



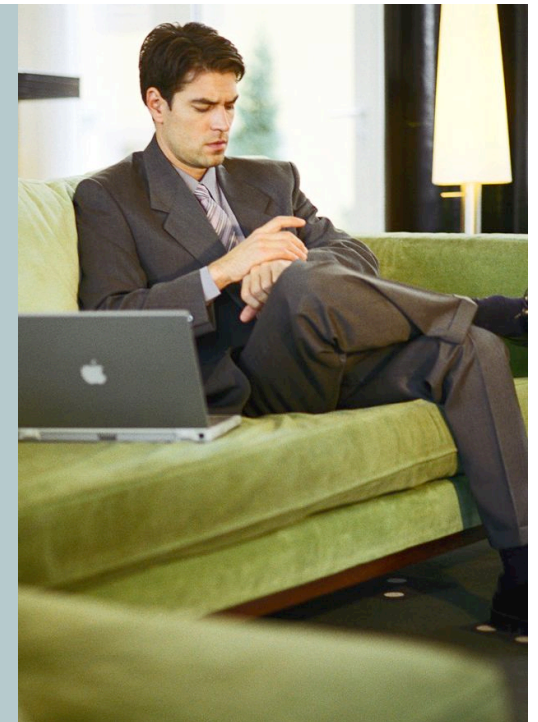
Wot no personal development plans?

What happens when you leave personal development plans to the individual.

We all know the rhetoric, individuals are supposed to take some ownership for personal development planning, but when we leave it to them the results become increasingly polarised between the eager to develop and everyone else.

Victoria Winkler, (adviser in learning, training and development CIPD) has been quoted as saying "HR is making available a range of learning and development options, but encouraging the individual to take increased responsibility for how that all comes together in terms of personal development plans or programmes for the year" A sentiment we would probably all agree with, but when we adopt this approach what are finding in our businesses? For many we are seeing a small number of individuals who really embrace it, engage with it and in it, and seek to build themselves in expectancy of tomorrows challenges. But unfortunately we are also seeing an increasing number who either start in earnest but find the pressures of the day squeeze personal development out, or even worse merely pay it lip service. What's your honest experience? It may be the same.

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If this is your experience as well, then we must question the validity of the whole Personal Development Plan approach. OK, so it clearly works for some people, those that see their development as an integral part of their career path, but are we letting the majority down who for whatever reasons don't embrace PDP's with the same gusto? Maybe some people really need HR to drive their development planning or they will miss out, and the organisation will not benefit from increased competence.

Perhaps a smarter approach yet to evolve will embrace multiple development planning mechanisms where those with the desire embrace their own planning have the freedom and framework to do so, but others fall back on a centralised facility to support and encourage them to embrace new learning.



We think it might be time to challenge the effectiveness of personal development planning across organisations. There's no need to throw the baby out with the bath water, but perhaps there is a need to develop multiple planning approaches that can run as alternate streams within the business. As HR move to an increasingly facilitative role in the development of the organisation, the involvement of managers (who have increasingly less time to dedicate to it) becomes critical. If we are not to fail the majority, a more dynamic development planning mechanism may be necessary.