

Development Plan / Action Plan Guidelines & Best Practices

- Write action steps that are behavioral statements you can commit to practicing and measuring over a specific timeline. For example: *I will look for opportunities before and after weekly meetings to coach my staff by asking more questions and helping them come to their own conclusions versus giving them the answers.*
- Use the SMART Goals model for guidance – **S**pecific; **M**easurable; **A**chievable; **R**ealistic; **T**ime Bound.
- Write Action Steps using **Continue, Start, Stop** language where applicable.
- Be specific – Where? When? With whom? In what settings? Under what conditions? How many times? Who else can help me with this development goal? For example: *I will be conscious of slowing down my pace in one-on-one interactions to give people time to express their viewpoints.*
- Identify actions and activities that you can integrate and execute in your day-to-day job, when things are busy not calm. Keep in mind that the best way to develop your leadership skills is “on the front lines” not when on “leave” or vacation.
- Leadership is also an “inside job,” meaning you will want to weave into your plan reminders on how you will become more self-aware and self-managing and mindful of how you are thinking and feeling. Remember how you think and feel impacts how you will behave and perform in any given situation. For example: *I will observe myself, including how I am thinking and feeling, when there is a critical business issue being discussed in meetings. In this way, I can **Stop** avoiding confrontation and **Start** facing into conflict where necessary to get my points across.*
- Spend the time to reflect on and write down the “Business Measures” section of the plan. Remember, *what gets measured gets done.*