

233d BASE SUPPORT BATTALION

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
HANDBOOK

“COMMUNITY OF CHOICE”

1 OCTOBER 2001
QUESTIONS ON THE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO
THE S-1, 348-6253 OR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, 348-1510

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PREVIOUS EDITIONS OBSOLETE

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PURPOSE

To establish policy and procedures for preparing an employee Individual Development Plan (IDP) within the 233d Base Support Battalion.

APPLICABILITY

This handbook is applicable to all personnel employed by the 233d Base Support Battalion. Responsibility to comply with these procedures is mandatory for all supervisors, managers, directors, raters, senior raters and employees who are employed under GM, GS, WG, WL, or WS appropriated fund categories. Noncompliance will not be tolerated.

PREPARING AN IDP

AN IDP IS:

- A document used to indicate training and developmental needs and to identify possible training solutions.
- An **action plan** that focuses on immediate and short-term goals that is in-line with the longer-term goals of the employee and the organization.
- A joint effort between the employee and the manager. The IDP preparation involves feedback and discussion about developmental needs, goals, and plans.
- A tool to identify and plan for training and experience which develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to meet the goals of the employee and the organization.

AN IDP IS NOT:

- A long-range development plan. Long-range goals drive shorter-term objectives, but the IDP is an **action plan**, which focuses on the present position and short-range goals.
- A performance appraisal. The IDP does not replace a performance appraisal (strengths and weaknesses are being considered, but the employee is **not being rated**).
- A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). Supervisors use PIP to give under performing employees who have been rated at less than fully successful on a critical element the opportunity to improve their performance. IDPs do not directly address performance problems or the corrective actions for those problems.

- A contract between employee and supervisor. The IDP is not a guarantee for payment of training.
- A way to clarify or revise a position description. The personnel office and the supervisor need to review this issue, if necessary.
- A promise for promotion upon completion of training objectives. The IDP does not guarantee advancement, but does increase the employee's ability to compete for future jobs as he or she develops skills.
- A method of resolving disputes between the manager and the employee.

GOALS OF THE IDP

- Learn new skills to improve current job performance.
- Maximize current performance, which will help the organization meet its goals.
- Increase interest, satisfaction, and challenge in current position.
- Obtain knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to reach career goals that are in line with organizational goals.

THE IDP SHOULD INCLUDE

- Clearly defined developmental goals.
- The knowledge, skills, and abilities that must be developed in order to achieve these goals.
- Specific assignments, training courses, projects, and other developmental activities.
- Proposed completion dates of time frames for the activities listed.
- Explanation of non-completion of training.

ROLE OF THE EMPLOYEE, THE SUPERVISOR AND REVIEWER

ROLE OF THE EMPLOYEE

- Assess the knowledge, skills and abilities he/she needs to develop to perform the job.
- Find potential learning opportunities that will help the employee meet the job's requirements.

- Discuss the IDP with the supervisor.
- Once the employee has reached a competency level in his/her current job, he/she should begin to develop objectives for higher-level work.

ROLE OF SUPERVISOR

- Identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities the employee will need to do the job.
- Initiate the IDP process.
- Offer constructive feedback about developmental strengths and weaknesses.
- Act as a coach regarding possible developmental activities to achieve the objectives and goals defined in the IDP.
- Define reasonable limits given organizational requirements and priorities, objectives, and needs of other employees.
- Assist the employee in identifying strengths and areas needing improvement.
- Guide the employee in drafting the IDP.
- Assist the employee in setting career goals once competency on the current job has been reached.
- Review the IDP every six (6) months together with employee to ensure target dates are being met.

ROLE OF THE REVIEWER

- Advise the supervisor and/or employee in the IDP process.
- Assist the supervisor with researching appropriate training and development opportunities.
- Ensure impartial selection of training opportunities.
- Create and monitor an environment that is conducive to fulfilling the training.
- Actively pursue resourcing of training.
- Ensure implementation of IDP.
- Ensure new employees receive their IDP within 30 days of employment.
- Ensure IDPs are renewed annually.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN PREPARING AN IDP

- The employee's goals should be realistic.
- Supervisor and employee will jointly develop the IDP. The supervisor will help the employee identify knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to reach goals, as well as developmental activities to develop those knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Training goals should be consistent with, and supportive of organizational goals.
- The IDP is a “living” document. When the supervisor signs the IDP, it is an indication of his or her support for the employee's training and development. The employee may not always be able to take advantage of training because of budgetary or workload constraints.

QUESTIONS EMPLOYEES MAY CONSIDER WHEN BEGINNING TO DRAFT AN IDP

- What knowledge, skills, and abilities will be necessary to do your work?
- Keeping in mind your self-assessment and the requirements of your position, what knowledge, skills, and abilities ***do you need to develop?***
- What kinds of training/experiences would help you develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities?
- Once you've developed competency in your current job, you can start to think about your longer-term career goals. What are your long-term career goals?
- Are these goals realistic?
- What knowledge, skills, and abilities will you need to reach those goals?
- What kinds of training/experiences would help you develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities?

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT IDPs

How and when is the IDP implemented?

The IDP is implemented by the employee, supervisor and reviewer. The IDP should specify in detail the goals and technical skills needed for the present job and/or future positions and helping the employee identify appropriate training and/or developmental activities.

Who signs the IDP?

The supervisor, employee, and reviewer sign and date the IDP.

Once the IDP is developed, can I change it?

Absolutely. Unexpected situations can make some planned training impossible, and new job demands can require additional training.

STEPS IN THE IDP PROCESS

STEP 1: ASSESSMENT

The ***supervisor initiates the IDP process*** by evaluating the skills needed for the current job and the employee's background, noting areas of strength and areas possibly needing improvement.

The ***employee reviews*** his/her prior job experience, training and education and compares his/her current skills to those needed for the job. These "skill gaps" form the basis of the employee's developmental objectives.

The supervisor and employee develop a recommended plan of action by researching training and developmental activities needed to reach the employee's objectives.

Once steps A through C are completed, the employee can repeat the process to identify objectives for future assignments.

OUTCOME: Working drafts of an IDP, which include developmental needs and possible training or developmental solutions.

STEP 2: EMPLOYEE/SUPERVISOR MEETING

The supervisor arranges a meeting with the employee. In this meeting, both the supervisor and the employee discuss the employee's needs in the context of his or her job requirements.

The supervisor coaches the employee with appropriate information regarding challenging assignments, career paths within the organization, the unit's "mission" from the supervisor's perspective, and a reasonable time frame in which to accomplish the objectives set forth in the draft.

OUTCOME: To reach a mutual commitment between the supervisor and the employee regarding the IDP plan.

STEP 3: EMPLOYEE COMPLETES FINAL IDP PLAN FOR SIGNATURES

The employee makes corrections of additions and prepares the final IDP for the supervisor's approval. If the final copy is acceptable to the supervisor, the supervisor signs the IDP form indicating support of the plan. Then, the supervisor submits the final IDP plan to the reviewer for signature.

OUTCOME: To establish a written career development plan.

STEP 4: IDP IMPLEMENTATION

The employee begins training and working on developmental assignments. If necessary, the employee completes the appropriate training forms and submits them to the supervisor for review and approval. The employee informs the supervisor of any problems he or she is having with the following through.

OUTCOME: To follow through on an IDP commitment.

STEP 5: FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

A. The employee should meet with his or her supervisor every six months to determine if the IDP is meeting the developmental needs of the employee and the organization.

OUTCOME: To systematically continue and support a career development plan for the employee.

TYPES OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

SOURCES OF INFORMAL TRAINING

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)

A planned process where an employee is given progressive and developmental work assignments in an effort to achieve specific learning objectives. The supervisor planning OJT should make the learning objectives as specific as possible and clearly map out the method by which the training should take place (for example, who will do the teaching, what skills and information will be taught, in what order will the information be presented).

DETAILS OR ROTATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

A temporary assignment to another work area to fill a manpower shortage, help meet a production deadline, teach or learn a new skill, or gain experience in another job.

SELF-STUDY

Independent reading, research, or training courses. Sources for self-study: Internet, and local public libraries.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Usually short-term work assignments given to an employee in addition to his or her regular duties. Examples of special projects can include researching articles, conducting a special investigation, writing a book review or report, leading meetings, creating and installing a new system, orienting new employees to their work place, planning an off-site meeting, and joining an ad hoc committee.

ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

Activities that can help employees meet experts in their field, learn about new research, and obtain resource materials.

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL OR NETWORKING ORGANIZATIONS

These include association by industry or areas of expertise, such as the Society of Government Economists, Professional Managers Association, or other professional groups such as Federally Employed Women and Toastmasters.

SOURCES OF FORMAL TRAINING

GOVERNMENT INTERAGENCY

Training provided by an interagency training activity, or by a Federal department, agency, or independent establishment other than the one in which a trainee is currently employed.

NON-GOVERNMENT

Training developed and delivered by an independent organization or individual to meet the needs of a wide range of employees. These organizations can include independent consultants, professional associations, colleges or universities, or other commercial or industrial organizations.