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Stepping Into A Developmental Role?



**12 Ways To Prepare
To Stretch In It**

While being placed in a developmental role is exciting, it can also be tricky to prepare for the transition. No matter how confident one might be going into it, you could end up feeling overwhelmed if you're not ready to stretch your capabilities beyond their current limits.

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Forbes Coaches Council members offer tips to help professionals prepare to stretch in a developmental role.

1. Learn What You Can And Jump In

Do as much research and preparation as you can, then jump in! Know that the research can help you understand the role from an intellectual perspective, but you won't truly know the details until you're in it. Engaging with an experienced mentor or coach can help you reassess as you go so that you will be your most successful. -

[Jennifer Wisdom, Wisdom Consulting](#)

2. Conduct Consistent Outside Research

If you are a high-performing employee being put into a developmental role that stretches your current capabilities, then outside research and preparation should be constant. It is imperative to remain sharp, creative and innovative. Our culture shifts are rapid and ongoing. Therefore, you must always remain flexible and fluid. It is also important to implement what you research to prove its success. - [Kashonna Holland](#), [Simply Kashonna](#)

3. Upskill If You Feel Anxious About A Task

When we find that we are stretched in our roles, our success largely depends on balancing the challenges we encounter and the tasks we take on with our ability and skill at that point in time. It can best be done by asking ourselves if we feel anxious or relaxed while taking on a task. If the former, then we must upskill until the feeling of stress is overcome. - [Krishna Kumar, Intrad School of Executive Coaching](#)

4. Invest In Your Personal Brand

Invest in your personality and personal branding. You need to think carefully about how you act. You should have a clearly identifiable personality so that people feel they know you personally, even if they have never met you. Your delivery style should be as unique as every other aspect of your personal brand. If you don't actively imitate anyone, then it can happen all by itself. -

Cristian Hofmann,

Empowering Executives

SUPERGROUP LTD

5. Forge The Right Relationships

Stretch roles are, by definition, painful and also rewarding. I can remember several stretch roles I had earlier in my career, and the greatest help to me during those times was to align myself with mentors who knew the roles or who knew about where these roles might take me.

Relationships are essential, especially with those who can aid you in navigating through new terrain in a stretch role. -

Dan Ryan, ryan partner

6. Be Fully Engaged In The Opportunity

If your organization is investing in you, be sure to fully engage in the development opportunity. This means thoroughly preparing before and between sessions. However, the amount of preparation needed depends on how the development experience is designed and what the expectations are. Once you know the expectations, I am a big believer in consistently overdelivering on them to demonstrate your value. -

**Jonathan H. Westover, Utah Valley
University & Human Capital Innovations,
LLC**

7. Explore And Develop Behaviors You Need To Thrive

While it is important to acquire the skills that will help you thrive in a new position, what is equally important is that you explore and develop the behaviors required to thrive in that role. For instance, if strategic thinking is a required skill for success, you need to not only learn the concepts, but also improve your cognitive abilities to apply those behaviors. - Yamini Virani, [Celebrus Business Strategies](#)

8. Interview Others In Your Organization

As a high performer, you are someone who continually looks for ways to grow.

Research can consist of interviewing others, mentoring and building relationships with stakeholders. Surround yourself with others who think differently from you and can expose you to new experiences. Education comes in many forms. -

Debra Kasowski, [Debra Kasowski International](#)

9. Overdeliver On The Stretch Project

If you are a high-performing employee being put into an opportunity to stretch to new goals, it's likely because you're being looked at for an important promotion or project. Depending on your career goals, I'd recommend focusing on delivering what you normally execute on and working to overdeliver on the stretch project, which likely will have more visibility and more impact and influence on your next role. -

[Lauren Cooney, Spark Labs](#)

10. Think One Step Ahead

Look beyond. Don't seek merely to grow to meet the demands of your new developmental role; seek to grow into the aspirational role that may follow.

In doing so, you will succeed brilliantly in the developmental role while simultaneously qualifying yourself for the goal-role that will surely follow. - [April](#)

[Armstrong, AHA Insight](#)

11. Learn And Collaborate Across Boundaries

Being able to learn and collaborate across boundaries is a key competency to master in the development of great leaders.

Awareness of yourself and others means reaching across all boundaries to engage subject matter experts to collaborate and build competency. - [Brad Cousins, Ingage Human Capital Strategies](#)

12. Keep Doing What You're Doing

You are seen as a high performer. You have a track record of exemplary performance. You are being fast-tracked and given an opportunity.

Of course you'll put in effort to develop a comfort level with your new assignment so that you have a base underneath you when you step into the role. This is what you've always done. No need to change now. - [Jeff Altman, The Big Game Hunter](#)