

# Career-forward Leadership in Practice

## Build Your Manager Toolkit With The Core Four

---

Leadership is a practice, and it becomes impactful with the right tools. If you're a career-forward leader, you already know that the intention to develop your team isn't enough on its own. What turns the intention into consistent action is having a toolkit you can use. A strong toolkit has the core four: prompts, frameworks, tools and templates.

### 1 Prompts: A set of guided questions to open up meaningful conversations

**When to use it:** When you are in 1:1s, career check-ins and coaching moments

**Example:**

- A career-check in prompt: "What part of this role still genuinely excites you?"
- A skills reflection prompt: "What is something you do that feels almost effortless for you?" and "What are one to two areas of your work you want to develop that I could support you with?"

### 2 Frameworks: Structured ways of thinking that bring shape to a concept or conversation

**When to use it:** When you need a model to guide your approach

**Example:**

- A coaching framework for understanding where someone is with their growth and goals (e.g. GROW Model)
- A leadership framework for understanding the ways you show up for the individuals you manage (e.g. The Four Quadrants of Showing Up)

### 3 **Tools: Resources that enable employee ownership of development and visibility of the team's skills and hidden talents**

**When to use it:** When you want to generate data, increase self-awareness, or develop a shared language around growth

**Example:**

- Career Growth Self-Assessment that is given to employees before a quarterly check-in or career conversation
- A manager-facing Team Development Tracker for monitoring career development and learning activities across your team

### 4 **Templates: Collaborative fillable documents that turn conversations into commitments and actions**

**When to use it:** When you want to plan development, capture commitments and help the team set goals

**Example:**

- A Post-Performance Review Growth Plan, the employee fills in with your support
- A Quarterly Growth Commitment one-pager with one growth and learning goal that the employee sets at the start of the quarter and revisits at the end

## **How to use the toolkit**

You don't need to have all of this ready before your next conversation. Career development is a system you build over time, not something you launch all at once. You can start with a prompt and notice what it opens up. When the conversations start to feel different, incorporate a framework to help you make sense of what you're hearing. From there, give the employee a tool to complete before you meet again so you both arrive prepared. Once that rhythm develops, a template gives your commitments a home, so growth feels intentional with an accountability measure built in.