



Talent Capability Partner Program

Program Workbook and Resources



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Why Have a Partner?

The purpose of the partnership program is to learn from each other in a safe and fun way. You will also gain valuable contacts in the Talent Development community.

Stay Relevant

Methods, research, and tools change in every discipline over time. Even if you have a decade or more of experience and your partner has less, you can learn from what is currently happening in your field at the ground level or in a different discipline. Your partner may also have access to information and experiences that you do not have.

Gain new perspectives

Through the numerous conversations with your partner about carrying out their daily responsibilities, you will learn their values and perspectives on many aspects of work and life. Whether you have dissimilarities due to different background, upbringing, education, or generation, consider this your opportunity to challenge the way you typically look at things and expand your own world view.

Learn more about yourself

During conversations with your partner, you will have the opportunity to learn more about yourself. Listen to what questions you are asking, what assumptions you are making, and what advice you offer. Use this for self-reflection. What do all of these say about you: your interests, your ways of operating? Take the additional step and ask your partner for feedback; seeing yourself from their perspective can be quite revealing.

Resources and Tools for you:

- Process Framework
- Getting to Know You (Sample Questions)
- Development Path Questionnaire
- Career Discovery Questionnaire
- SWOT Questionnaire
- Clarify Expectations -Discussion Guide
- Agreements Worksheet

The guide and questionnaires that follow are provided to help you choose the most comfortable and mutually beneficial way to get to know your partner. The questions you choose should be a good balance of personal and professional questions.

You are encouraged to read through and pre-select how you plan to focus your first several conversations. This will help with getting things started in the right direction. However, these are not intended to be “interview questions.” They can and should be used in a fluid manner, allowing the conversations to flow freely and head in the direction that best meets your partnership.

Suggested Meeting Guidelines

Phase	Timeframe	Focus	Tools and Resources
Application Acceptance	AUG 13	✓ Review partner program benefits and determine if right for you ✓ Submit application	Partner application & questionnaire
Partner Announcement	AUG 14	✓ Virtual introduction of partners via email	
Introduction/ Kick-Off	AUG 15 Kick-off meeting	✓ Learn about the program and exchange contact information with your partner ✓ All partners will be invited	Resource packet will be provided
Establishing the Relationship & Setting the Direction	First 1-2 meetings TBD by partners' schedules	✓ Get to know one another ✓ Establish development goals ✓ Set the tone for the quality of the conversations ✓ Guide the discussion about roles and expectations ✓ Explore each other's aspirations ✓ Set meaningful and actionable development goals ✓ Determine opportunities and assignments	1. ATD Capabilities Model quiz 2. Getting to Know You (Sample Questions) 3. Development Path Questionnaire 4. Career Discovery Questionnaire 5. SWOT Questionnaire 6. NOISE Questionnaire
Job Shadowing and/or Tour #1	Development Assignment (1 job shadow + 1 debrief discussion)	✓ Partner job shadow and/or tour work location #1 ✓ Discuss current work experiences, mindsets, and behaviors ✓ Explore partners' day to day experiences and interactions ✓ Use the power of questions to gain insight ✓ Encourage partners to experiment with new skills, processes, technologies, and/or behaviors	Job Shadow Debrief
Job Shadowing and/or Tour #2	Development Assignment (1 job shadow + 1 debrief discussion)	✓ Partner job shadow and/or tour work location #2 ✓ Discuss current work experiences, mindsets, and behaviors ✓ Explore partner's day to day experiences and interactions ✓ Use the power of questions to gain insight ✓ Encourage partner to experiment with new skills, processes, technologies, and/or behaviors	Job Shadow Debrief

Additional Development Opportunities and Assignments	Ongoing meetings (Minimum of 2)	✓ Partners to discuss in ongoing meetings ✓ Select at least two additional development options (reading assignments, stretch assignments, behavior changes, skills practices, etc.) ✓ If one or both job shadowing assignments cannot be completed, add 1-2 additional development opportunity assignments as applicable	1. Selecting Development Assignments 2. How to debrief a development assignment
Partner Sharing Best Practices Meeting	AUG 29 4:00-5:00 PM	✓ Partners will present learning, best practices, development assignments, thoughts, and ideas ✓ Zoom (or by email)	
Mid-Point Check-In	SEPT 12	✓ All partners will receive a check-in from the ATD board program managers ✓ Provide additional tools, resources, advice, etc. ✓ Determine what is going well, what assistance is needed, etc.	
Partner Sharing Best Practices Meeting	SEPT 19 4:00-5:00 PM	✓ Partners will present learning, best practices, development assignments, thoughts, and ideas ✓ Zoom (or by email)	
Wrap-Up	Final formal meeting between mentor and mentee	✓ Partners will discuss what they have learned from each other	Consolidating Learning Activity
Virtual Celebration	OCT 3 (or after) Time TBD		

The First 1-2 Meetings:

The purpose of your first couple of meetings is to establish the relationship.

Your goal is to:

- Gain an understanding of each other's career goals
- Find common ground
- Clarify expectations for working together
- Identify your roles
- Validate your agreements

Getting to Know Your Partner: Worksheet

Objective: Learn your partner's past experiences and set the framework for future goals

When to Use: During the first 1-2 meetings.

How to Use: Consider pre-selecting a few questions that you believe will be a good starting point.

Sample Questions

What brought you to the program?

What do you hope to learn through your involvement in the partnership program?

Tell me a bit about your career background – what brought you to the position that you are in today? What other jobs/positions have you had?

What has been most important in your career development so far?

What is going on in your current role/position at work?

What are your career aspirations? (Short term and down the line)

What accomplishment(s) are you the proudest of in your life or career?

If you could have a “do over” for something in your life or career, what would it be?

SWOT Analysis Questionnaire

Objective: Learn your Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities to help frame how you may be able to best assist each other.

When to Use: During the first 1-2 meetings.

How to Use: Consider reviewing the questions as a homework assignment. This will give both of you time to really think about the questions, and will help guide your discussion more productively.

STRENGTHS:

What do you do well? What do you have good qualifications for?

What do others see as your strengths?

Which of your achievements are you most proud of?

What respected networks (formal or informal) are you part of?

What other strengths do you have?

WEAKNESSES

What tasks do you usually avoid because you don't feel confident doing them?

Do you have traits that you hold back in your role?

What are others dissatisfied with in your work?

What's your biggest self-doubt, professionally?

What other weaknesses are you aware of?

OPPORTUNITIES

What industry and technology trends might allow you to use your expertise?

What needs can you identify at your company that you can fulfill?

How could you turn your strengths into opportunities for growth?

What training would help you address a weakness in your skills?

What other useful opportunities exist in your current role?

THREATS

What threats to your reputation do your weaknesses expose you to?

What threats do you face from competition inside and outside the company?

How do you undermine your own success?

What threats to your personal brand do you face?

NOISE Analysis Questionnaire

Objective: Assess talents, strengths, and needs to implement improvements and offer a sense of empowerment. Self-reflection and documenting objectives and goals ensure greater buy-in and achievement.

When to Use: During the first 1-2 meetings.

How to Use: Consider reviewing the questions as a homework assignment. This will give both of you time to really think about the questions, and will help guide your discussion more productively.

NOISE stands for Needs, Opportunities, Improvements, Strengths, and Exceptions. This model works with individuals, teams, departments, and the entire organization.

Work through the model in the following order:

1. Strengths – your skills and talents that others admire
2. Needs – internal factors, such as resources, classes, certifications, materials, people, or processes to meet goals and improve skills and talents (may be organizational or individual)
3. Opportunities – external factors, such as trends, concerns, or areas of untapped potential to work toward to become more marketable with focus and effort
4. Improvements – immediate actions or changes, internally or externally, to improve or support progress
5. Exceptions – identify what is already happening in the four other areas to increase what is working well and decrease what is not working well

STRENGTHS:

1. What is working well?
2. How do you know?
3. Where do you succeed?
4. Can you provide examples?
5. What do others say are your strengths?

NEEDS:

1. After acquiring skills or talents, will you work better?
2. Can you work more effectively?
3. What technical or complex skills are required?
4. What interpersonal or soft skills do you need?
5. What tools or resources do you need for work?

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. What are you learning and applying that you need more data?
2. Are you using your skills and talents to their full potential?
3. Can you use them differently?
4. What interests you?
5. What are you missing?

IMPROVEMENTS:

1. What tasks can you complete in the next 90 days?
2. What strengths, needs, and opportunities can you improve?
3. What works well that you can do more?
4. What areas would be easy to accomplish?
5. What else should you be doing?

EXCEPTIONS:

1. What am I already doing (even a little) in other areas – strengths, needs, opportunities, and improvements – that I could sharpen with more energy?
2. Can I increase what is working well and decrease what is not working well?

After answering these questions, review, edit, and reflect on your responses. Look for outlier ideas that don't seem to fit with the others. They could be breakthrough ideas that lead to success.

Follow up with these action questions:

1. How do you use your strengths to take advantage of opportunities?
2. How do you close the gap on needs that prevent you from taking advantage of opportunities?
3. How can you better understand the opportunities and increase their odds of happening?
4. What improvements can you put into practice quickly? Which ones need expert support and advice? Which ones will yield good results and play to your strengths?

Development Path Questionnaire

Objective: Learn each other's interests and goals by comparing your vision of a future role with current skills.

When to Use: During the first 1-2 meetings.

How to Use: Discuss your responses to the following questions.

Sample Career Path Questions

What aspects of your current role do you really enjoy?

What aspects of your current role do you wish you could change?

What is your primary career interest, vision of the future, or long-term professional role for yourself?

Which of the following best describe your development goals?

- ☐ Gain expertise for development in your current role
- ☐ Expand into a new or different area/Learn about a new career path
- ☐ Increase/develop a talent
- ☐ Obtain additional knowledge/experience to develop for an upcoming position or opportunity
- ☐ Get better in current role
- ☐ Create a professional network for future opportunities
- ☐ Build your reputation or brand
- ☐ What knowledge, skills or experiences do you believe you will need to gain in order to make your vision a reality?
- ☐ What tasks in your current role do you believe are contributing the most to your long-term professional goals?
- ☐ What type of learning opportunities or stretch assignments would you like to be involved in if possible?

Clarify Expectations: Discussion Guide

Objective: To establish how you will work together to move forward on a positive path.

When to Use: During the first 1-2 meetings.

How to Use: Discuss the topics below up front so that you can design a framework that is mutually beneficial and tailored to your individual personalities and workloads.

Topic	Questions for Consideration
Overall objectives	What will success look like for each of us?
Use of a mentee development plan	How will we use the development plan to target specific goals, guide progress, and check-in against the goals?
Preferred ways to communicate	What is the preferred way to communicate in-between meetings (desk phone, cell phone, text message, zoom, etc.)
Meetings and scheduling	How often, when, and where will we be meeting? What will the length of the meetings be? How far in advance do you want to schedule meetings? What is the agreed upon method if one of us needs to make a change to a meeting date/time?
Scope of discussion content	What will be our primary subject matter (for example – work related successes and challenges, developing specific skills, career opportunities, etc.) What is off the table (life choices, purchasing a home, finances, etc.)
Safe and confidentiality	How will we handle sensitive topics? What does confidential mean for each of us?
Providing feedback	How can we ensure regular check-ins to provide each other feedback on how things are going (i.e. Is this still working?) How will we discuss the aspects of mentoring that are not going well?
Obstacles and balance	What might get in the way of our meetings and how should we address those obstacles?

Mutual Agreements

Directions: The following template will be completed and agreed upon within the first two meetings.

We identified the following expectations and role responsibilities as part of our agreement to work together in this partnership.

Overall objectives

Use of development plan

Preferred ways to communicate

Meetings, scheduling, and communicating changes

Scope of discussion content

Safety and confidentiality

Providing feedback to each other

Partner #1's responsibilities

Partner #2's responsibilities

Additional considerations we discussed

If the partnership is not working well for either one of us, we agree to take steps to improve the relationship including reaching out to the program administrators for counsel.

Partner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Partner Signature: _____ Date: _____