STRETCH ASSIGNMENT

INTRODUCTION

One of the most impactful ways of developing yourself and your impact is through stretch assignments.

A stretch assignment is a deliberate and focused activity beyond your current knowledge or skill level.

The goal is exposure to the needed knowledge and experience that can bridge current abilities with the desired future ones.

To do that you need to be clear on your overall development direction and the more specific development areas supporting that direction. So, don't start by defining potential stretch assignment, but always start be clarifying the specifics of what you actually want to develop.

STEP 1

- Be clear on your overall development direction and desired development objectives.
- Never do this part alone, but always include other people and get their perspectives and inputs to potential development areas.
- *Where are you going and what do you need to focus on to get there?*

STEP 2

- Based on step 1 clarify what kind of stretch assignments that could be relevant in collaboration with your leader (use stretch assignment template as inspiration).
- Make sure to include already existing work, because a stretch assignment is not always something new that is added.

STEP 3

- Map out the steps to begin the stretch assignment and make sure to include the relevant people from the beginning.
- Define the role and responsibilities of your leader, when you check-in with each other and how you make sure to keep a development focus while performing the stretch assignment.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GREAT STRETCH ASSIGNMENT?

SPECIFIC
Clarity in why, what and how the stretch assignment will be useful for your development.

How specific is the stretch assignment providing clear answers to your development needs?

LOW DEGREE ▼ HIGH DEGREE

IMPACTFUL
Clearly defined impact criteria related to your development (learning, behavior, results).

Does the stretch assignment present a coherent impact logic?

LOW DEGREE ▼ HIGH DEGREE

ENGAGING
Even though a stretch assignment is difficult, it also needs to be engaging and motivating to do.

How engaging and motivating is the stretch assignment and why?

LOW DEGREE ▼ HIGH DEGREE

CHALLENGING
A stretch assignment is always challenging, but is has to be a relevant and targeted challenge.

How relevant and impactful will the challenges in the stretch assignment be?

LOW DEGREE ▼ HIGH DEGREE

SUPPORTED
Development should always include other people as support and inspiration.

How much relevant support is provided in the stretch assignment?

LOW DEGREE ▼ HIGH DEGREE

BUY-IN
Stretch assignments are performed in real time and key people needs to be onboarded in what you are trying to do.

How much are the right people onboarded in goals and process of the stretch assignment?

LOW DEGREE ▼ HIGH DEGREE

BALANCED
A stretch assignment is always about business impact and development impact at the same time.

How well defined is balance between business and development impact?

LOW DEGREE ▼ HIGH DEGREE

STRETCH ASSIGNMENT TEMPLATE

OVERALL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTION
What is my overall development direction and the short and long-term aspirations of mine?

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES
What are my more specific development objectives supporting the overall direction?

STRETCH ASSIGNMENT	<Brief description of the stretch assignment>	<How will the stretch assignment provide the needed development?>	<Key deliverables and milestones>	<Success criteria related to the stretch assignment>
BUSINESS IMPACT	<What is the desired business impact related to the stretch assignment?>		<What needs to be true for that to happen?>	
DEVELOPMENT IMPACT	<What knowledge to acquire?>	<What behavior will be signs of progress during the stretch assignment?>	<What specific impact will be signs of progress during the stretch assignment?>	<What needs to be true for this to happen?>

MAKING BUSINESS USEFUL