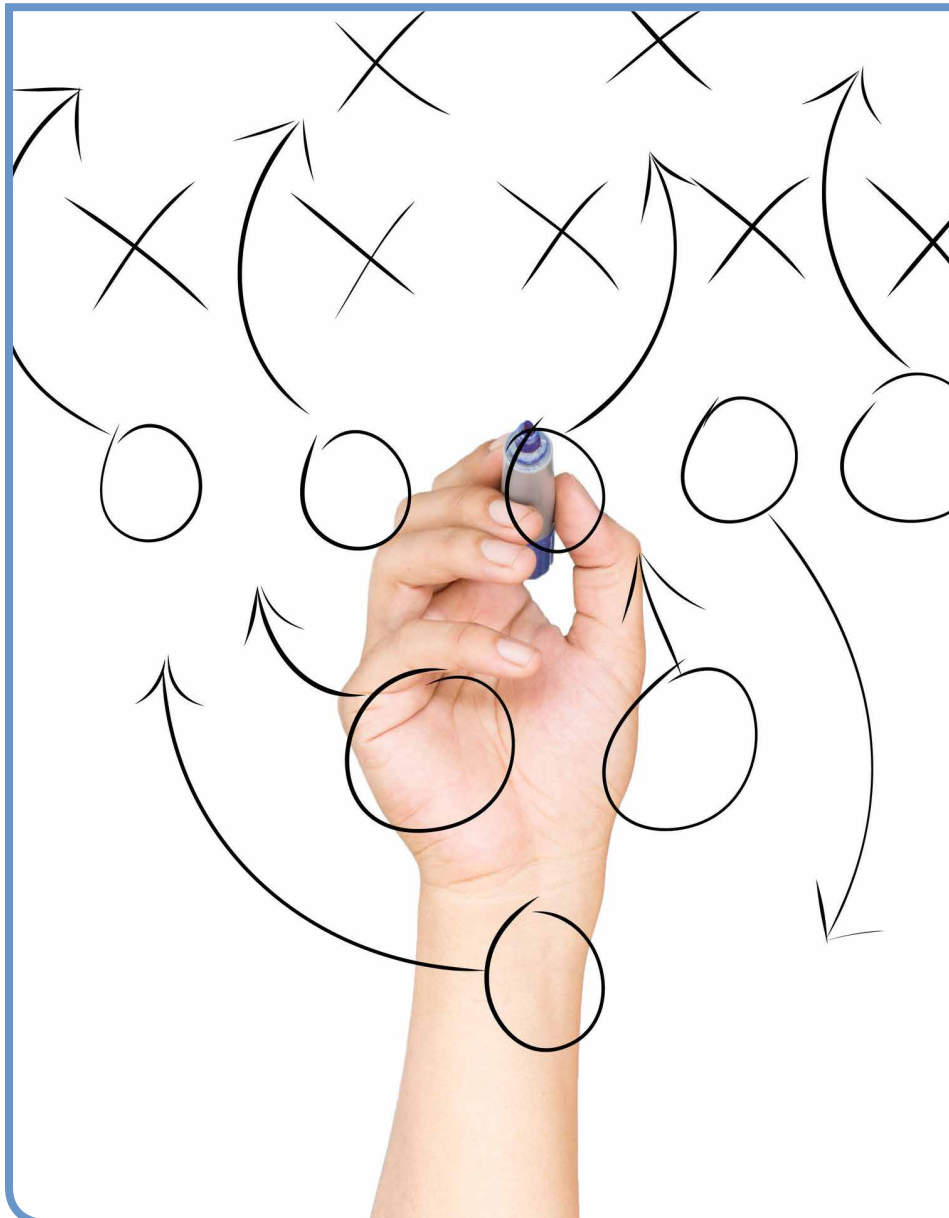


# Talent Development Strategy Playbook

An i4cp Report



*A step-by-step guide to develop the talent you need now and in the future.*

## STEP 1

Define the business case for development

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## STEP 2

Identify strategic development priorities

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## STEP 3

Design a talent development framework

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## STEP 4

Build the go-forward implementation plan

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### FOREWORD

# Planning to Succeed at Talent Development

The adage “failing to plan is planning to fail” is a timeless observation that serves as a useful reminder to talent and learning and development (L&D) leaders. We all aspire to go beyond the reactive, “order-taker” training status still too common in organizations and while a solid talent development strategy is the hallmark of high-impact, high-performance organizations, crafting a useful strategy is easier said than done.

So how do we overcome the inertia of maintaining the status quo programs that keep us busy and employees somewhat satisfied? How do we build something with lasting power in the face of today’s dynamic, ever-changing business world? And who has the time to go through the 20+ steps of classic strategic planning in the first place?

Based on research and the guidance of leading L&D practitioners, i4cp has created this practical, step-by-step Talent Development Strategy Playbook to address these challenges. It consists of a simple four-step framework with tips, templates, and key questions any talent and L&D practitioner can apply.

As you work through this playbook, keep five things in mind:

## 1. Taking the time to gain a new perspective is the best way to create new solutions.

We often convince ourselves that we've tried everything and are doing the best possible. Strategic thinking starts with a fresh scan of what's going on externally and internally and can provide a creative spark leading to better solutions to today's challenges.

## 2. Great talent and L&D plans stand together, not alone.

The best development plans incorporate and contribute to the larger strategic needs and interests of the business and functions. Furthermore, the effort to create an effective development plan is an exercise in collaboration and influence, not a heroic solo performance from the talent/L&D leader. Involve a wide-ranging set of voices, stakeholders, and perspectives to both ensure a relevant and supported plan.

## 3. Get ready to make real choices and place a few big bets.

We often sub-optimize development efforts by trying to cover too many bases, maintain too many legacy programs, and satisfy too many requests. Strategic planning should uncover what is most important and help guide courageous choices. High-impact, high-performing talent and L&D organizations know where to apply limited resources, strategically making a few big bets that matter most.

## 4. Thinking execution is also being strategic.

Once choices are made, a successful strategy applies an equal amount of disciplined thinking about execution. What are the resources and capabilities necessary for implementation? Are new capabilities and skills needed in the development team? What metrics will guide the work and indicate the targeted ROI?

## 5. The second plan is much better than the first.

Any good sports coach knows that the team will need time to successfully utilize a new playbook. If you and your organization are relatively new to applying a strategic approach to talent development, be patient and diligent in your efforts. Your first time around may feel a bit rough, but consistent application of this four-step playbook will yield greater confidence and impact as you build strategic muscle.



By **Kevin D. Wilde** – i4cp Strategic Business Advisor

- *Former Talent Capabilities & CLO, General Mills*
- *2007 CLO of the Year, Chief Learning Officer magazine*
- *2012 #1 Learning Elite*
- *Training Magazine Hall of Fame*

## INTRODUCTION

# How to use this playbook

Want to get started? i4cp's *Talent Development Strategy Toolkit* provides all of the templates shown in this report in an interactive Excel format. Members can find it on the i4cp website in the Learning & Development Knowledge Center.

### 1. Identify who will sponsor and approve the talent development strategy.

Every project needs someone (a senior executive or a steering group) to affirm that the strategy aligns with the needs of the business, provide direction, and ultimately sign-off on the contents, budget, and implementation plan.

### 2. Create a project team.

Form a strategy development team made up of HR specialists and business leaders who care about learning and development and the talent needs of your business.

### 3. Follow the steps.

This playbook provides a step-by-step guide—each step includes templates. You may:

- Work through the steps and corresponding templates in the order they are presented,
- Focus on a particular step to enter, update or edit content, or
- Skip a step or template altogether because some parts of your strategy have already been prepared.

### 4. Read through all steps and templates in the playbook before you begin.

Seeing how the steps flow from one to the next and are supported by each template provides big-picture clarity.

## Talent development strategy goals

A *talent development strategy* has two goals:

1. To produce, through learning and development, the human capabilities your organization needs to accomplish its business objectives, and
2. To provide learning and development content and experiences that attract and retain employees.

The information produced after completing the templates in this playbook will be unique to your organization's workforce and its development needs, making your strategy a source of competitive advantage.

## Talent development strategy steps

The playbook consists of four steps:

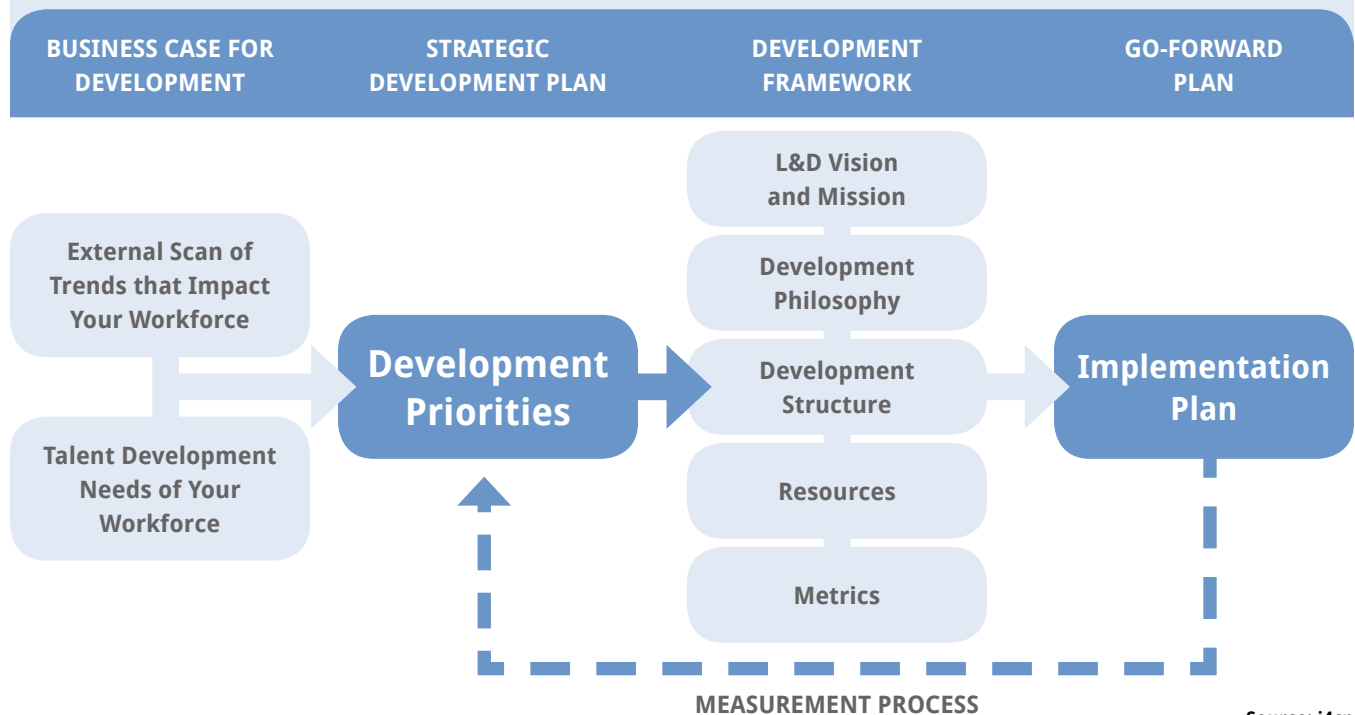
**STEP 1: Define the business case for development**

**STEP 2: Identify strategic development priorities**

**STEP 3: Design a talent development framework**

**STEP 4: Build the go-forward implementation plan**

The strategy development team builds your strategy by completing corresponding templates provided for each step in the process.



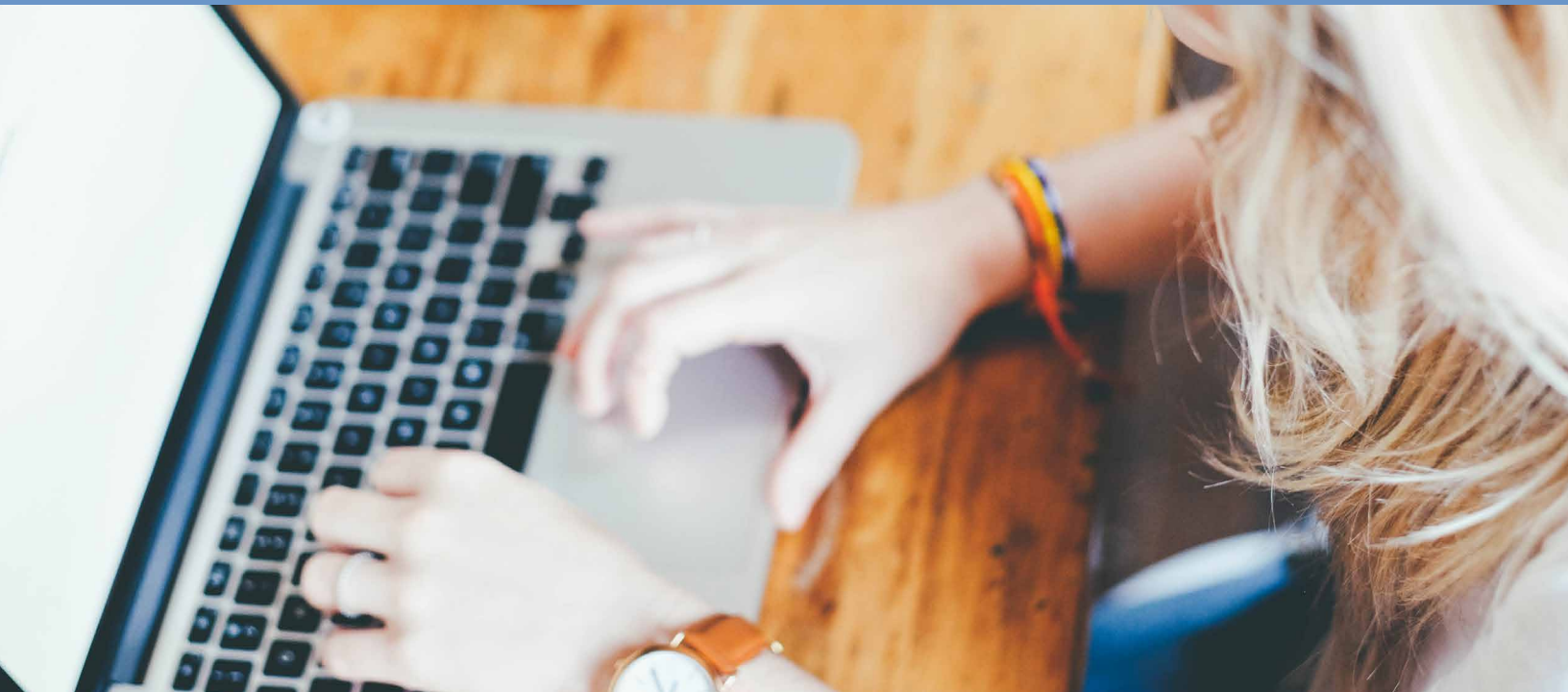
Source: i4cp

## Sponsors and stakeholder involvement

Creating a talent development strategy involves the efforts of many people and the investment of major resources. Ultimately, successful talent development will be a source of competitive advantage and major influence on an organization's culture and the employment experience.

As you work through the steps in the playbook, periodically communicate with sponsors and stakeholders to keep them updated, informed, hear their views, and seek their support for proposed development activities.





**STEP 1:**

## Define the business case for development

Answers these questions:

- 1. What trends or forces external to the organization have implications for the development of people in our workforce?**
- 2. What are our business-driven learning and development needs?**
- 3. What learning and development initiatives, programs, or tools does our organization already have in place to address important development needs?**

*Collecting and analyzing information about the organization's business environment, its goals, and its workforce characteristics enables you to understand and explain why and where your organization needs to invest in talent development.*

### Step 1 templates

Template #1: External scan

Template #2: Internal talent development needs

Template #3: Current state of learning and development assessment

## STEP 1 TEMPLATE 1:

# External scan

*The purpose of the **external scan** is to examine the broad talent context your organization operates in and identify important implications for development of your workforce.*

### Instructions:

#### 1. Trend-spotting:

Identify workforce trends, issues, and major forces in these broad categories: social, technological, environmental, economic, political, legal, other, etc.

#### 2. Development implications:

For each trend or issue, identify implications for talent development. For example, if your talent pool consists of people who are inexperienced or academically unprepared to perform, an implication is the need to provide a pre-hire or new-hire assessment to identify proficiency levels and target “catch up” learning experiences.

#### 3. Benchmark:

Identify practices used by other organizations to address the trends and implications.

### External scan tips:

1. Focus on a specific timeframe, for example: trends from the last five years/five years into the future.
2. In global organizations, external influences on talent may vary by country/region.
3. Interest in trend information and L&D practices is high; you can find trend data and benchmark information from many sources, including i4cp.

### EXTERNAL SCAN

Categories	Trends/Issues	Implication for Talent Development	Ideas from Benchmarking						
Social	<p>Use this template to stimulate thinking and record external trends, development implications, and what you learn from benchmarking other organizations. Here's an example:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Trends/Issues</th> <th>Implication for Talent Development</th> <th>Ideas from Benchmarking</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The talent pools we draw from have become strongly multi-cultural and multi-generational.</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for more inclusive leadership approaches.</li> <li>• Need to be sensitive to generational learning style differences.</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative design of leadership development experiences with the diversity and inclusion function.</li> <li>• Use of ERGs as a leadership development experience.</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Trends/Issues	Implication for Talent Development	Ideas from Benchmarking	The talent pools we draw from have become strongly multi-cultural and multi-generational.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for more inclusive leadership approaches.</li> <li>• Need to be sensitive to generational learning style differences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative design of leadership development experiences with the diversity and inclusion function.</li> <li>• Use of ERGs as a leadership development experience.</li> </ul>
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Economic									
Technological									
Environmental									
Political									
Legal									
Other									



STEP 1 TEMPLATE 2:

# Internal talent development needs

*The internal talent development needs assessment identifies your organization’s most important current and future learning and development needs.*

## Instructions:

### 1. Review your organization’s workforce plans:

Workforce plans typically identify important talent segments by job type, job level, organization/function, or other category, such as “pivotal job” or “scarce skill.” The plan compares talent demand with anticipated talent supply to pinpoint supply gaps and targets actions—usually hiring, contracting, promotion, development—to ensure an adequate supply of capable talent.

### 2. Conduct interviews:

If your organization does not have a formal workforce planning process, business leaders and HR business partners should have a good sense of the workforce in the organizations they manage or support. Focusing on both today’s needs and future needs, the goal of the interview is to identify workforce segments where capability gaps are present and learning and development is the appropriate approach to build needed capabilities.

## Internal talent development assessment tips:

1. There is no singular ideal way to categorize talent segments; choose an approach that best fits your organization.
2. In large organizations, internal talent assessments can be done by business unit/department.
3. Don’t forget to incorporate developmental assessment information your organization may already have on hand.

## INTERNAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

Talent Segment	Current Development Needs	Future Development Needs						
<b>Functions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sales</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Supply chain</li> </ul>	<p><b>Use this template to record current and future development needs for each of your talent segments. Here’s an example:</b></p>							
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Talent Segment</th> <th>Current Development Needs</th> <th>Future Development Needs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Sales engineers</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New hires require sales process understanding—prospecting, qualifying, solution selling, closing, forecasting, and sales documentation.</li> <li>• Core product knowledge</li> <li>• Time and territory management</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next generation product knowledge</li> <li>• Consultative selling</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Talent Segment	Current Development Needs	Future Development Needs	Sales engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New hires require sales process understanding—prospecting, qualifying, solution selling, closing, forecasting, and sales documentation.</li> <li>• Core product knowledge</li> <li>• Time and territory management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next generation product knowledge</li> <li>• Consultative selling</li> </ul>	
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<b>Levels:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front-line supervisors</li> <li>• General managers</li> </ul>								
<b>Positions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pivotal roles</li> <li>• Hard-to-fill jobs</li> </ul>								

### STEP 1 TEMPLATE 3:

# Current state of learning and development assessment

*This template identifies initiatives, programs, tools, and other experiences your organization has that address important development needs. Knowing how well your L&D portfolio supports your talent development needs informs your planning efforts. It prevents duplication, recognizes the value of existing programs and activities, and suggests L&D portfolio activities that may no longer be priorities or even needed at all.*

## Instructions:

### 1. Review.

Review your organization's current portfolio of development activities.

### 2. Compare.

Match current learning and development initiatives, programs, experiences, or tools with important development implications or needs identified in the external scan (**STEP 1 TEMPLATE 1**) or an internal talent development need (**STEP 1 TEMPLATE 2**).

## Current state of learning & development assessment tips:

1. This step can be a good time for an in-depth capability review of your organization's learning and development function, even though a L&D capability assessment is not required for this step.
2. Learning and development programs, initiatives, experiences, and tools that do not support an important development need should be considered for cessation, freeing resources to work on other development areas.

## EXTERNAL SCAN DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

Trend or Issue	Development Implication	Current Learning & Development Initiatives, Programs, Experiences or Tools
<p>Use this template to record learning and development experiences your organization currently offers that address an important external development trends or issues. Here's an example:</p>		
<p><b>Low unemployment heating up the war for talent</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting and retaining talent is more difficult, resulting in scarce skills in key capability areas.</li> <li>• Development opportunities can be used in the value proposition to make the organization more attractive and help retain people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employee Value Proposition:</b> Our EVP communication specifically mentions learning and development investments and opportunities we provide.</li> <li>• <b>Succession Planning:</b> We have expanded the scope of our succession planning to include high performers and roles beyond top management roles.</li> </ul>

## INTERNAL TALENT ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

Talent Segment	Current Development Needs	Future Development Needs	Current Learning & Development Initiatives, Programs, Experiences or Tools
<p>Use this template to record learning and development experiences your organization currently offers that address an important internal development trends or issues. Here's an example:</p>			
<p><b>Sales</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large number of hires require sales process understanding—prospecting, qualifying, solution selling, closing, forecasting, documentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next-generation product knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Basic Sales Skills:</b> A three-day intensive sales training program. Formal follow-up sales development experience. Sales people have an individual development plan, but only about 50% have one.</li> </ul>



### STEP 2:

## Identify strategic development priorities

### Answers these questions:

- 1. Which workforce development issues and needs are most critical to our organization?**
- 2. What learning and development approaches are most appropriate to address these issues and needs?**
- 3. What should be the top priorities in our talent development strategy?**

*High-priority trends/issues impacting the workforce are the basis for your organization's strategic focus on learning and development. This foundation guides creation of the organization's infrastructure of development philosophy, programs, resources, and metrics.*

### Step 2 templates

Template #1: Impact analysis worksheet

Template #2: Prioritization matrix

Template #3: Talent development priority list

STEP 2 TEMPLATE 1:

# Impact analysis worksheet

The impact analysis helps the project team evaluate development needs from STEP 1 using criteria that will guide prioritization and inform specific development strategies.

## Instructions:

- List important development issues/needs.** Refer to content from the external scan (STEP 1 TEMPLATE 1) and the internal talent development needs (STEP 1 TEMPLATE 2) to build the list.
- Rate the items.** Evaluate and rate each development issue/need (H = High, M = Moderate, L = Low) on two criteria: *Business Impact* and *Implementation Readiness*.

### Impact analysis tips:

- Group similar issues.
- In large organizations, impact analysis can be done by business unit/department and then “rolled up.”
- Suggested implementation readiness considerations are:
  - top-level support
  - understanding of methodology for L&D approach
  - staff capabilities
  - adequacy of financial resources
  - previous level of investment
  - cultural fit

## LIST OF DEVELOPMENT ISSUES/NEEDS FROM STEP 1

Development Issue or Need	Business Impact	Implementation Readiness
Use this template to rate the business impact (High, Moderate, Low) of important development issues or needs and your readiness to implement a learning & development experience that will address these issues and needs. For example:		
Development Issue or Need	Business Impact	Implementation Readiness
Building sales skills in new hires	(H)   M   L	(H)   M   L
Advanced sales training	(H)   M   L	H   M   (L)

STEP 2 TEMPLATE 2:

# Prioritization matrix

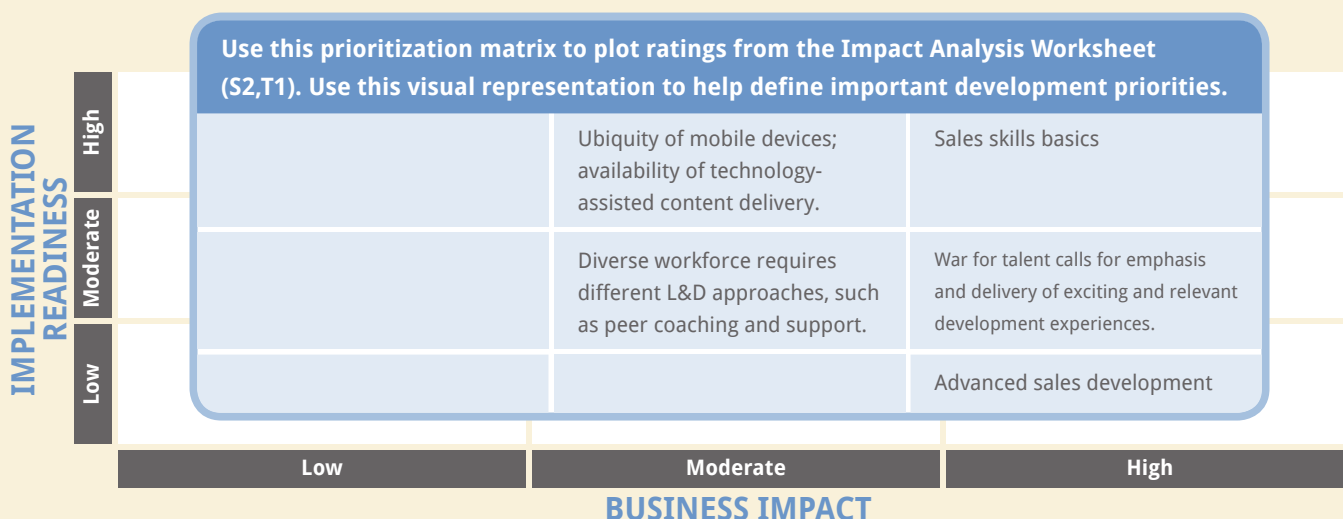
*The prioritization matrix provides a graphic, visual view of workforce development priorities based on your team’s evaluation of business impact and implementation readiness.*

## Instructions:

- 1. Prepare:** Prepare a 3x3 matrix. Label one axis “business impact” and label the other as “implementation readiness.” Label the cells along each axis as low, moderate or high, starting with Low for each axis in the bottom left-hand cell.
- 2. Plot:** Plot each important trend or issue onto the 3X3 matrix according to the evaluations you made on **STEP 2 TEMPLATE 1**. You may wish to adjust or fine-tune your ratings as you go.
- 3. Select:** Once you have visibility of the filled-in matrix, have your project team recommend and explain their selections for top priority development issues and needs.

## Prioritization tips:

1. This activity typically requires lots of discussion, so allocate adequate time or schedule two sessions—one for initial thinking and discussion, and a second for final deliberations.
2. While there is no off-the-shelf answer for how best to determine top development priorities, consider business impact first. Items with *high* and *moderate* level of business impact have priority. A *low* implementation readiness rating signals the need for more effort and/or more resources.





STEP 2 TEMPLATE 3:

# Talent development priority list

*This template captures results from your prioritization matrix discussion as a list of ranked development priorities and identifies corresponding talent segments affected by each priority. This is mostly a documentation activity, but it is a very important one because it will focus your future development efforts and resources on top priorities first.*

## Instructions:

### 1. Prepare a priority list.

Review **STEP 2 TEMPLATE 2**. Prepare a list of your development priorities, grouping them as high, moderate, and low.

### 2. Identify corresponding talent segments.

For each item on the priority list, identify the talent segment(s) most affected.

## Priority list tips:

1. This activity can be done quickly without prolonged debate by the team.
2. If it seems like the team is revisiting the prioritization matrix determinations to discuss them in-depth again, do a process check to see if this desire to reevaluate prioritization decisions made in completing **STEP 2 TEMPLATE 3** is really needed.
3. When the prioritization list is completed, review it with key stakeholders to get their impressions. A good question to ask is “what have we missed?”.

Developmental Priorities	Major Talent Segment(s) Impacted
High	
<p><b>Use this prioritization matrix to plot ratings from the Impact Analysis Worksheet (S2,T1). Use this visual representation to help define important development priorities.</b></p>	
Moderate	
Low	

Developmental Priorities	Major Talent Segment(s) Impacted
<p><b>High</b></p> <p>Sales person development - new hires and experienced</p> <p>Emphasize &amp; deliver exciting and relevant development experiences as part of our EVP</p>	<p>Sales</p> <p>New hire software developers</p>

STEP 3:

## Design a talent development framework

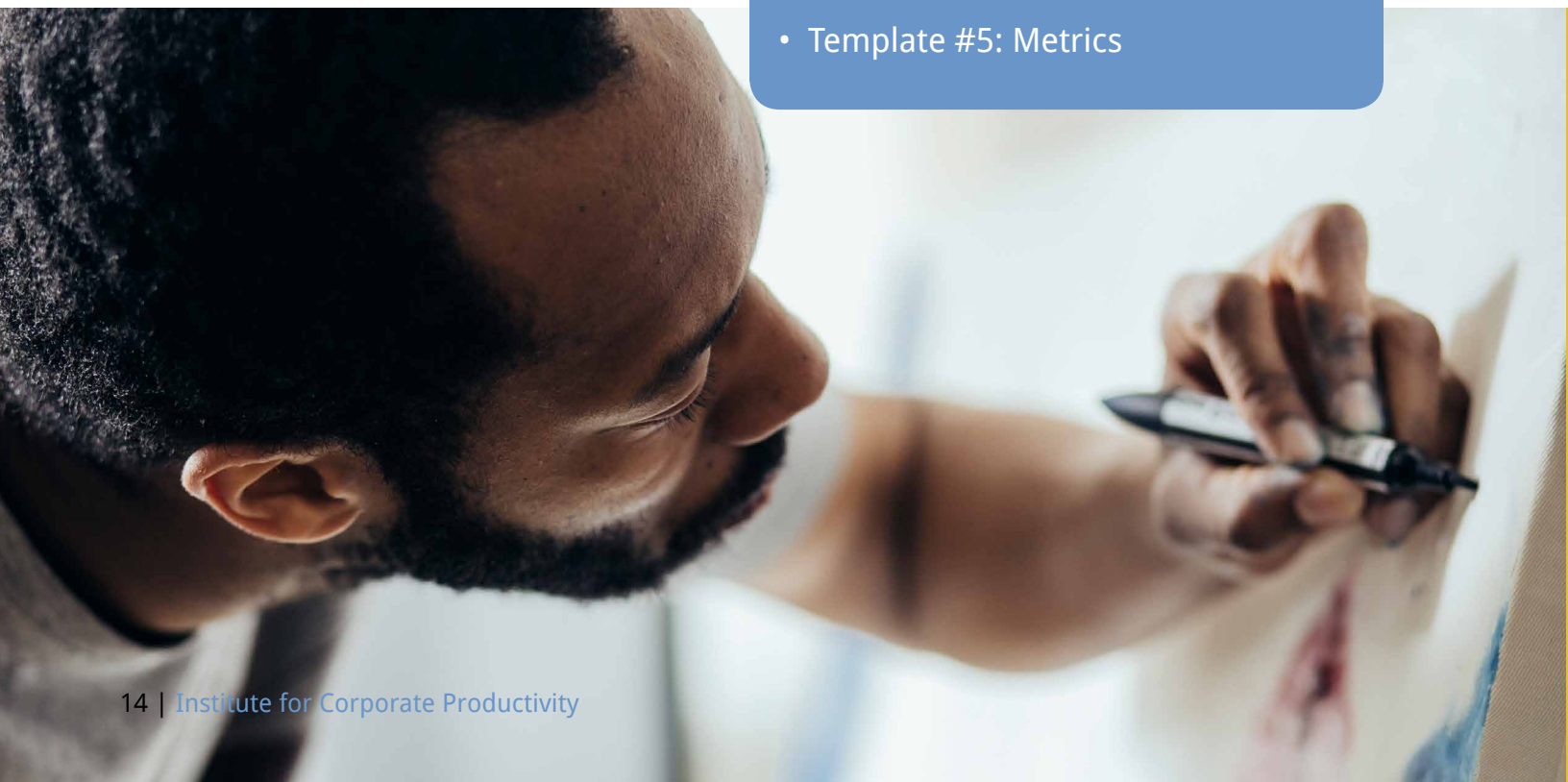
### Answers these questions:

1. What is the mission and vision of the learning and development organization?
2. What values and beliefs will guide talent development?
3. What programs, experiences, and activities will we put in place?
4. What resources will we need?
5. How will we measure talent development effectiveness?

*This step describes how your organization will go about achieving its talent development strategic priorities, covering the role of the learning and development function, your organization's development philosophy, programs and experiences, required resources, and measurement approach.*

### Step 3 templates

- Template #1: L&D mission and vision statement
- Template #2: Development philosophy
- Template #3: Development structure
- Template #4: Resources
- Template #5: Metrics



## STEP 3 TEMPLATE 1:

# Learning & development mission and vision statement

*Creating a mission statement and vision for your organization's learning and development team unifies them in pursuit of your organization's talent goals. It also provides the basis to communicate consistent messages about talent development to key stakeholders.*

## Instructions:

### 1. Answer these questions to describe the mission of your L&D function.

What is the role of the learning and development function?

How do we link learning and development activities to the business?

Who are our primary customers and stakeholders?

What benefits does L&D produce for the organization and its workers?

### 2. Answer these questions to declare your vision for the L&D function.

What are our aspirations for learning experiences in the future?

What impact will talent development have on the organization and its culture?

## Mission and vision tips:

1. Mission statements focus on the present while vision statements focus on the future.
2. Learning and development functions have two primary customers—the organization and the people who work in it. Make sure the mission and vision address both.

Follow this template to produce L&D mission and vision statements. Here's an example:

#### Our Mission:

- The mission of our Learning and Development function is to support the company's business units and support organizations by rapidly developing capable employees.
- A robust workforce planning process will help us identify key talent segments and development priorities.
- Our primary customers are business unit/function general managers and our employees. Stakeholders for development are our customers and shareholders.
- We provide value to the company by ensuring we have people with the right skills to implement our business strategies.

#### Our Vision:

- The future will emphasize increased use of technology to deliver development experiences.
- Learning and development experiences will demonstrate to employees that this is a place where they can come and stay to learn and grow their careers.

### STEP 3 TEMPLATE 2:

# Talent development philosophy worksheet

*An organization's talent development philosophy is a resource for its leaders, its workers and the learning and development staff. It guides decision making and the design and implementation of development experiences.*

## Instructions:

**Answer these questions to create your organization's talent development philosophy.**

What types of learning and development are valued by the organization?

What is the employee's responsibility for learning and development?

What is the manager's responsibility for talent development?

How will we measure our commitment to learning and development?

Will some types of workers receive a greater amount of development resources than others? If so, why?

What part does learning and development play in our organization's employment value proposition?

In our organization, how will employees experience learning and development?

## Development philosophy tips:

1. There are no right/wrong answers—chart your own course.
2. Test-run your philosophy with key stakeholders and aim for consensus. Philosophy is an area where your organization should speak with one voice.

**Follow this template to produce a L&D philosophy statement. Here's an example:**

### Talent Development Philosophy:

- We value business required capability-building, experiential learning and self-directed development.
- We expect our associates to "raise the bar" of their capabilities through continuous personal development. Everyone will have an individual development plan.
- Our people managers are expected to identify capability needs for their teams, participate in development planning, and budget the time and resources required for development.
- We will measure our learning and development efforts through improvements in two ways: increased workforce capability and associate feedback on the learning experience.
- Employees in key roles for current and future operating needs and high potentials will receive priority for our development investments.
- We intend that learning and development be viewed by associates as a key component of the company's employee value proposition and a source of career advancement.

**STEP 3 TEMPLATE 3:**

# Talent development structure

*The **development structure** identifies the learning and development programs and experiences your organization will implement to meet its priority development needs. This is also the step in which talent development professionals truly shine as they apply their skills and creativity.*

## Talent development structure tips:

1. Don't forget to include relevant learning and development programs and experiences currently offered (**STEP 1 TEMPLATE 3**).
2. The descriptions required by the development structure are high-level designs, meaning that creation of detailed design materials (content, tools, etc.) for these learning and development programs and experiences is not required at this step.
3. This step is usually the most time-consuming element in building a talent development strategy, requiring work to be spread among several people or sub-teams, often organized by talent segment, organizational unit, or geography.

## Instructions:

**Describe development programs/experiences to address major development priorities identified in STEP 2 TEMPLATE 3.**

Development Priority	Description
Use this template to describe development programs/experiences. For example:	
Developmental Priorities	Description
Priority	Salesperson skill development
Objective	Program to accelerate production of sales results
Audience	New hires to attend within two months of employment
Planned approach	Online and onsite, led by central sales and including product line managers as instructors
Proposed roll-out and timing	Once per quarter as needed
Metrics	Instructor ratings, test results, self-assessment, manager post-development ratings

## STEP 3 TEMPLATE 4:

# Resource plan

The **resource plan** encompasses the people, systems, external support and financial resources needed to implement the Talent Development Structure.

### Instructions:

#### 1. People: Working from STEP 3: TEMPLATE 3:

- a. **Skills/Roles:** Identify roles required to design, communicate/market, deliver, and assess planned development programs and experiences.
- b. **Source:** Determine whether required roles will come from in-house or external resources (contractors, consultants).
- c. **Cost:** Project estimated costs to provide the required roles—both internal and externally sourced.

#### 2. Systems and Tools: Considering planned programs/experiences individually and as a whole:

- a. **Requirements:** Identify software and system needs, tools (such as assessments), licenses, software, etc, required.
- b. **Source:** Determine whether the systems and tools will come from in-house or external resources.
- c. **Cost:** Project estimated costs to provide the required systems and tools—both internal and externally sourced.

### RESOURCE PLAN

People				
	Design	Communicate	Deliver	Assess
<b>Skills/Roles Needed</b>	Use this template to document planned resources. Here's an example for People resources:			
<b>Source</b>	Design	Communicate	Deliver	Assess
<b>Cost</b>	Content development	Build awareness and promote attendance	Scheduling and logistics	Evaluate learning experience and impact
	External - Sales Training Consultant	Internal - HR	Internal - HR	Sales organization
<b>Systems and Tools</b>	\$25,000	none	none	none
	Design	Communicate	Deliver	Assess
<b>Requirements</b>				
<b>Source</b>				
<b>Cost</b>				



## STEP 3 TEMPLATE 5:

## Metrics

*Talent development metrics include both measures that pertain to individual development programs and experiences and measures that evaluate the impact of the overall talent development strategy on the organization's operations, its culture and its people (managers and associates).*

### Instructions:

#### 1. For measurement of individual development programs/experiences:

- Ensure measurement is addressed in your Talent Development Philosophy (STEP 3 TEMPLATE 2).
- Ensure measurement is addressed in your Talent Development Structure program/experience descriptions (STEP 3 TEMPLATE 3).

#### 2. For measures of the overall organizational impact of the talent development strategy, identify:

- Measures of the impact of talent development on business operations.
- Measures of the impact of talent development on the organization's culture.
- Measures of the impact of impact of talent development on associates.

#### 3. Identify how measurement data will be collected.

Measurement Focus	Metrics (Examples)	How Measured
Use this template to record metrics used to measure the impact of talent development. Here's an example:		
Measurement Focus	Metrics (Examples)	How Measured
Impact on business operations	% of business units with major talent/skills gaps	Workforce plan
	% of associates certified/possessing acceptable level of capability	
Impact on culture	% regrettable associate attrition	Exit interview
	% associates with high level of engagement	Employee survey



**STEP 4:**

## Build the go-forward implementation plan

Answers these questions:

1. How will we organize for implementation?
2. Who will be responsible for implementation tasks?
3. When will talent development activities take place? What will happen first?

*The culmination of the strategy development process is a go-forward (implementation) plan. It delivers the talent development structure (Step #3) through business-linked capability development programs and experiences and creates employee satisfaction by providing opportunities for personal growth.*

### Step 4 template

Template 1: Implementation project structure

STEP 4 TEMPLATE 1:

# Implementation project structure

*Clearly defining roles and responsibilities from the outset ensures an effective effort. As well, visually showing projected timing for program/experience design, testing, and implementation helps to communicate how various target populations in the organization will be impacted throughout the year.*

## Instructions:

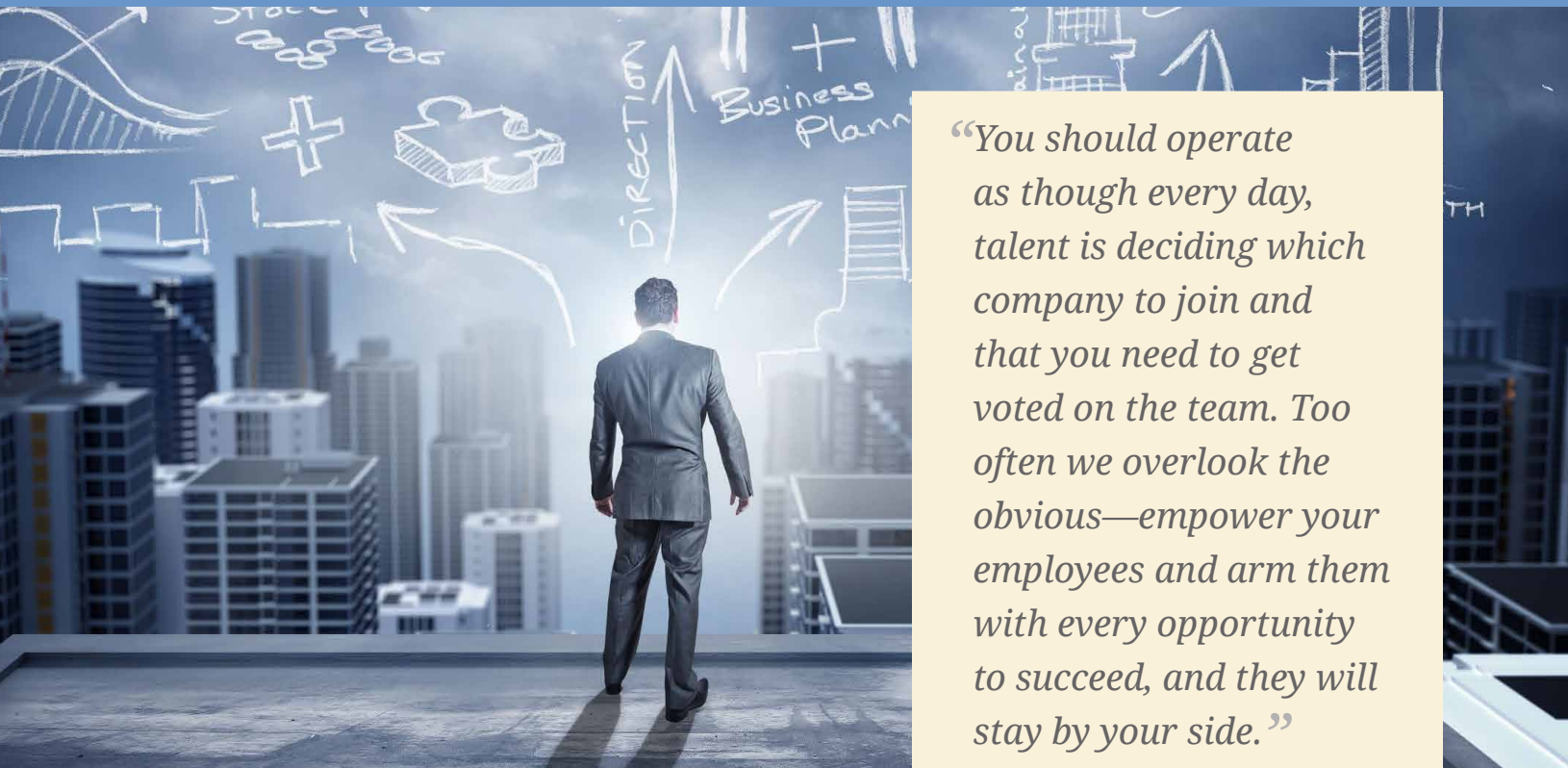
**For each major program/experience (or cluster of related programs/experiences), identify:**

- Program sponsor
- Program/experience lead
- Assigned program resource personnel
- Projected implementation timeline, broken down by design and testing (pilot) and rollout to the program/experience by target group/population.

## Talent development structure tips:

1. Many organizations have a project planning template(s) that is required or customarily used—use these formats accordingly.
2. Major talent development initiatives can benefit greatly from guidance and support from a senior executive. A senior sponsor may not be needed in every situation.
3. Content from this template can be integrated to provide an enterprise view.

Program/Experience/Program Area				
Executive Sponsor				
Design & Implementation Lead				
Designer/Design Team				
Timeline	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Design & Test			
		Rollout Group 1		
			Evaluate/Improve	
				Rollout Group 2



*“You should operate as though every day, talent is deciding which company to join and that you need to get voted on the team. Too often we overlook the obvious—empower your employees and arm them with every opportunity to succeed, and they will stay by your side.”*

**Maynard G. Webb, Jr.**  
Chairman of the Board, Yahoo!

## Wrap-up

*If this looks like a lot of work, it is.*

*Building a talent development strategy requires considerable effort, but it is worth it.*

Regardless of industry, maturity, geographic scope, size or complexity, organizations run on talent—developing existing talent for current and future needs is a business imperative.

- The combination of deep commitment and a strategic approach has the greatest potential to ensure talent development activities are aligned with the performance needs of the business and in step with forces in the external environment that affect your workforce.
- Leaders will respond to an approach that is grounded in the realities of business operations.
- The financial and time investments organizations make to create and deliver learning and development experiences are significant. A carefully crafted talent development structure provides the greatest return on investment.

Our aim with this playbook is to provide a useful framework for talent development practitioners. We are eager to hear your feedback on the talent development strategy process and learn from your experiences.

# Authors and Contributors

**Patrick Murray** and **Kevin Wilde** co-authored this playbook.

**Lorrie Lykins** edited this playbook.

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Several i4cp staff members provided background research and other support for this report, including SVP of research **Jay Jamrog**, and chief research and marketing officer **Kevin Martin**. Thanks too, to **Joe Jamrog** and **Erik Samdahl**.

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## About i4cp



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