

Stage 1 checklist – Before the development programme

February 2017

Developing
managers to
manage *sustainable*
employee engagement,
health and well-being

Refined checklist for those considering conducting a development programme

Introduction

Numerous research studies have shown that, through the management of their teams, line managers have a huge impact on employee engagement, health and well-being. Previous research conducted by Affinity Health at Work identified certain manager behaviours that are central to engaging employees and the prevention and reduction of stress in employees. In addition, the research demonstrated that, using development programmes, organisations can equip managers with these behaviours. However, running such development programmes is not without challenges, and sustaining the changes after the development programme is even more difficult.

Affinity Health at Work wanted to understand more about how to create the context and implement development programmes to support manager behaviour that enhances employee engagement, health and well-being. They used an evidence-based practice model (Briner et al 2009) to collect evidence from a wide range of sources. Both academic and practitioner literature was reviewed and stakeholders within organisations were interviewed. The evidence gathered clearly demonstrated that there are crucial factors for practitioners to consider in order to achieve success in such development programmes; the research also suggests that the stage of the intervention process determines which of these factors should be considered. This research resulted in the development of checklists for practitioners (Lewis et al 2014).

The initial 2014 checklists were designed to guide practitioners who are planning to run a development programme, currently running a development programme, or facilitating the transfer of learning after a development programme. They are intended to support organisations to implement successful development programmes by helping them to consider the range of factors that could enhance or reduce effectiveness. The checklists were categorised into three areas of consideration: methodology, manager and organisation.

Feedback on the 2014 work was that, although the checklists were both easily understood and useful, they provided a large number of factors that practitioners needed to consider when beginning the

process of running a development programme. During 2015–16, Affinity Health at Work therefore conducted research focused on collecting further data to help refine the checklists and provide additional guidance to support their application. The methodology for this research is summarised in Figure 1.

The refined checklist set out in this document should be used by practitioners BEFORE a development programme.

Please note: these checklists represent guidance on factors to consider. They are evidence-based suggestions, rather than a validated model.

How to use these refined checklists

The factors for management development success have been categorised into three levels, based on the research findings. Level 1 factors are those that the research showed most respondents had considered, level 2 factors are those that some respondents had considered and level 3 factors are those that most respondents had not considered. For ease of use, these have been highlighted using different shades (see key below).

It is suggested that these levels can be used to prioritise practitioner action. When starting out, it is suggested that practitioners implement the Level 1 factors first and then, with more experience and time, consider Level 2 and Level 3 factors. Therefore when using the refined checklists, organisations should at first ensure the pink factors (Level 1) are in place before moving onto the purple and grey factors (Levels 2 and 3), as these factors are more likely to be in place in organisations with mature development programmes.

Key:

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Managers who take part in the development programmes are referred to as participants throughout the checklist.

Should you have any questions when completing the checklist, please refer to the supporting Frequently Asked Questions document.

Figure 1: Research process



Refined checklist for those considering conducting a development programme

Stage 1 - Before the development programme

Methodology	
Considerations for planning, design and format of the programme that support success	
Please mark the applicable box (✓) on a scale from 0 – ‘No, not at all’ to 5 – ‘Yes, completely’ or ‘Don’t know’ and provide examples.	
	0 1 2 3 4 5 Evidence and comments
1 Is the development programme seen as a series of interventions unfolding over time (3-plus months including practice and follow-up) rather than just a one-off activity?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">No, not at all</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 </div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Yes, completely Don't know</div> </div>
2 Will you ensure that the development programme is integrated with the wider organisation’s culture and practices?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 </div>
3 Have you considered how ongoing resources (for example financial, administrative, logistical, support) will be made available?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 </div>
4 Have you ensured there will be opportunities for the participants to apply their learning?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 </div>
5 Have you considered ways of making participants accountable both for the success of the development programme and for applying their learning in their management role (for example linking to performance reviews, follow-ups)?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 </div>

Stage 1 – Before the development programme

Methodology (cont.)

Considerations for planning, design and format of the programme that support success

Please mark the applicable box (✓) on a scale from 0 – ‘No, not at all’ to 5 – ‘Yes, completely’ or ‘Don’t know’ and provide examples.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Evidence and comments
6 Does the development programme include a range of formats (effective formats include mentoring, coaching, lectures, group collaboration, management networks, multi-rater feedback, learning through experience and action learning sets)?	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	No, not at all					Yes, completely Don't know	
7 Will you ensure there is a shared responsibility for its success across all the relevant teams and functions, such as HR, health and safety, occupational health, learning and development?	<input type="checkbox"/>						
8 Have you considered how you ensure that the development programme is useful, beneficial and important to all stakeholders, including manager participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>						

The following factors have also been found to be important but may need you to consult with other areas of your organisation. Please consider the following:

Does the development programme include setting multiple goals for participants that are compatible with each other, challenging but not unmanageable, specific and requiring effort over time?

Are senior leaders and all in management positions genuinely supportive of the development programme?

Are the development programme aims clear and straightforward (for example, SMART goals – specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time bound)?

Have you ensured the name of the development programme is appropriate in your organisation (for example, fit with organisational language, brand, culture, population)?

Note: Remember to refer to the Equality Act 2010 when planning the programme – for instance, ensuring it is accessible to part-time workers and considers the needs of older workers.

Stage 1 – Before the development programme

Manager

Characteristics of the manager participants that support programme success

Please mark the applicable box (✓) on a scale from 0 – ‘No, not at all’ to 5 – ‘Yes, completely’ or ‘Don’t know’ and provide examples.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Evidence and comments
1 Do you support managers to be confident in their management skills (for example ensuring positive, timely, specific feedback, mentoring, coaching)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">No, not at all</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Yes, completely</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Don't know</div> </div>					
2 Do you encourage managers to value learning and development (for example through recognition schemes that place value on furthering knowledge)?	<input type="checkbox"/>						
3 Have you considered selecting participants for the development programme according to the following behaviours/characteristics that have been shown to influence learning: leaders who are supportive of their team, display integrity, are effective performers and accept negative feedback?	<input type="checkbox"/>						
4 Do you currently have activities that build self-awareness and help managers recognise themselves as leaders (for example upward/360 feedback, mentoring, coaching, use of psychometrics/occupational testing)?	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Note: Research also shows that cognitive ability and personality characteristics (conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience, external locus of control) positively impact on the success of learning and applying learning in the workplace. These should be assessed/used as consideration criteria only by qualified professionals in an objective and standardised way.



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