



Northeast Region

Annual Individual Development Plan Resource Guide

*A blueprint to help advance employees toward meaningful
learning and development opportunities*



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Individual Development Plan

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) identifies an employee's development goals in the context of NPS' Strategic Plan. The plan contains training, education, and development activities to acquire or enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to maximize job performance. IDPs help to ensure that staff is prepared to carry out their responsibilities and contribute to the bureau's mission by helping them obtain new skills, refresh old skills, and make use of emerging technologies.

An IDP is:

- an opportunity for the manager/supervisor to establish objectives that support both the unit's and the employee's needs and goals.
- a way of providing the employee with clear direction in regards to career development.
- a tool that helps employees augment their interest, satisfaction and challenge in their current position.

An IDP is not:

- a performance plan or appraisal. Whereas areas ripe for development are considered when developing the IDP, the employee is not rated on his/her ability to work through the developmental activities annotated on his/her IDP.
- a promise of promotion. While the IDP is meant to increase the employee's ability to compete for future jobs as he/she develops skills, the IDP does not guarantee advancement upon completion of the developmental objectives.
- a binding document. When the supervisor and employee sign the IDP, it is simply an indication of intention and support for the employee's development. The employee may not always be able to complete every developmental activity annotated on his/her IDP.

Roles of the Employee and the Supervisor

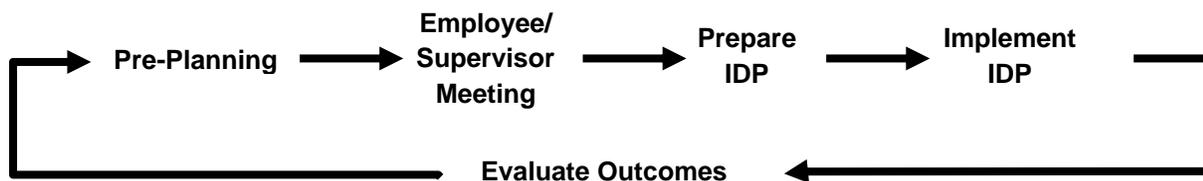
Role of the Employee

- Take charge of own development and actively participate in establishing goals and determining how to meet them
- Assess existing skills and interests honestly, and assess the knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies needed to develop to perform the current job
- Set goals and objectives that will benefit the NPS as well as enhance own career
- Find potential learning opportunities that will help meet current job requirements
- Actively participate in the development of the IDP and the discussions with the supervisor
- Identify ways of meeting personal career goals and enhancing work performance
- Develop objectives for higher level work, once full competency has been reached in current job
- Evaluate own progress and keep the supervisor informed

Role of the Supervisor

- Understand the IDP process and its purpose
- Help the employee to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies the employee will need to succeed
- Help the employee assess existing skills and interests
- Provide a climate of trust and open communication where the employee can discuss his or her progress and career
- Provide feedback on the employee's performance in his or her current job
- Offer constructive feedback about strengths and areas for development regarding the employee's advancement potential and qualifications for other positions
- Define reasonable limits given NPS requirements and priorities, objectives, and needs of other employees
- Identify and ensure access to learning resources; support the employee's development, providing opportunities and funding when at all feasible
- Ensure that the development activities in the IDP are linked to larger, strategic goals
- Ensure that follow-up meetings occur as scheduled

The IDP Process



Step 1: Pre-Planning

The employee needs to consider

- Requirements (knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies) of the current position
- Personal strengths and weaknesses in the current position, as well as past positions
- In general, what type of work am I good at? What parts of my job do I excel at?
- Where are my weaknesses? Do these weaknesses hinder my ability to do my job well?
- What assignments do I like doing? Not like doing?
- Short- and long-term career goals
- What kind of assignments would I like to have in the next year? Is there any different or new work that I would like to get into?
- What skills or knowledge is necessary to do the work that I would like to get into?
- Do I already have these skills, this knowledge? How strong or weak am I in these areas? What developmental activities would help me hone these skills?

The supervisor needs to consider

- NPS & unit needs
 - How can this employee help to support NPS strategic goals, unit goals, staff development needs?
- Requirements (knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies) of the current position
 - What can be done to help the employee fully meet the requirements of the position?
- Developmental needs based on current performance
 - What developmental programs are currently available?
 - What training courses might be appropriate?
 - What funds are available? Are there other resource requirements to consider?

- Potential for growth based on employee's capabilities and interests and the resources that are available
- Will staffing allow an assignment into a different job within the unit? Out of the unit?
- Who could mentor/coach this employee?

Pre-planning Tools

There are several tools to help the employee with the pre-planning part of the IDP process. Job requirements can be readily located in the employee's position description and current performance plan. Knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies can also be extracted from position descriptions for comparable jobs.

Employees can use previous performance evaluations to help assess their strengths and weaknesses. Aptitude tests, career finders and job personality exams can help the employee set definitive career goals. The employee can also craft a skills inventory (a compilation of skills, education and experiences) to catalog and assess their strengths and weaknesses.

Supervisors should consult applicable unit work plans, as well as local and agency strategic plans, such as the Call to Action, to help align the employee's developmental activities with a larger purpose.

Step 2: Employee/Supervisor Meeting

This focus of this meeting should be on the employee's overarching goal/objective and cataloging the employee's developmental needs. It is not necessary to delineate the specific activities needed to meet the employee's developmental needs during this meeting.

Several things should occur during this initial meeting

- The supervisor delineates the knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies required for the current work assignment
- The employee evaluates his/her prior job experience, training and education and compares current skills to those needed for the job
- The employee relays his/her growth needs for future positions
- Both the supervisor and employee review and discuss the employees' strengths and weaknesses in relation to the current work assignment. These skill gaps form the framework for the employee's developmental needs
- The supervisor assists the employee in linking his/her developmental needs to broader strategic goals
- Larger career goals should be broken up into smaller, more manageable objectives; these objectives should then be prioritized
- The supervisor and employee can begin brainstorming ways to meet learning objectives through specific activities
- The supervisor and employee agree to finalize the IDP at a later date, generally within two weeks' time

Step 3: Prepare IDP

The employee takes the lead on developing his/her draft IDP using the IDP template. This is the time to research specific activities that could meet the learning and development needs of the employee.

When reviewing the draft IDP, the supervisor and employee ensure

- Knowledge, skills, and abilities have been identified that are important to the unit's success
- Developmental activities are realistic, given the unit's needs, budget, and staffing
- Developmental activities are the best possible options for learning what the employee needs
- Scheduled activities will not interfere with the employee performing his/her job
- Development activities identified in the IDP are actually available as scheduled

The supervisor and employee review the draft plan, modify it as necessary, and determine what the supervisor and employee will each do to move forward with the plan.

Ultimately, the employee's final IDP will:

- identify goals and competencies to be developed during the specified period.
- identify developmental activities and experiences that address the competencies
- prioritize needs and activities
- define measures of success
- identify potential barriers to success and strategies to overcome them
- list the resources needed to accomplish the learning activities
- identify how the supervisor can support the employee
- establish projected timeframes and or deadlines

Step 4: Implement IDP

Once the employee and supervisor agree on the components of the employee's IDP, both entities will sign and date the IDP. The employee then begins working on his/her developmental assignments. The supervisor and employee commit to checking in with each other on a routine basis to assess the employee's progress.

The supervisor monitors progress and gives feedback to the employee. The employee keeps the supervisor informed of any problems that he/she encountered. When feasible, the supervisor provides opportunities for the employee to apply new skills.

Ongoing Step: Evaluate Outcomes

The supervisor and employee should meet periodically to determine if the IDP is meeting the developmental needs of the employee and the work unit. Remember, an IDP is a working document. As the year progresses, the supervisor and employee must be wary of changes in duties, responsibilities, resources, work environment that would impact the employee's IDP. If additional opportunities arise throughout the course of the year that support the goals, they should be added. Adjustments should be made to the IDP alert for changes in the duties, resources, technology, or the work environment that make it necessary to adjust development plans.

Types of Developmental Activities

We often think of development only in terms of formal training classes. There are many other, and often better, ways for people to learn and develop. Budget and time constraints, as well as individual needs, make it unrealistic to have a developmental plan comprised entirely of formal training.

The following developmental activities are useful for developing individual competencies. The list is not all-inclusive and should stimulate other ideas for developmental assignments.

Job Rotation

The employee temporarily moves into an existing position or through a series of existing positions. Assignments may be short or long term, between line and staff positions, and may include headquarters and field positions.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To broaden an employee's knowledge of other functions and departments within the NPS • To prepare an employee for career advancement • To maximize an employee's exposure to customers by moving him or her into positions that require customer interaction • To motivate and challenge an employee that has been in the same position for a long time • To cross-train members of a team • To streamline work processes through fresh ideas that eliminate unnecessary practices or operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link job rotations to the organizational goals and individual learning needs • Establish expectations and learning goals with the employee before the job rotation • Check with the employee periodically to ensure expectations are being met • Meet with the employee (at the end of the job rotation) to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lessons learned - how these lessons can be applied to the employee's current job - how the employee can educate others about what was learned during the job rotation

Special Assignment (Detail, Collateral Duties, or Committee/Task Force)

The employee performs temporary duties on a full-time or part-time basis. These temporary duties may be performed within the employee’s current program office or outside the organizational structure. An example of a special assignment is being assigned to chair an ad hoc cross-functional team. This process requires creativity and an eye for opportunity to identify a "stretch" activity with good probability for success.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance an employee's knowledge or skills in a particular area • To complete tasks or assignments when a mix of people with expertise in different areas is needed • To prepare an employee for career advancement or develop specific knowledge or skills • To broaden an employee's knowledge of other functions and departments within the NPS • To motivate and challenge an employee that has been in the same position for a long time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific work projects that relate to IDP objectives and development activities • Link special assignments to NPS strategic goals and individual learning needs • Establish expectations and learning goals with the employee before the special assignment • Check with the employee periodically to ensure expectations are being met • Meet with the employee (at the end of the special assignment) to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —lessons learned —how these lessons can be applied to the employee’s current duties —how the employee can educate others about what was learned during the special assignment

Coaching

A process for setting goals and providing feedback on performance to an employee. The coach may be the employee's supervisor or a co-worker with subject matter/area expertise. The process usually focuses on a specific task, competency, or project.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support an employee who is assuming new job duties • To develop or provide new skills through on-the-job training • To introduce new procedures or technologies • To enhance performance and correct deficiencies • To prepare employees for career development • To develop members of a work team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare by collecting necessary information on current performance levels and needs • Set learning objectives and expectations together with the employee • Mutually develop and agree on a course of action for enhancing performance • Facilitate learning and enhance performance through using observation, listening, and feedback skills • Give constructive feedback and encourage and reward accomplishments • Schedule follow-up coaching sessions

Mentoring

A formal or informal relationship between senior and junior employees for the purpose of supporting learning and development. The mentor provides ongoing support, advice, and career direction to an employee. A mentor typically holds a higher position in the NPS and is usually outside of the employee’s line of supervision. The mentor can assume the role of teacher, sponsor, counselor, guide, model, developer of skills and intellect, and supporter. For a mentoring program to work, both mentor and the employee must be motivated to participate in such a relationship.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue the development of a talented and skilled employee • To groom employees who show high potential for management or leadership responsibilities • To retrain and prepare an employee for a new job or function • To assimilate new employees into the NPS by educating them about the norms, culture, and politics of the NPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify what will be achieved through the mentoring relationship • Listen, coach, counsel, and motivate • Allow mentor and employee to select each other

Learning Groups

Gathering of employees who meet to focus on their own learning and development in a particular interest area, such as information technology, public speaking, or career paths.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a mechanism for obtaining knowledge and skills when there is no formal training available in a particular area • To provide a way of learning when the environment or technology is changing so rapidly that there is no time to develop a formal training program • To reinforce learning through the ongoing peer support provided by regular learning team meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a learning group if there is a need or an interest in a particular area • Hold the learning group meetings during times when people are more likely to attend (e.g., lunchtime meetings or early morning meetings) • Make the learning available to group members through newsletters, email messages, etc. • Consider using technology to augment face-to-face meetings

Self-Development (Professional Reading, Participation in Professional Organizations, Volunteer Work, and Networking)

Taking personal responsibility for one's own learning and development through a process of assessment, reflection, and application.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continually update skills and to remain marketable in the workplace • To broaden an employee’s network of contacts inside and outside of the NPS • To determine future career direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Reading - Implement a program of reading periodicals and books. Seek opportunities in the workplace to apply the theories studied and to discuss potential applications. • Participation In Professional Organizations - These organizations offer opportunities to exchange practical information with colleagues inside and outside of the government. Interaction with others sharing occupational interests can contribute to state-of-the-art knowledge and professional growth. • Volunteer Work - Volunteer organizations pose a special challenge because they require influencing the behavior of others who are also volunteers or otherwise not under your control. • Networking - Developing personal contacts & maintaining good channels of communication throughout the NPS helps to increase awareness of developmental opportunities and to raise visibility inside and outside of the NPS.

Shadowing Assignment

Observing another person perform tasks and demonstrate competencies. Assignments can be as short or as long as necessary to acquire the needed learning.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase awareness about the scope and nature of a target position/competency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can range from a few hours to observe methods or processes, to several weeks in order to become familiar with functional and interpersonal relationships or to observe the effective management of programs and human resources Particularly beneficial when assignments are timed to coincide with key staff meetings, strategizing on budget and staffing, etc. A great deal of learning occurs when the person being shadowed candidly discusses the rationale of decisions and actions, answers probing questions, comments on alternatives, and shares lessons learned from past decisions which resulted in both positive and less desirable outcomes.

Training

Learning that is provided in order to improve performance on the present job. An event designed to address a knowledge or skill deficit.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there is an identifiable knowledge/skill deficit • When new knowledge/skills are required in the current position • When new knowledge/skills are required in a new position • When changes have been made or new technologies introduced into the work place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct individual needs assessment • Identify training outcomes that satisfy need • Identify objectives that will achieve desired outcomes • Determine the most effective/efficient delivery mode(s) • Discuss goals for training with supervisor or employee • Schedule training • Follow up with supervisor or employee

IDP Worksheet Description

FY2016 FORM

The FY16 Electronic IDP form is a guided form with dropdown menus and an auto save to the regional network drive. The Form can be downloaded on the NER Learning and Development Google Site for 2016 IDPs at <https://sites.google.com/a/nps.gov/nerld/idp-fy2016>

The following examples and field definitions are designed to help familiarize you with the form

Developmental Goals: Why you are seeking development.

What are you trying to accomplish and toward what end? Everything in the IDP is supporting this personal goal and it should be a general short declarative statement. Is this a technical skill within the job description needed to stay current or to advance? Is the goal to better understand career opportunities or gain skills to transfer to another job or career field? Are you looking to improve supervisory or leadership skills?

The Knowledge, Skill, Ability, Behavior or Competency (KSABC): What specifically you are trying to learn.

What specific learning objectives will advance you toward your goal? These must be identified before the appropriate *Developmental Activity* can be chosen. Remember that the *KSABC* will be linked to one of NPS' strategic goals, a unit workplan, or Call to Action item (last cell in chart) to justify it.

Developmental Activity: How you will learn and develop.

The specific activities that you will engage in to achieve the *KSABC* objectives and the *Developmental Goal*. Refer to pages 9 – 16 of the *NER Annual Individual Development Plan (IDP) Resource Guide* for examples of developmental activities.

Measure of Success: Outcomes of the *Development Activity*.

How you and your supervisor will know when you have successfully achieved the *KSABC*. The performance measure that will indicate successful completion of the *Developmental Activity* (Make sure you are measuring a *KSABC* and not the completion of the Development Activity e.g. the outcome of reading a book to learn a computer program is not finishing the book, but rather being able to use the computer program.)

Resources Required: What you need to engage in the *Developmental Activity*.

Resources can include funds, work hours, other employees (e.g., subject matter/area expert), documentation and job aids, etc.

Manager/Supervisor's Role: What your supervisor will do to support you during this process.

This support will always include regular feedback and encouragement.

Dates or time frames: When your *Development Activity* will occur.

The time frame for completion of the *Development Activity* may be expressed as a specific date (by Sept 30, 2014) a date range (within first quarter 2014) or as an hourly requirement (40 hours; or 2 hours a week for 3 weeks)

Strategic Goal: The NPS strategic goal, Call to Action Number, GMP goal, or workplan item that the *Development Activity* supports.

Answer the broad question of how this will support the future of the work unit, the division or park, or the NPS as a whole. More than one strategic goal may be linked to the IDP *KSABC*. Call to Action Item # 30 *Tools of the Trade* is a general employee training and development support goal that fits. Note: the action might be good for the service as a whole but not directly linked to the work unit, supervisors should consider this in prioritization of *KSABCs* and *Development Activities*.

Employee Name: Ima Parkie	Position: Park Ranger- GS-7	Employee Supervisor Name: I. Muir Boss
Development Goals: Continue career within the NPS and qualify for supervisory positions in ranger career field.		

Knowledge, Skill, Ability or Competency	Developmental Activity	Measure of Success	Resources Required	Manager/ Supervisor's Role	Date or Time Frame	Strategic Goal Or Call to Action
Technical: Enter data into database	Work with subject matter expert—observe, enter data with guidance, enter data without guidance. Two hours per week doing this work.	Accurate (100%) and timely entry of data into database.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time—16 hours • Access to SME • Documentation or job aid for software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free employee from regular duties—backfill, adjust schedules, etc. • Feedback and encouragement 	7/5/11 thru 9/9/11	Call to Action #30 Tools of the Trade
Career Field: EMS Basic Responder Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review requirements with supervisor for my level. • Take 80 hour class • Fulfill 240 HR ride along • Pass certification exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS-9 requirement is goal • Pass class to get ride along status • Signed Task book • Certificate from State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and understanding of park goals for rescue response • Time offline to take class and study • Schedule to take exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval and initiation of task book • Tuition and transport to class • Letter of intro to state EMS coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Dec • Cass jan 15-Feb 1 • 240 hrs by July • exam 9/15 	Park SAR readiness goal . GPRA reduce visitor fatalities. DO#9
Supervisory: Understand EEO policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read DO on EEO • Take online class (2hrs) • work toward Collateral Duty EEO officer certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand requirements of EEO • applied skill in conflict management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and approval for class • Access to regional EEO counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule training time • recommendation on regional or national contact • Consideration of future collateral duty 	3 hours training	Regional EEO plan, Call to Action #36 Value Diversity
Leadership: Leading Change Strategic Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Good to Great • Information interview with three managers on strategic thinking • Participate in Foundation meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Strat plan for my career • compile Top 5 ideas for strategic thinking • Contribute to Foundations Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of book, reading group • Time on schedule for interviews • Permission to attend meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations of managers to interview • Advocate to management team for attendance at Foundations meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before meeting • By Sept 2014 • Aug 28-30 	Call to Action 30 tools of the trade, DO#2

Annual Individual Development Plan for FY16

EXAMPLE 2

EXAMPLE 2

Employee Name: Ima Parkie	Position: Park Ranger- GS-7	Employee Supervisor Name: I. Muir Boss
Development Goals: Continue career within the NPS and qualify for supervisory positions in ranger career field.		

Knowledge, Skill, Ability, Behavior or Competency (KSABC)	Developmental Activity	Measure of Success	Resources Required	Manager/ Supervisor's Role	Date or Time Frame	Strategic Goal Or Call to Action
Understand a different way to fill in an IDP form	Self Study: Read the information guide on IDPs	Can identify 2 ways to fill out an IDP 1. Fill in many development opportunities in one row 2. Use multiple rows for activities	NER reference guide	Discuss learning objective	By Oct 25	C2A # 30 Rigional HR goal for FY 16
	Training: Participate in NER training on IDPs on line or in one of the regional office sessions	Successfully fill out a draft IDP	Schedule of trainings Permission Registration confirmation	Sign application Provide time and permission	Three hours in November	C2A # 30 Rigional HR goal for FY 16
	Self Study: Search the OPM website for individual development plan examples	Find 3 examples of IDP formats and how they relate to NPS	Computer access, Time	Time off schedule Internet password	Oct 13-15	C2A # 30 Rigional HR goal for FY 16
Search for information I can use to make a good IDP to become a superintendent some day	Conduct information interview with three superintendents	Develop list of 5 qualities that helped 3 superintendents become effective and use them as a basis for my next IDP	Time Introduction to superintendent s	Letter of introduction, follow-up with employee	FY16	C2A # 30

Annual Individual Development Plan for FY16

Filling out the form

Filling out the form

Employee Name:	Position: current job title	Employee Supervisor Name:
Development Goals: General goal you wish to attain- be better at your job, get experience for promotion, gain new skills, remain current in your field, etc.		

Knowledge, Skill, Ability, Behavior or Competency (KSABC)	Developmental Activity	Measure of Success	Resources Required	Manager/ Supervisor's Role	Date or Time Frame	Strategic Goal Or Call to Action
<p>What you want to learn or accomplish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge- skill, ability, behavior or competency • There can be 5-10 knowledge or skills but abilities, behaviors and competencies are more complex and should be fewer. • Employees should start here. This is the issue or problem you are trying to strategize to solve 	<p>How you will learn it- the mechanism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There can be multiple development actions for each knowledge or skill • You can place alternatives or "plan B"- not everything has to be done either/or • <u>Do not start here-</u> these are solutions- ID the issue first then devise ways to learn 	<p>Outcome (Why) of learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observable and concrete • How will you and others know you have this new skill, ability etc? • Make sure each action has a metric • Supervisors should send employees to training with a task to complete or project in mind • Completion of the the learning activity is not an outcome- No one cares if you read the manual, they want to know if you can fly the plane. 	<p>Time, treasure, talent needed to get the learning.</p> <p>Each action needs resources</p>	<p>Is there a need for active hands on management or is approval all that is required?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission, \$, Advocacy, letter of recommendation or introduction • Each action needs supervisory input. 	<p>When</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolute date if known • Accomplished by a date or between dates • Number of hours needed • Each action needs a time- especially if actions are dependent per week (e.g you need to complete the pre course work before attending a class.) • This should be reviewed monthly if there are monthly times identified 	<p>Direct link to a work plan, strategic goal of park or office, national initiative etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than one goal can be addressed • annual plans and new requirements of EPAPs can be detailed here • Supervisors can start here to demonstrate link with work and development- but go to Skills etc. next.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. ***Who should have an IDP?***

Everyone.

2. ***Who initiates the IDP?***

The supervisor is responsible for developing his/her employees, but the employee is responsible for his/her continual learning. As such, while the supervisor initiates the IDP discussion with the employee and the employee must take the initiative to identify potential developmental needs and opportunities. The employee may author the first draft of the IDP, but an approved IDP is a collaborative effort and has both the employee's and supervisor's signature.

3. ***How often are IDPs created?***

An IDP is typically a yearly plan that should be monitored and revised as necessary.

4. ***What's the relationship of the IDP with other career development initiatives?***

The IDP is a way of recording any developmental activities that the employee and supervisor have agreed to, regardless of what program or initiative generated the discussion. As such, an IDP can include developmental needs identified through another program, such as the New Superintendent's Academy or a Career Academy.

5. ***What are competencies? How do they differ from KSAs or KSABs?***

Competencies are measurable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors (KSABs) critical to success in a job.

- Knowledge is the practical or theoretical understanding of a subject
- Skills are applied knowledge
- Abilities are natural or learned capacities to perform acts
- Behavior is a pattern of actions or conduct

When choosing training and development activities to help you achieve knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors (KSABs) identified for your job or the job you want, target competencies – not courses.

6. ***How many developmental activities can be on an IDP?***

Generally, the complexity of the activities and the time needed to complete said activities dictate the number of developmental activities that an employee and supervisor would agree on for an IDP.

7. ***Can an IDP include other training besides formal training courses?***

Absolutely! Options include independent study, details, on-the-job training, etc.

8. ***Does mandatory training go in an IDP?***

Supervisors may dictate certain courses or certifications that their employees should take. This type of learning and development is tied more directly to performance and is, in most cases, statutory in nature. The supervisor could include these in the employee's IDP, but if the courses/certifications are viewed as requirements of employment for the employee's current position, they are best documented in a learning plan.

9. ***Will an IDP signed by my supervisor guarantee that I get all the development listed?***

No. The IDP is a plan, not a contract. The supervisor's signature indicates an agreement with the plan, understanding that there will be modifications as workplace requirements change and the employee progresses.

10. ***What happens if what we agreed on can't or doesn't happen?***

The IDP is a plan and a tool for communication. Neither party is penalized if what is proposed doesn't take place. The focus should be on the goal, not the activity. If there are other ways to achieve the goal, the activities should be changed to reflect this. If a goal is no longer worthwhile, it should be removed from the IDP.

11. ***Will the completion of an IDP guarantee me a new job or promotion?***

No. The IDP is geared for present job skill improvement. While the IDP will surely enhance your qualifications for future positions, it does not target you for a specific vacancy.

12. ***I'm in an organization that offers little opportunity for advancement. What can an IDP do for me?***

An IDP will give you an opportunity to gain some control over improving your performance in your current position and will help you to identify developmental requirements for your career goals.

13. *Who has responsibility for implementation of the IDP?*

The employee is responsible for accomplishing the developmental activities annotated on the IDP. The supervisor is responsible for supporting the employee's endeavors.

14. *IDP & Performance Plan: one in the same?*

No, they are two separate items. However, they have a correlation. In a nutshell, an IDP supports a performance plan. In other words, if your performance plan mandates that you have certain knowledge, skill, or ability, then you would identify developmental activities in your IDP to achieve that.

15. *Do new hires get an IDP?*

Yes. It might be beneficial to delay the creation of an IDP for a few months, so that the employee and his/her supervisor will have enough information to know the employee's strengths and development needs to meet the requirements of the job.

16. *Can the supervisor just write a plan for the employee or a work group?*

No. Remember that this is an individual development plan. Employees not only have different goals and objectives, but different learning styles as well.

17. *What is the difference between an IDP and a PIP?*

A PIP is a Performance Improvement Plan, and is triggered by a deficiency in meeting performance standards. A PIP might include training, but failure to attend the training in the PIP generally leads to disciplinary action. There are no such consequences for an IDP.

18. What does the Call to Action have to do with an IDP?

Aligning developmental needs with office, division, park, or agency strategic goals answers the “why do this” question. At the lowest level the employee is meeting an operational or project need. Learning and development activities improve the ability of the employee to do this work better, faster, delivering more output, or cheaper. At an agency/department level, learning and development activities catalyze a motivated, capable workforce that is flexible and adaptive in times of change. In between are park goals, work plan items, division plans (PAMP, Resource management plan, Search and Rescue Operations plan), and other strategic documents.

19. Any limits on how much time can be taken up by developmental activities?

While 40 to 80 total hours is not an unreasonable length of time, it is up to the supervisor’s discretion. The employee should be able to satisfactorily complete the tasks identified in his/her performance plan, while still making progress on the development activities identified in his/her IDP.