



State of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Preparing For Your First Career Development Meeting

Thinking about your future, but not exactly sure where to begin? Take these steps to get started:

Determine your goal/identify the desired future state

Common goals include promotion, lateral position change, growing your skills or increasing your knowledge. If you are interested in a different position, having an identified job title (and a position description) will be very helpful.

Some questions you may consider asking yourself:

- What do I like about the current situation?
- What do I want to be different?
- What do I want to be better?
- What do I value? (In a working environment, organization's mission, colleagues, manager, compensation and benefits)
- What feedback have I received about strengths and areas of opportunity for growth?

Take inventory and assess your current state

Where are you now? What knowledge, skills, abilities, education and experience do you currently have? Where do you believe you might be lacking? Keep in mind that career development is hard work. It can be easy to underestimate how hard and lonely it can be, so you really want to get clear up front about your situation and level of commitment. It can be easy to think something is a great idea until you realize exactly how much work it will be.

Some things to consider:

- How much time and effort am I willing to commit to achieve my goal(s)?
- Is this the right time for me to undertake career development?
- What resources do I have access to?
- What am I missing?
- Are there any barriers that either might prevent me from being successful or make achieving my goals much harder?
- What kind of support do I have in place for this endeavor?
- Am I ok with making some changes in my life to do the things needed for this goal?

Conduct a Gap Analysis

The difference between where you currently are and where you want to be is known as the "gap."

If you have identified a goal, this is where a specific job title and position description will come in really handy. Consider the minimum qualifications needed to be competitive for the position. Perhaps the opportunity you seek requires a college degree or certificate? Maybe you need additional computer skills or some other specialized knowledge? Knowing exactly what stands between you and being qualified tells you what steps you will need to take in your journey.

Career development is all about filling that gap with tangible, actionable steps that will bring you closer to meeting your goal.

[Here's the link to the State of Oregon Human Resources Divisions Classification and Compensation page with classification specifications.](#)

You will find specific classifications of jobs and the minimum qualifications required for each.

The more concrete your goal, the more actionable it will be, so the easier it will be to plan for and work on. Over time, your goal may change as you learn more, but having a starting point is key. Think about it this way: you won't know when you arrive, if you don't set a destination.

Create a plan

It's important to be realistic. Go back to the questions in step two. Consider exactly what is needed to reach your goal, both in action and resources. Breaking your goal into smaller, more easily manageable tasks is key.

DEQ has a Career Development Plan form to help you plot out your journey