Description of how the new skills would be applied on the job and measured * Discussion of available time and resources to attain the goal * Align development goal with organizational need * Time limit on goal attainment |

## Element 5: Application Feedback—Level 1 (Guided Learning)

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| Element  Time  :30 | Total  Time  1:25 | * Discuss how good planning can help managers set a productive tone to development dialog * Ask participants to turn to Dialog Planning Worksheet in the Participant Workbook and think of an upcoming development dialog with a specific employee * Advance to Slide 8: Eliminating Bias   + Describe * Halo effect: A manager who likes important aspects of an employee’s behavior (willingness, friendliness, etc) overestimates employee skills in areas where s/he is lacking * Pitchfork effect: A manager who doesn’t like important aspects of an employee’s behavior underestimates the employee skills in areas where s/he does really well * Central tendency: A manager tends to mark all skills at mid-level * Ask participants to complete Part 1 of the Dialog Planning Worksheet to identify potential bias with this employee * Ask for volunteers to share potential bias * Advance to Slide 9: Anticipating Employee Input * Ask participants to complete Part 2 of the Dialog Planning Worksheet to identify employee input * Ask for volunteers to share key elements of anticipated employee input * Advance to Slide 10: SMART Goals * Ask participants to set a tentative SMART development goal for the employee * Ask for volunteers to share tentative SMART goals |

## Element 6: Application Feedback—Level 2 (Eliciting Performance) Round 1

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| Element  Time  :12 | Total  Time  1:37 | * Divide the group into triads. If the group is uneven, place the strongest performers as second observers. * In each triad, the participant with longest hair is the manager, shortest hair is the employee and other participant is the observer. * Advance to Slide 6: Key Success Factors and review * Allow 1 minute for “manager” to brief the “employee” on their role * Allow 6 minutes for “manager” to role play engaging the “employee” in a development dialog |

## Element 7: Application Feedback—Level 3 (Feedback) Round 1

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| Element  Time  :03 | Total  Time  1:40 | * Ask observers to complete the observation checklist and provide feedback to the manager * Walk around the room and add input on your observations |

## Repeat Elements 6 and 7 for Rounds 2 and 3

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| Element  Time  :20 | Total  Time  2:00 | * For Round 2, the observer becomes the employee, the employee becomes the manager and the manager becomes the observer.   + Allow 1 minute for briefing   + Allow 6 minutes for role play   + Allow 3 minutes for application feedback with facilitator input * For Round 3, the employee becomes the manager, the manager becomes the observer and the observer becomes the employee.   + Allow 1 minute for briefing   + Allow 6 minutes for role play   + Allow 3 minutes for application feedback with facilitator input |

## Element 8: Evaluation

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| Element  Time  :15 | Total  Time  2:15 | * Turn to Self Evaluation form in participant workbook and have each participant identify their current strengths and weaknesses in conducting development dialog. Have each participant share with their role play group. Circulate among the groups to add your input * Hand out Course Feedback Form and ask participants to complete and return to stack by projector * Turn to Self Evaluation form in participant workbook and ask participants to complete and return to facilitator (or site coordinator) after their next real development dialog within three weeks |

## Element 9: Closure

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| Element  Time  :15 | Total  Time  2:30 | * Advance to Slide 4: Objectives * Ask group to reflect on how the session could help them minimize risks and maximize rewards in their next development dialog |

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