



Harvard John A. Paulson
School of Engineering
and Applied Sciences

Career Development for Staff and Managers

Thursday, August 13, 2026

Why We Are Here Today...

Many of you have asked for more guidance on supporting staff career development.

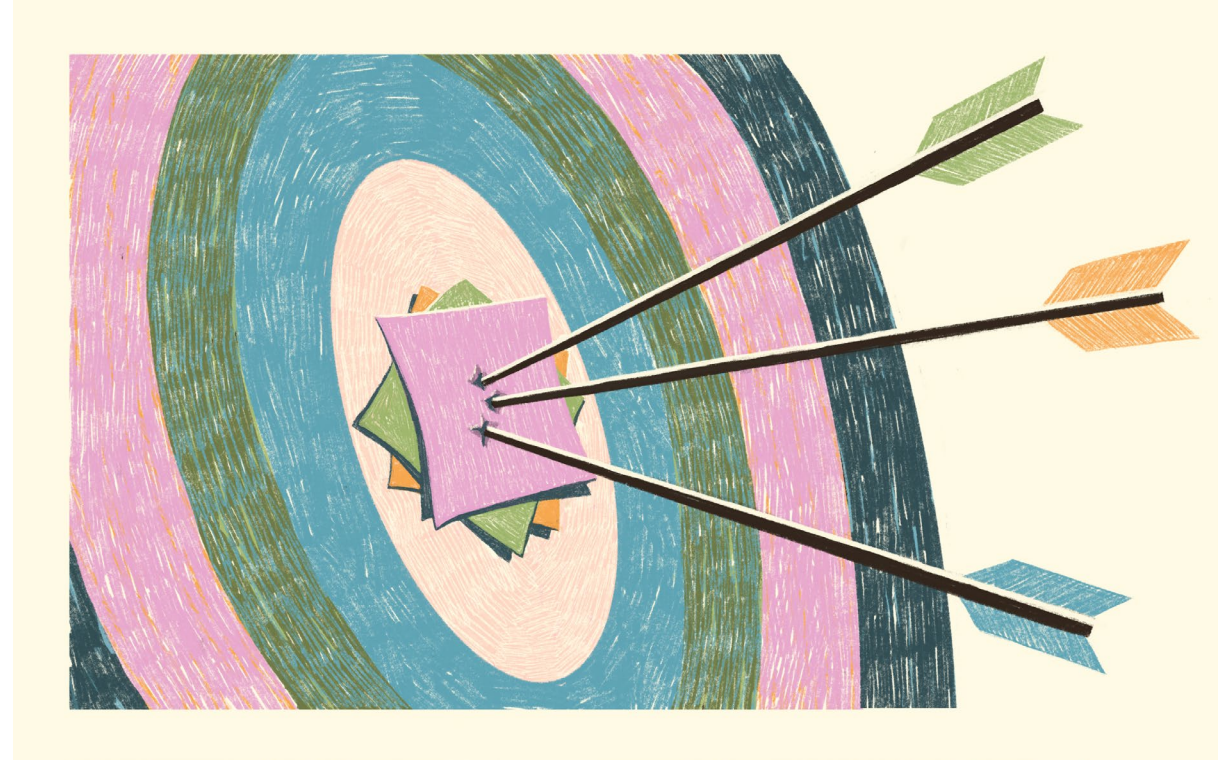
The list below reflects specific questions from our manager retreat.

- How do I manage growth-oriented staff in roles with no upward mobility?
- How do I provide opportunities for advancement without an open position?
- How can we effectively and proactively get staff to engage in training and professional development?
- What are some tools or resources to encourage staff career development conversations?
- How do I keep employees motivated and engaged with limited opportunity for advancement?



Objectives of Today's Session

1. **Discuss** the elements of career development at SEAS.
2. **Review** resources, programs, and development opportunities available to both staff and managers.
3. **Share** practical ideas, successes, and challenges related to supporting staff development and pursuing your own growth as leaders.



Career Development

It is the lifelong, ongoing process of managing skills, education, and experiences to achieve professional goals.

Key Components:

1. Goal Setting: Outlining specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) objectives.
2. Self-Assessment: Identifying your personal strengths, values, interests, and limitations.
3. Exploration: Researching various roles, industries, and potential career trajectories.
4. Action: Acquiring new knowledge or experiences (e.g., stretch projects), building skills, acquiring certifications, and networking to execute your plan.



Career Development Benefits

- **Retention:** Continuous learning and career development improves retention.
- **Engagement:** Employee engagement increases with learning and development opportunities.
- **Resilience:** Coaching, support, and sponsorship all increase staff resilience.
- **Individuals:** Builds capabilities that matter most: confidence, influence, adaptability, strategic thinking, stronger relationships, effective communication, deeper expertise, and leadership.
- **Organization:** Organizations investing strategically in learning and development perform better.

****Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)***



Harvard John A. Paulson
School of Engineering
and Applied Sciences

Career Development Impact

- **76%** of employees are more likely to stay at organizations offering continuous learning and development.
- **78%** say learning programs positively impact their engagement.
- Employees with **managers, sponsors, or mentors are 1.5x more likely** to feel strongly motivated to overcome career obstacles (**54% vs. 35%**).
- Organizations with strategic learning and development are **2.3x more likely** to achieve better business outcomes.

****Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)***



Harvard John A. Paulson
School of Engineering
and Applied Sciences

Manager and Staff Roles for Career Development

Managers

- **Ask** thoughtful questions, **encourage** reflection, and **provide** honest feedback.
- **Create** and **champion** learning opportunities.
- **Help** make connections and **remove** barriers when possible.
- **Support** development discussions and growth.
- **Influence** careers, they don't own them.

Employees

- **Reflect** honestly, **ask** for feedback, and **be open to** coaching.
- **Seek out, pursue, and make the most of** learning opportunities.
- **Build** relationships, **ask** for support when needed, and **follow through**.
- **Drive** career conversations with **clear goals** and **preparation**.
- **Own** your career development and **be accountable** for your growth.



How Development Occurs

<u>Experience Based Learning</u>	<u>Relationship Based Learning</u>	<u>Education Based Learning</u>
Projects/Assignments	Managers	Courses
Jobs	Colleagues	Seminars/Conferences
Hardships	Mentors	Training Programs
Community Service	Coaches	Online Learning



Career Development Insights and Strategies Ideation

Breakout Exercise (13 min)

1. Identify someone to keep track of key insights surfaced.
2. Share career development challenges, questions, or opportunities you are experiencing or have experienced with direct reports.
3. Discuss what you have tried (including what has been most and least effective).
4. Ask your peers to provide ideas, feedback, and next step suggestions.

Return Group Discussion (17 min)

1. Share the key insights, strategies, and takeaways your breakout group discussed.
2. Contribute additional ideas, tools, resources, endorsements (e.g., courses), or best practices that haven't yet been shared.



SEAS Career Development Resource Guide

SEAS Career Development Resource Guide					
Programs, Solutions, & Resources	Details	Target Audiences			
		Grade Level 60+ Managers	Grade Level 60+ Non-Mgrs.	People Managers	Individual Contributors
Center for Workplace Development (CWD)	Courses, coaching, and programs designed to help Harvard employees achieve their professional best.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Harvard Extension School courses in Business, Management, and Strategy	Offers standalone courses for all employees (\$40) or enrollment in certificate and master's programs for deeper study.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Harvard ManageMentor (via HTP)	Self-paced learning (primarily manager content but some for all) to build skills, solve workplace challenges, and explore topics of interest.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Harvard Training Portal (HTP)	University-wide hub for all employee-focused training programs.	✓	✓	✓	✓
LinkedIn Learning	Short, practical, self-paced learning that fit busy schedules and make it easy to build a skill, solve an immediate challenge, or explore a new topic.	✓	✓	✓	✓
SEAS Professional Development Policy & Application Page	Provides funding and release time for eligible professional development that builds job skills and supports career growth.	✓	✓	✓	✓





Q&A

We Would Love your Feedback!

Thank you for participating in our
SEAS Manager Learning Session
today!

*Please scan the QR code with
your phone to complete a short, 3
to 4-minute evaluation.*



Thank You!



Harvard John A. Paulson
School of Engineering
and Applied Sciences

Appendix

Additional Support Resources, Tools, and Strategies TBD

1. Manager Practices to Foster a Development Culture
2. Career Development Conversation Starters



Manager Practices to Foster a Development Culture

Focus Areas	Practices
1. Know Your Direct Reports Understand what motivates each employee and tailor development accordingly.	- Hold regular career development conversations. - Conduct stay interviews to understand what engages, fulfills, and retains employees. - Explore employees' strengths, interests, aspirations, and development goals.
2. Align Development with the Work Integrate development into day-to-day responsibilities rather than treating it as separate from the job.	- Align development goals with work assignments and organizational priorities. - Adjust responsibilities where appropriate to better match strengths and growth goals (job crafting). - Protect dedicated learning time, even in small increments.



Manager Practices to Foster a Development Culture

<u>Focus Areas</u>	<u>Practices</u>
3. Create Meaningful Growth Opportunities • Use real work, not just formal training, to build capability and confidence.	• Assign stretch projects with appropriate support and follow-up. • Create opportunities to lead meetings, mentor others, improve processes, or solve visible problems. • Leverage emerging work and changing priorities as development opportunities. • Encourage growth beyond promotion through expanded influence, leadership, and cross-functional experience.
4. Expand Learning and Connections • Help employees broaden their knowledge, relationships, and perspectives.	• Support participation in Harvard and external learning opportunities. • Encourage involvement in Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). • Connect employees with mentors, colleagues, and professional networks. • Promote peer learning, job shadowing, cross-training, and communities of practice.



Manager Practices to Foster a Development Culture

<u>Focus Areas</u>	<u>Practices</u>
5. Coach for Ownership • Provide guidance while empowering employees to own their development.	• Coach up front, then step back and allow employees to lead. • Clarify expectations, define success, and provide support when needed. • Help employees identify the skills and experiences that will prepare them for future opportunities.
6. Reinforce Learning and Growth • Help employees turn experiences into lasting development.	• Debrief projects and challenging experiences to identify lessons learned. • Encourage employees to share new knowledge with peers. • Seek and provide feedback regularly to accelerate growth.
7. Recognize and Model Development • Create a culture where learning and growth are visible and valued.	• Recognize growth in skills, judgment, influence, leadership, and visibility, not just promotions. • Celebrate meaningful contributions and increased responsibility. • Share your own development goals and demonstrate continuous learning.



Career Development Conversation Starters

<u>Questions Managers Can Ask Their Staff</u>	<u>Questions Managers Can Ask Themselves</u>
• What work gives you energy? • What kinds of problems do you enjoy solving? • What skills would you like to strengthen this year? • Where do you feel underutilized? • What experiences would challenge you in a good way? • What support from me would be most helpful? • What would success look like 6, 12, 18 months from now?	• What leadership skills are you currently working on? • Who gives you honest feedback? • When was the last time you intentionally learned something new? • What challenge at work could become your next development opportunity? • What kind of leader do you want to become over the next two years? • Who is investing in your growth? • Who can you ask to invest further in your growth?

