Phase 3: Performing and ongoing support
Performing and ongoing support involves ‘actioning’ the key work tasks, accessing the professional development and support activities, and working toward the career goals that are outlined in team members’ Developing Performance agreements.

Team leaders and team members have a shared responsibility for ensuring that Developing Performance agreements are implemented and for building a positive workplace culture that is based on quality conversations and constructive feedback about work-related practices and performance.

As a part of regular on-the-job interactions, employees and team leaders will touch base on task progress and discuss new priorities or issues as they arise.

Some schools or work units might decide to complement these informal discussions by scheduling additional formal progress meetings for teams or individual employees. Team leaders will need to advise team members of the date, time, venue, purpose and processes to facilitate these meetings.

**Why is this phase of the process important?**

A founding principle of the Developing Performance process is valuing each individual’s contribution to the achievement of the team, school or work unit and Department, and providing support for them to keep learning.

This phase builds on the daily conversations and interactions employees and team leaders already have as a part of doing their jobs. It aims to make the best use of these interactions to give and receive feedback, develop relationships between team members, build supportive work environments, and enhance employees’ job satisfaction.

The case studies that follow demonstrate some of the reflections and resulting key actions team leaders in pilot schools and work units undertook to effectively integrate Phase Three of the framework.

**Case study: Remaining focused through team changes**

Midway through a work period, Trish McGregor and her team at the School Technologies Branch experienced a major change in team structure. Trish and her team believe that their weekly one-on-one coaching conversations, focused on Developing Performance agreements, supported them through this transition.

Together, they were able to re-clarify and modify expectations and key work tasks in line with changing roles, particularly with regard to timelines. Team members summed up this process in saying ‘During the realignment, it was important that we were kept well informed and supported. The realignment and physical move could have meant that all professional development and support was put on hold until we settled into our new area. Instead, our team leader used this as an opportunity to support us and expand our knowledge of the work units around us’.

Trish’s motive for establishing weekly one-on-one coaching conversations had been to keep her team members focused by discussing progress, emerging issues and the impact of professional development. She soon realised that this established practice, based on the trusting, empathetic relationships she enjoyed with her team members, meant that they felt comfortable enough to be open and honest with her. This has helped them all to continue to grow as a team and as individuals during a period of change.
Case study: Confidence blossoms with the right support

While a supportive culture has always existed within the Sunshine Coast Human Resources team, team leaders believe they have supported their team members differently as a result of the Developing Performance Framework. The framework has brought a greater awareness of the need to engage in focused conversations tailored specifically to developing the performance of individuals and teams.

As a result, team leaders and members are more conscious of giving and receiving specific feedback during the course of normal work, talking about the progress of key work tasks and dedicating time to developing new approaches to solving problems.

Team leaders and members also dedicate time to discussing the impact of the professional development undertaken by each individual. In these discussions, team members describe the benefits they have experienced in taking on new and challenging tasks within the team and providing improved professional responses to clients. They attribute these improvements to the professional development opportunities that are tailored to suit their personal needs and preferred ways of learning. Such opportunities include, for example, coaching, mentoring, and courses, and being involved in the development and delivery of presentations and training programs for clients on various aspects of their work.

These new, focused practices have brought about such positive change in the workplace that team leaders and members now see them as an accepted practice, rather than the exception. The more they become a habit for each team member, the more embedded they will be in the organisational culture, until they are simply described as ‘the way we do things around here’.

Case study: Developing performance is a part of everyday business

The members of the senior leadership team at Windaroo State School strongly advocate that the Developing Performance process is not an add-on, but ‘a part of what we do in our jobs every single day’. Therefore, throughout Phase Three of the Developing Performance process, the Windaroo State School team members support one another to work towards their work and career goals.

Team leaders and members agree that they have a shared responsibility for developing performance. Teaching teams are structured by year groups and non-teaching teams by employee groups. Teams are known as domains and each domain has a collegial team leader. This structure supports the philosophy that school leaders and team leaders are equally responsible for communicating the links between school priorities and the everyday work of individuals, and that team leaders and members have a shared responsibility for coordinating Developing Performance conversations that include feedback and progress updates.

Throughout Phase Three, regular individual and group meetings are used to talk about individual and team developing performance. Meeting types and times have been structured to make this possible. For example, school and team leaders meet twice each term over a working lunch, and team leaders and members come together monthly in domain meetings.
In addition to meetings, the Principal, Dean Murphy, circulates a regular strategic newsletter outlining the priorities of the school and Education Queensland. He also issues a weekly memorandum to all team leaders and ensures that the school’s intranet is kept up to date. This thorough approach to communication has helped Dean to ensure that the staff at Windaroo State School are constantly reminded that ‘**everything they do is about developing performance**’.

Coordination of professional development opportunities is the responsibility of the school leadership team. Deputy Principal Lynn Vine stresses the many options for professional development and support, and how important it is that team members are given the most appropriate opportunities for them. Many require little or no funding. She identifies professional networking, mentoring, school forums and collegial support as effective no-cost alternatives accessed by team members at Windaroo State School. School-wide professional development planning ensures that team members have access to the support they require — support suited not only to their capability development needs, but also to their preferred ways of learning.

**Case study: Team members take control of their professional development**

Acting Head of Health and Physical Education at Dakabin State High School, Gary Steedman, is constantly impressed by the level of professionalism and performance within his team. During Phase Three of the Developing Performance process, Gary’s main focus is to support his team members as they track toward the successful completion of their nominated key work tasks and the achievement of their career goals. By monitoring progress carefully and providing the advice and support required, Gary is also able to help team members to effectively use the time and resources available to them.

Each member of Gary’s team maintains a folder containing their personal Developing Performance agreement that details their key work tasks, career pathway and professional development needs, as well as general information relating to the process. Throughout Phase Three, Gary meets with his team members to review this information and seek progress updates.

During these meetings, Gary has observed that team members are becoming increasingly enthusiastic about their jobs. This, he believes, is because they have been empowered to plan their own professional development pathways. Team members are identifying support and professional development opportunities that are highly relevant to their goals. This is a shift from the days when professional development was provided on an ad hoc rather than a needs basis. Gary reflects, ‘Perhaps it was the feeling that someone cared about them and what they were doing, or that they felt they had control over the direction of their Professional Development that has led to this increased enthusiasm’.

Gary believes that **‘trust is the glue that holds this together’**. Team leaders trust in team members’ choices and team members trust in team leaders as they provide the support team members need to identify and agree on the professional development options they will access. He believes that only then can teams say they are ‘developing performance together’. 