



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Grain Inspection,  
Packers and Stockyards  
Administration

Stop 3649  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250-3649

April 25, 2012



**TO:** All GIPSA Employees and Supervisors

**THRU:** Marianne Plaus  
Director, GIPSA-MBS

**FROM:** Caroline C. Thorpe  
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**SUBJECT:** FY 2013 – The Individual Development Plan (IDP) – Moving Goals and Targets

This past year has been a whirlwind of change, requiring employees to adapt like never before. Record numbers of retirements are opening up many new work opportunities, and the changing economy and technology continue to cause people to refocus work and life priorities. As a result, plans may shift forcing people to move career and retirement targets. While the current situation may cause you to adjust your goals and strategy as needed, this is all the more reason to focus on using an IDP so you know the direction you want to go. Individuals who write out their goals are more likely to meet them and may be better able to adjust them as needed.

Thank you for continuing to proactively support this program. Note that GIPSA continues to have one of the highest IDP participation rates at USDA. IDPs are also required to participate in FGIS' mentoring program. IDP's remain a priority through the Cultural Transformation initiative, as it "...represents a commitment that the organization makes to growing and developing employees. It demonstrates that employees are valued."

Like last year, USDA has provided guidelines located at: <http://www.idp.usda.gov/>. This document clarifies both employee and supervisory responsibilities in this process. See Attachment A at the end of this document which summarizes how this applies to GIPSA.

**Reminder:** *IDPs are due this year on July 31, 2012.* Check with your Administrative Officer or Collateral Duty Training Officer for details on submission of your IDP. An IDP is required from every permanent employee. However, if you do not wish to take any further steps using the IDP form, please complete it and check the box near the top of the page to indicate "No further development is desired/required at this time." Please sign it at the bottom of the page and get your supervisor's signature too.

IDP documents are on inGIPSA at: <http://ingipsa/Employee-Resources/Training.aspx>.

Under [Individual Development Plan](#) on the left side of the Training Site please find:

1. **IDP - PDF fillable form,**
2. **IDP Example (Employee),**
3. **IDP Example (Supervisor),**
4. **The Individual Development Plan Guide**
5. **IDP Brochure**
6. **IDP Flyer**

Under [Training Resources](#) on the right side of the Training Site please find:

5. **Lending Library**
6. **GIPSA Training and Videos**

Under [Supervisory/Management](#) in the center of the Training Site please find:

7. The **Leadership Journey** which identifies the competencies required throughout the Federal government at various levels.
8. **OPM Competency Definitions** or professional attributes from the Office of Personnel Management,

**Attachment:** Attachment A-See USDA IDP Guide Summary

### QUOTES:

*One of the amazing things we have been given as humans is the unquenchable desire to have dreams of a better life, and the ability to establish goals to live out those dreams.*  
- Jim Rohn

*Instead of worrying about what people say of you, why not spend time trying to accomplish something they will admire.*  
- Dale Carnegie





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**The Individual Development Plan according to USDA's guide @ [www.idp.usda.gov](http://www.idp.usda.gov)**

**1) IDP Definition**-This document is a: a) clear statement of planned goals; b) a map for attaining goals that specifies immediate and long-range developmental needs; c) an individually tailored plan; and d) a written plan for scheduling and managing an employee's development. More information is provided on this in the guide.

**2) The IDP Process**-The IDP process is a continuing cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation between an employee and supervisor, for the mutual benefit of both the employee and the organization. It is more than a swift review of course catalogs. It requires time to: a) analyze job requirements, b) assess current competencies, and c) make informed decisions about developmental needs.

**3) Steps to Creating an IDP:**

- **Planning before employee-supervisor meeting** - Both the supervisor and the employee are responsible for development of the IDP. While the employee completes the IDP with the cooperation and assistance of the supervisor, it is the supervisor who normally has to approve individual activities on the IDP.
- **Employee-Supervisor Conference or Meeting**-During the meeting: 1) review performance appraisal; 2) look at employee strengths and weaknesses; 3) review short and long-range goals; 4) determine are the goals job related, attainable, realistic and is there commitment; 5) review specific skill or competency areas to work on; 6) identify developmental competencies and prioritize; 7) identify developmental needs by determining the difference between the competencies I currently have and those needed to meet my goals; 8) rank developmental needs in relation to the job and organization; 9) discuss developmental options; and 10) select developmental approaches.
- **Select Optimum Developmental Activities** - Look at work constraints, mission, budget, workload, travel, staffing and time constraints. Consider options for on-the-job and classroom training, in addition to self-development and developmental activities (Shadowing, details or taskforce assignments). Definitions of these are found in the USDA IDP guide.
- **IDP Form** – Fill out the [IDP form](#) located on inGIPSA at: <http://ingipsa/Employee-Resources/Training.aspx> - Form is located on the left side of the webpage and use [IDP Example-Employee](#) as a template. **Do not use the one from the USDA website (AD form 881).**
- Complete the identified activities: During this process, you will want to document your training and development, participate by getting the training approved, and evaluated as necessary.
- IDPs are used by your agency to track training needs and are very important in helping to determine training needs and resources that may be allocated for employee development.

\*A Trainers Toolkit located at [www.aglearn.usda.gov](http://www.aglearn.usda.gov) in Books 24 X 7

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