

# Grow for Tomorrow: Leader Guide to Development Conversations and Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

Use this guide to prepare for meaningful development conversations. A suggested conversation agenda is available on Page 2.

## UCALGARY'S APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

Development is most effective when embedded in everyday work — not separate from it.

- Real work and new challenges
- Learning with and from others
- Formal learning and resources
- Reflection and application

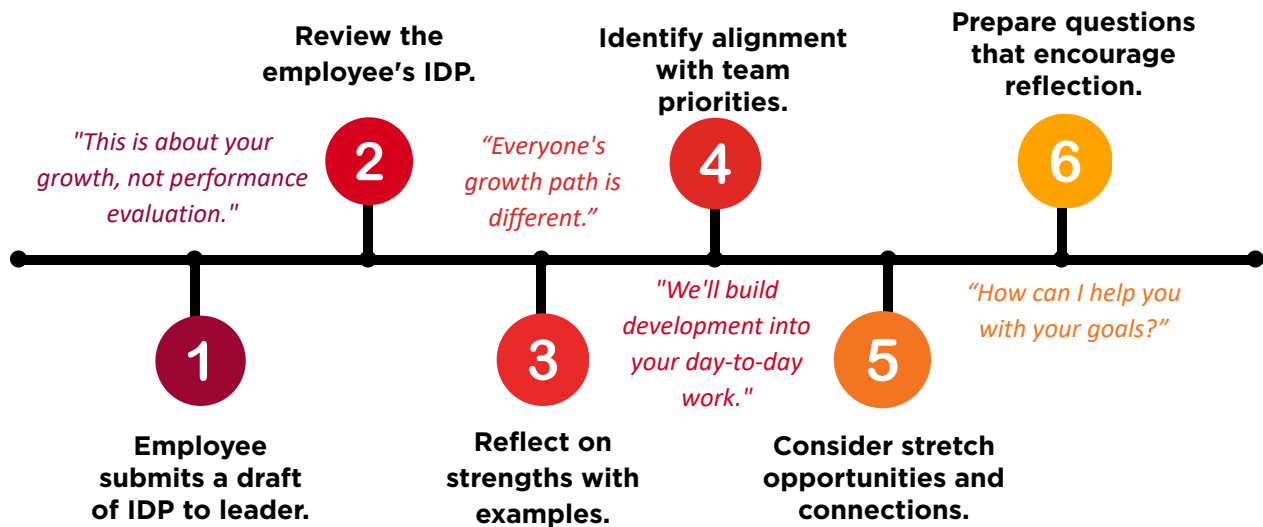
## WHAT THE IDP DOES

Development is continuous—not a one-time activity. The **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** helps employees and leaders turn growth goals into practical actions.

- Reflect on strengths, interests, and goals
- Identify 1-2 development priorities
- Apply learning in real work and through others
- Track progress over time








EMPLOYEE (OWNER OF IDP)	LEADER (COACH AND ENABLER)
Initiates and owns development	<b>Creates space for future-focused conversations</b>
Reflects on strengths and goals	<b>Provides feedback and perspective</b>
Identifies development priorities	<b>Connects development to meaningful work</b>
Drives development conversations	<b>Supports ongoing growth and follow-up</b>
Tracks progress and actions	<b>Prioritizes regular development check-ins with team</b>

## PREPARE FOR THE CONVERSATION



## SUGGESTED CONVERSATION FLOW (45-60 MINUTES)

**Preparation tip:** Ask employees to share their draft IDPs before the conversation. Review them in advance to ensure time is spent discussing development priorities and actions rather than completing the form together.

	<b>Open the Discussion</b>	<b>(5 min)</b> Focus on growth, not evaluation. Invite the employee to lead
	<b>Explore their reflections</b>	<b>(15 min)</b> Let the employee walk through their IDP. You might ask: <i>"What stands out to you?", "What led you to these priorities?", "What feels most important right now?"</i>
	<b>Share your observations</b>	<b>(10 min)</b> Reinforce strengths. Add perspective with specific examples. Build on their thinking — don't override it.
	<b>Identify priorities</b>	<b>(10 min)</b> Confirm 1-2 development priorities together. Ensure they connect to real work. Ask: "What matters most to focus on right now?"
	<b>Define outcomes</b>	<b>(5-10 min)</b> You might say: "What would others notice if you're progressing?", "What will you be doing differently?"
	<b>Agree on actions &amp; support</b>	<b>(10 min)</b> "Where can you practice this in your current work?", "Who can support you?", "What's a strong first step?" Anchor learning in <a href="#">the Continuous Learning Model</a>
	<b>Close the discussion</b>	<b>(5 min)</b> Confirm priorities, agreed actions, your support, and follow-up timing.

## HOW INTENTIONAL LEADERS APPROACH DEVELOPMENT

Mindset	Practice
Coach, don't direct	Use questions to build ownership
Enable, don't own	Keep plans simple—focus on 1-2 priorities
Build on strengths	Start with what's working
Connect to real work	Use current projects as learning opportunities
Make development continuous	Schedule regular check-ins
Partner in growth	Support experimentation and reflection

## FOR QUESTIONS & RESOURCES

Contact your HR Business Partner for support with development conversations and the IDP process. Access the [Individual Development Plan](#) template, and other learning resources, through the [Professional Development Hub](#).