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| Approach: **Building Capability** |
| Name: **Ruth Davies**Role: **Student Systems and Records Manager, Registry** |
| I manage a team of 13 with 4 managers directly reporting to me and several further layers (including graduate interns).I work with my team to identify people's aspirations, skill-sets and development needs. A lot of this is done through working with direct reports to talk about their specific needs and talking to them about the development needs of people reporting to them.I try to make sure that line managers are asking reports about their development needs and at the same time encouraging staff to take some responsibility for their own development. This creates an environment where staff can take an active part in identifying development opportunities and development is not something that is "done" to them.I am also in a position where I can spot development opportunities which may be relevant to team members and which they may not see for themselves. I can often take a broader view of things that may be going on across the team, directorate and/or wider University. The individual may not see the immediate relevance to their development but I encourage people to take a leap of faith and go for it. I try to help encourage a balance between the day to day routine activities that staff have to perform and providing opportunities for development. This can often be achieved by encouraging staff to identify how processes could be improved and then taking responsibility for implementing the improvements. This is always done with appropriate levels of support in place. Individuals who undertake development of any kind are always encouraged to reflect on what they have done and what they have learned as a means of anchoring their learning.Another example of actively encouraging development is through carefully managed delegation. I try and check out with people what level of delegation they are comfortable with and offer support in order to get them to stretch themselves.For example, I had a member of staff who had accompanied me to several meetings. I asked them if they would like to lead the next meeting. Their first reaction was that they didn't feel comfortable about this. We discussed their concerns and developed an approach which would help allay their fears. This involved them observing me chair the next meeting and discussing all of the things that I was doing to manage the meeting effectively. They agreed that they would chair the next meeting and that I would offer appropriate support.People accept development opportunities because they know that they will be supported. We have conversations to establish an individual's readiness to take on opportunities and any development opportunities undertaken are reviewed as a matter of course.I actively support people who spot their own development opportunities, for example to join working groups outside of the immediate team. I am also flexible in supporting staff who want to undertake structured learning such as Masters' degrees. An outcome of this approach is that it builds an individual's confidence to take on other, sometimes more challenging opportunities. For example I encouraged an intern to apply for a job that they lacked the confidence to go for. My approach was to say "just try it" which she did and was successful. I also think it is important to recognise when something isn't working. For example, I have had individuals undertaking longer term development which is conflicting with their workload or they are not getting anything out of it. I think it is important to explore other options if it isn't working and to not get stuck on a fixed path. |