

An Excerpt From

***Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go
Career Conversations Employees Want***

by Beverly Kaye & Julie Winkle Giulioni
Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Help
Them
Grow or
Watch
Them

**CAREER
CONVERSATIONS
EMPLOYEES WANT**

GO

Beverly Kaye & Julie Winkle Giulioni

Coauthor of the bestselling *Love 'Em or Lose 'Em*

More Praise for *Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go*

“Like eating your fruits and veggies, developing your employees should be done every day. Beverly Kaye and Julie Giulioni not only show how easy it can be but make the case that regular, short conversations can better develop people.”

—**Charlene Li, founder, Altimeter Group, author of *Open Leadership*, and coauthor of *Groundswell***

“Life and business are all about where you pay attention. Pay attention to the growth of your people...and they will grow your business. The authors do a great job in spelling out the how-tos!”

—**Chip Conley, founder, Joie de Vivre Hotels, and author of *Emotional Equations***

“Developing talent is essential for business success. This book provides a practical and easy-to-implement approach that can have a big impact on an organization.”

—**Tamar Elkeles, Chief Learning Officer, Qualcomm**

“One of the most important responsibilities of a leader is to grow future leaders. The authors do a great job making development something that can happen during one’s everyday work life.”

—**Gabriella Giglio, Executive Vice President for Global Human Resources, American Express**

“Should be the career conversation bible for busy leaders!”

—**Marshall Goldsmith, author of the *New York Times* bestsellers *Mojo* and *What Got You Here Won’t Get You There***

“The authors provide pragmatic insights and tools for managers to make employee growth a *part of work versus apart from work* with their people in the midst of rapid, ongoing change. After reading this book, it will be impossible not to see what one can start doing immediately to be more effective.”

—**Teresa Roche, Vice President and Chief Learning Officer, Agilent Technologies**

“*Help Them Grow or Watch Them Go* is an important contribution to leading organizations where people and talent growth matters to success.”

—**Kevin Wilde, Vice President and Chief Learning Officer, General Mills**

“The best and most comprehensive resource available. It takes the complex issue of career development and simplifies it with real, action-oriented tips, tools, and insights. It’s relevant for new supervisors, senior executives, and HR professionals at any level, in any industry.”

—**Sharon Silverman, Vice President, Human Resources, Macy’s**

“Beverly Kaye and Julie Winkle Giulioni provide a practical, personalized approach that promises to help managers seeking to create an environment that

supports all members of a diverse workforce and empowers them to achieve their career growth aspirations.”

—**R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr., author of *World Class Diversity Management***

“At last, a hands-on book that’s smart, practical, and honest. Everyone knows that people make all the difference; this book will teach you how to make a difference with your people.”

—**Alan Webber, cofounder, *Fast Company*, and author of *Rules of Thumb***

“Improving the skills of our workforce is one of the country’s most important economic challenges. It has to start with employers, and *Help Them Grow* tells you how to do it painlessly.”

—**Peter Cappelli, Director, Center for Human Resources, The Wharton School, and Professor of Management, University of Pennsylvania**

“Full of useful materials that are easy to access. Ideal for a manager who wants to learn about coaching others.”

—**Edward E. Lawler III, Distinguished Professor of Business, Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California, and coauthor of *Management Reset***

“Beverly and Julie have a remarkable gift of turning an important and complex topic into useful and simple ideas and practices. Their work will help leaders wisely invest in their employees and employees take responsibility for their personal development.”

—**Dave Ulrich, Professor of Business Administration, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan**

“Provides a practical road map for managers who know that they want to help their teams but may not know the clear, specific steps they can take.”

—**Rebecca Ray, Senior Vice President, Human Capital, The Conference Board**

“I loved this book. Draw from the abundant list of simple yet powerful questions and become the best talent manager in your organization.”

—**Tina Sung, Vice President, Government Transformation and Agency Partnerships, Partnership for Public Service**

“Bev and Julie give us creative, fresh, and immediately applicable tools to spark career conversations in real time, in the moment—not once or twice per year. I’ve already applied a couple of suggestions from the book and received an immediate payback.”

—**Lorraine Munoz, Director, Leadership Development, Boston Scientific Corporation**

“A great guidebook for those whose job it is to help other people grow, with all the right questions we need to be asking!”

—**Frances Hesselbein, President and CEO, The Frances Hesselbein Leadership Institute**

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EMPLOYEES WANT

Beverly Kaye and Julie Winkle Giulioni



BK[®]

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From Julie,

To Peter for knowing I could do this...and making sure I did.

To Nick and Jenna for the constant joy and lessons learned from watching you grow.

From Beverly,

To Barry for truly being the wind beneath my wings.

To Lindsey for showing me that I still have a lot to learn.

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT'S A MANAGER TO DO?

Developing employees. Helping them grow. It's like eating properly or exercising.

You know it's good. You know you should. Yet, if you're like many managers today, you just don't do it as well or as frequently as you would like.

In survey after survey, year after year, employees express their dissatisfaction with how they are being supported in their careers. At the same time, managers across industries, regions, and levels uniformly report a moderate to severe lack of competence, comfort, and confidence in themselves in regards to this critical job expectation.

What IF . . .

- ▶ you could more easily and frequently engage in the career development work that employees crave without sacrificing everything else that must get done?
 - ▶ employees learned to assume greater responsibility for their careers?
 - ▶ it was possible for career development to be integrated into the work that needs to get done as opposed to being a separate series of overwhelming tasks that have to be checked off a list?
-

You could. They can. And it can be. That's why we've written this book.

HELP THEM **gROW**

Career development is as important as it's ever been (maybe more). In today's business environment, talent is *the* major differentiator. And developing that talent is one of the most significant drivers of employee engagement, which in turn is the key to the business outcomes you seek: revenue, profitability, innovation, productivity, customer loyalty, quality, and cycle time reduction.

But the reality of career development is changing in response to the new business landscape. It's not the wide-open playing field it once was. Boomers are waiting longer to retire. Repeated rounds of belt tightening have led to delayering and downsizing. More jobs are outsourced. All of this breeds a sense of scarcity and leaves the impression that there aren't as many opportunities as there once were. This makes career development more—not less—important than in the past.

OR WATCH THEM **GO**

Ignore the development imperative at your own peril. Every day, employees who believe that their careers are not getting the attention they deserve make the decision to leave. Some resign to pursue employment in organizations that offer greater opportunity. Others decide the freelance life fits them better, and they cobble together a variety of projects that become a career.

But an equally dangerous situation occurs when employees stay but withdraw their engagement, motivation, and enthusiasm for the work.

CAREER CONVERSATIONS EMPLOYEES WANT

So, what's a manager to do? Plenty. And it might be easier than you expect. Quality career development boils down to quality conversations.

Throughout this book, we'll challenge you to reframe career development in such a way that responsibility rests squarely with the employee, and that your role is more about prompting, guiding, reflect-

ing, exploring ideas, activating enthusiasm, and driving action. This role centers around talking about—rather than actually *doing* the heavy lifting of—development.

We'll offer a framework for thinking about conversations that help others grow. It involves three distinct types of conversations: hindsight, foresight, and insight.

- ▶ Hindsight conversations are those that help others look backward and inward to determine who they are, where they've been, what they love, and where they excel. Chapters 3 and 4 provide you with questions and ideas for helping others look back as a basis for moving forward.
- ▶ Foresight conversations are designed to keep employees looking forward and outward toward changes, trends, and the ever-evolving big picture. Chapter 5 offers easy, straightforward tools that are long on value and short on your time investment.
- ▶ Chapters 6, 7, and 8 focus on leveraging the insights that surface from the convergence of hindsight and foresight. How do the employees' strengths fit into where the organization or industry is going? Where are there opportunities to carve out space to grow and perform? Out of the work that needs to be done, which activities will give people unique experiences and fodder for development?
- ▶ In Chapter 9, you'll learn how to grow with the flow or embed development into everyday life through heightened awareness and fluid conversation strategies.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

You're probably doing a pretty good job so far. Here are just a few thoughts to get the most from the experience.

This book was written for anyone who has a role in developing others. The titles vary from organization to organization: Supervisor,

Manager, Director, Team Leader, Vice President, CEO. We've chosen to use the term *manager* generically. Whenever you see it, it means *you*.

This book is all about the career conversations employees want. So we'll draw heavily upon employees' voices. These are real individuals in the workplace whose eloquent insights make the point far better than we could. They aren't the entitled whiners with unrealistic expectations. They're your solid citizens. The ones you count on to produce. The ones you're hoping will stick around.

► TRY THIS

You'll find lots of questions and activities you can use with your employees. We'll call them out like this. Have an upcoming career conversation? Scan the pages for an exercise, tuck the book under your arm, and you're ready to go.

• WHAT ABOUT YOU? •

So, you're somebody's employee too, right? And, if you're like many managers, you get caught in the middle, doing the right thing for your employees, but not necessarily having it done for you. As you read this book, you may find yourself thinking, this sounds pretty good, but what about me? Answer: do it yourself!

The tools and questions throughout this book are highly flexible. Change **you** to **I** and you're ready for some self-discovery. You might find it helpful to review the answers with someone at work or at home. A fresh set of eyes may pick up clues and offer a different perspective and new insights.

We'll close each chapter with some *what ifs*. We know that as a manager responsible for delivering business results, you must keep your feet planted firmly on the ground. So, from that grounded position, take a moment to consider what just might be possible.

What IF . . .

- ▶ you kept reading and tried out even one or two ideas with your employees?

.....

They would *grow*.

1

Develop

Me

OR I'm

History!



Spending 40-60-80 hours somewhere each week . . .

I want it to mean something. I want to feel like I'm moving forward somehow. If I can't grow here, I've gotta look elsewhere.

—an employee (perhaps yours)

The decision to assume a management role in today's workplace comes with a front-row seat to some of the greatest business challenges of our time. Day in and day out, you must

Do more with less. It's become cliché, but it permeates life at work. You've likely become a master at finding ways to reduce costs, time, and other resources below levels you never imagined were possible.

Meet ever-expanding expectations. Every quarter, you're asked to do a little (or a lot) more. Bigger sales. Greater numbers of service interactions. More projects. Higher scores.

Continuously improve quality. Good enough isn't. Given the competition in today's global market, perfection is the standard—until it's met and you have to do even better.

Deliver the next big thing. Most organizations believe that if they're not moving forward, they're sliding back. Innovation gets its picture on business magazine covers because it represents the promise of greater success.

And, no matter how long, hard, or smart you work, you can't do all of this alone. Success depends upon tapping the very best that each employee has to offer and enabling the highest possible levels of engagement.

Study after study confirms that best-in-class managers—the ones who consistently develop the most capable, flexible, and engaged teams able to drive exceptional business results—all share one quality: they make career development a priority.

Career development

is among the **most**
frequently **forgotten**
tools for driving
business results...

yet

it's completely within
a **manager's**
sphere of **influence.**

A “HISTORY” LESSON

Even during challenging economic times, your best and brightest have options. Failing to help them grow can lead employees to take their talents elsewhere. They become “history.” But what can be equally as damaging as this sort of talent drain are the employees who stay and become disengaged. Their bodies remain but their commitment has quit. In this way, history plays out, repeating itself over and over again in too many organizations.

So, if career development is a tool that can deliver productivity gains, expense reduction, quality improvements, innovation, and bottom-line results, why isn't everyone using it?

DEFINING TERMS

Perhaps it's frequently forgotten because the term *career development* strikes fear into managers' hearts.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Take a moment to think about what career development means to you? What's involved? What's your role?

Whatever your answer, we'll bet that ours is simpler. You see, many managers are intimidated by or steer clear of career development because they have a mistaken, convoluted, or overwhelming definition of the term.

So, try this definition on for size:

Career development
 is nothing more than
helping others grow.
 And nothing **less.**

Helping others grow can take a nearly unlimited number of forms. On one end of the continuum, you help employees prepare for and move to new or expanded roles in obvious and visible ways. But far more frequently, growth shows up on the other end of the continuum, in small, subtle ways that quietly create greater challenge, interest, and satisfaction in a job.

The problem is that too often career development evokes images of forms, checklists, and deadlines. And let's be honest—you've got to address them to support the organization. But administrative details are not career development.

Instead, genuine and meaningful career development occurs through the human act of conversation.

Whether it's a formal individual development planning (IDP) meeting or an on-the-fly connection, it's the quality of the conversation that matters most to employees. That's how they judge your performance and their development. That's also how they make the decision to go or stay—or to stay and disengage.

So, if it really is as simple as just talking to people, then why isn't career development a more common feature of the organizational landscape?

IMMOBILIZING MYTHS

Over the years, managers—by sharing oral history and spinning lore—have created and continue to propagate several myths. And these myths (read: reasons or excuses) keep them from having the very career conversations their employees want. Which are familiar to you?

Myth 1 — There is simply not enough time.

No one will argue that time is among the scarcest resources available to managers today. But let's get real. You're having conversations already—probably all day long. What if you could redirect some of that time and some of those conversations to focus on careers?

Myth 2 — If I don't talk about it, they may not think about it and the status quo will be safe.

Why invite problems? Developing people could lead them to leave and upset the balance of your well-running department, right? Wrong. Employees have growth on their minds—whether you address it or not. Withholding these conversations is a greater danger to the status quo than engaging in them.

Myth 3 — Since employees need to own their careers, it's not my job.

No one will argue that managers don't own the development of their employees' careers. Employees do. But that doesn't mean that managers are completely off the hook. You have an essential role in helping and supporting others to take responsibility. And that role plays out in large part through conversation.

Myth 4 — Everyone wants more, bigger, or better: promotions, raises, prestige, power.

If you believe this one, then your employees all look like baby birds, their mouths always wide open, wanting to be fed. This image probably loses its appeal quickly even for doting bird parents—much less busy managers. But based upon our research, this image is patently inaccurate. When asked about what they want to get out of a career conversation with their managers, the number-one response from employees is “ways to use my talents creatively.”

Myth 5 — Development efforts are best concentrated on high potentials, many of whom already have plans in place.

This one's a cop-out. You can indeed see a significant return on the development you invest in your high potentials. But they make up only about 10 percent of your population. You probably have another 10 percent of marginal performers who are on a very different kind of plan. But what about the 80 percent in between—the massive middle responsible for doing the bulk of the work? Imagine what even a small investment in their development might yield.

Careers
are
developed
one
conversation
at a **time...**
over time.



If you're like most managers, a few of these myths likely make sense to you. Dog-ear or bookmark these pages and come back to them after you've completed the book. We predict that once you are introduced to a different way of looking at your role, you may also look at career development and these myths a little differently.

But, until then, remember this: growing the business means growing people. Forget that . . . and the rest is history.

What IF . . .

- ▶ you reframed how you think about career development?
- ▶ growth really was as simple as conversing with employees?
- ▶ managers could break through the myths that undermine their success and their employees' growth?

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