

Preeta Nayak:

By now, you and your supervisor have met to begin co-creating your development plan and decided on some development priorities - specific competencies you'll focus on to support your goals and aspirations.

The next step is to get concrete about the activities you will take, supported by your supervisor, to grow those competencies, and you'll do this by building a 70/20/10 plan. What does 70/20/10 mean? Well, most of us associate learning with classrooms, textbooks, chalkboards, a teacher at the front of the room, but the reality of adult learning and development is much more complex. Think about a skill that you've acquired in your life, like cooking. To build the skill, maybe you watched a cooking show, or prepared a meal under the guidance of a friend or family member who cooks well. But the majority of your expertise likely came from practice, taking advantage of opportunities to use and perfect your skill until eventually it became less difficult.

This is the essence of the 70/20/10 approach. Research shows that the most effective learning actually happens on the job. While training and coaching have a role to play in leadership development, research from the Center for Creative Leadership and other studies have found that on-the-job learning drives approximately seventy percent of development. This job-related learning includes experiences like special projects, stretch assignments, and an expansion of one's role. By contrast, coaching drives approximately twenty percent of development, and formal learning drives only ten percent.

This doesn't mean you should only focus on job-related learning. The three elements of the 70/20/10 model reinforce one another and add up to a whole that's greater than the sum of its parts. You'll retain new knowledge better when you gain it in a practical context, and those lessons will be even more powerful when reinforced through informal conversation with others who've done similar work, the coaching component. Coaches can point out common pitfalls, offer practical advice and steer you away from bad habits. Of course, advice may also come from outside of your organization if that's where you can find someone with the expertise needed to support growth and development.

Here's an example of how 70/20/10 development works. Imagine that a staff member has a development priority to strengthen their verbal communication skills. On-the-job experience might include presenting a new idea to the board, or recording a presentation to identify ways to improve, or serving as a trainer in internal employee training. For coaching, they might ask a trusted person to give them feedback after presentations or even signal when they notice something during a presentation. Finally, for formal learning they might sign up for a class that focuses on communication or listen to a recommended podcast.

Emphasizing the value of experience is not meant as a slight to formal learning, but formal learning is most valuable when it can be applied directly through experience and quickly integrated within the work environment. Investing in a 70/20/10 development plan will help you, your supervisor, and other

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leaders in the organization to focus your development efforts by getting explicit about what kinds of opportunities you're looking for and what kind of coaching will be most helpful.