

ARE YOU READY FOR A TALENT PROGRAM?

E MD@FRIDAYCPH.COM
@ [FRIDAYCPH](https://www.FRIDAYCPH)
W [FRIDAYCPH.COM](https://www.FRIDAYCPH.COM)

INTRO

Many super talented and committed people are right now ready to embark on their company's talent program. A huge opportunity for learning, challenges, networking and tangible results.

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Many super talented and committed people are right now ready to embark on their company's talent program. A huge opportunity for learning, challenges, networking and tangible results. I have personally met thousands people who have participated in various talent programs and the same number of leaders who have sent these great people on the programs, and there is a number of tips on how to get the most out of it.

You are not only competing with yourself when you try to accelerate your development. Netflix and craving for chocolate will also try to get you to join the party on the couch, grabbing a plaid, and relax. Obviously, you should do it BUT you should fully ignore the temptations if you have actually decided to make the most of your participation in the talent program.

Instead, give the temptation an aspirin and begin:

- What is the end game of our company and what fundamental impact are we trying to create?

- Reading that article that you know you should be reading.
- Revisit your development plan, which is definitely not specific and tangible enough (yes, it's a bet!).
- Preparing for the upcoming 1:1 with your leader and send your agenda for that meeting today.
- Reaching out to one of the participants of the program and start building a relationship.
- Making it clear why you are a part of the program. And no, it is not enough to gain insights to who you are and some tools.

Regardless, it is about getting up of the couch. A talent program is not about continuing old patterns. If you do so, then you have walked in through the wrong door and should back out or make sure that your ambitions match your actions.

CONSULTANTS ARE ANNOYING

Consultants can be really annoying – yep, you heard me – but many of them also have a deeper understanding of topics relevant to your development in the talent program and the impact you wish to create. Make sure you take advantage of that and get access to their knowledge, methods, network and specific ways to get off the back-sides.

Do not settle with what is being presented to work with in the program. You need to ask for more because that is exactly what will help you to develop. In any talent program they also look for one who takes responsibility, who drives their own development, who starts without being asked to and who sees opportunities, when most people see chaos or confusion. Expect the same from the consultants so that they in their behavior are role modelling what is expected of you.

Most of the talent programs include elements all the participants must go through and if you only do what is asked of you and not more you are headed for trouble. You should always put more effort into it. That could be an extra mentor, an assignment that gives you relevant learning, a coffee meeting with a cool person, looking over the shoulder of a leader in a meeting, etc.

Everything you practice, you become good at. That goes for bullshit too.

GET YOUR LEADER ON BOARD

It is no surprise that your most important partner in the talent program is your leader.

Your leader has had a decisive influence on you to becoming a part of the program but ultimately you are your own leader along the way. So, step up and take responsibility in order to get your leader on board.

- Therefore, take responsibility and make sure your manager gives all his inputs to your development plan in the program.
- Get help to be specific and to add tangible desired behavior to the plan.
- Book meetings with your leader and make sure to have a clear end goal and agenda every time.
- Get access to your leaders network. Who does your manager know that you should get to know too?
- Take advantage of the fact that many leaders are often busy. Which of your leader's tasks or responsibilities are you able to help out with that are relevant to your development?
- Never bring problems to your leader's table without a minimum of two solutions and your recommendation on how to move forward.
- Stop only focusing on you as there are plenty of other talented people inside and outside your team who for some reason are not part of the talent program. Earn your spot and show respect by helping others than yourself.
- Follow up on all the seminars and other activities included in the talent program, as well as how these things can be helpful to your leader and the rest of your team.
- Keep your leader up to speed by continually updating him on your progress of the development plan, challenges you face and issues that arise along the way. All this does not have to happen face-to-face in traditional 1-hour meetings. Send a text, snap, or video instead.
- Watch a series on Netflix and enjoy the taste of good chocolate once in a while.

Go ahead and enjoy. It's a great opportunity and journey you have ahead of you.