

Platform

Quick guide: Using Progression as a manager



Hey — welcome to Progression!

We're a career development platform, built for teams, their managers and organisations that really care about their peoples' development. Your organisation has taken a giant leap towards career clarity for you and your reports by building a Progression framework for your team.

In this guide we explain exactly what a Progression framework is, how to get started with yours and use it day-to-day to support and develop your team.

What's a career framework and how can they help me?

Career frameworks, also known as career pathways and growth frameworks, outline what's expected of an employee in their job right now as well as the paths for progression within their organisation, whether they be vertical or lateral.

As a manager, you can use career frameworks to:

- Identify strengths and weaknesses within your team, so you can support your reports effectively, identify opportunities for improvement and advocate for what they deserve
- Help your team understand what's expected of them in their position, and how this ties into organisation-wide values and goals
- Motivate your team to improve in the areas that matter most
- Highlight internal mobility opportunities within your team and elsewhere in the organisation
- Provide a more structured onboarding process that outlines a new joiner's responsibilities from the outset
- Help inform decisions on promotions alongside other factors like business impact and need.



Framework overview

Here's what a typical career framework looks like in Progression.

Now let's take a closer look at the tracks, positions and skills that form the foundation of the framework.



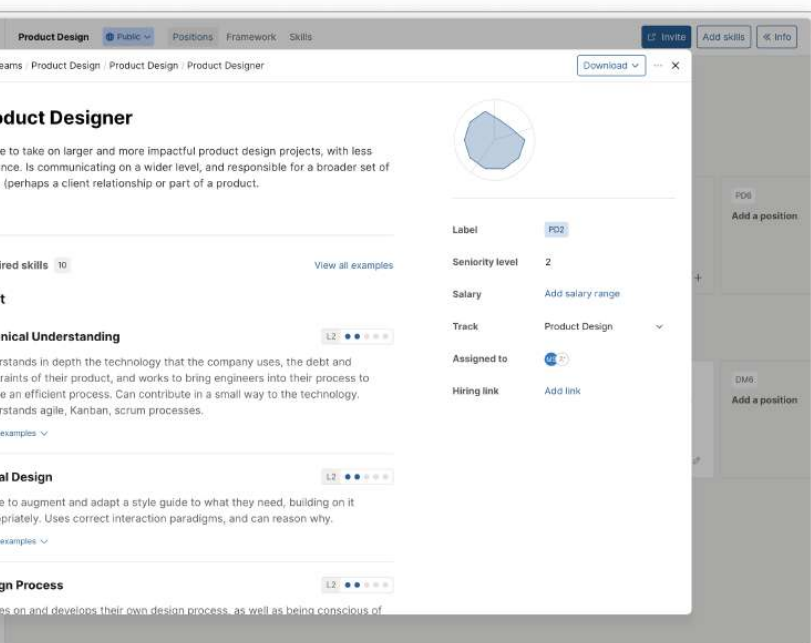
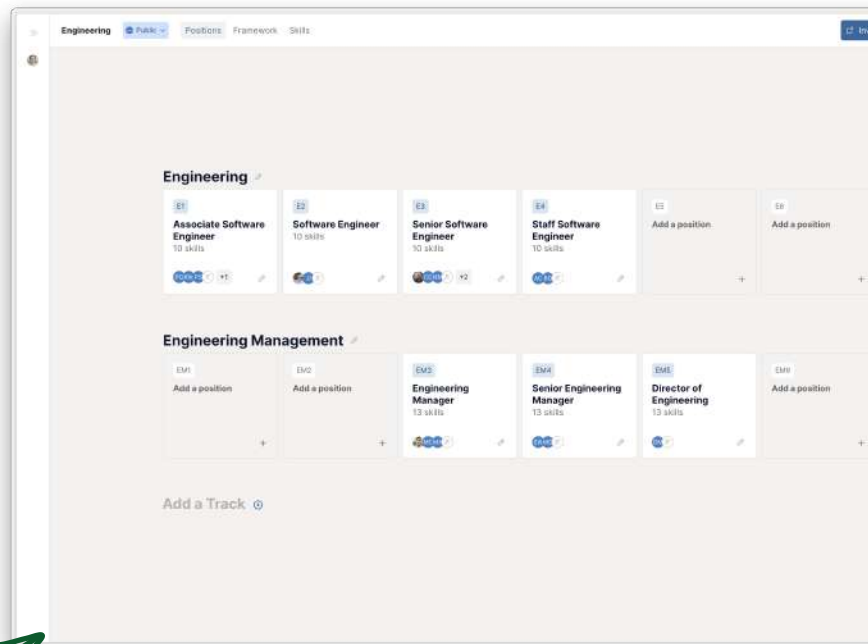
The screenshot displays the 'Engineering' framework in Progression Academy. It features a grid of skills categorized by 'Skill category' (Technical, Systems Thinking, Technical Understanding, User Focus, Using Data) and 'Skill level' (E1, E2, E3, E4, EM3). The 'Track' is labeled 'Engineering (4)' and the 'Position' is labeled 'Senior Software Engineer'. The 'Team members' are listed as 'Associate Software Engineer', 'Software Engineer', 'Senior Software Engineer', 'Staff Software Engineer', and 'Engineering Manager'. The 'Skill category' is labeled 'Technical' and the 'Skill level' is labeled 'Skill level'.

	E1 Associate Software Engineer	E2 Software Engineer	E3 Senior Software Engineer	E4 Staff Software Engineer	EM3 Engineering Manager
Systems Thinking The ability to consider and design for the wider context of their work, in terms of both time and peers.	Aware of the history and future of the work they're doing, and designs accordingly	Actively designs features according to the requirements of future projects, and looks to find efficiency through shared components and patterns	Heavily involved in creating efficiency in full teams workflows or processes. Building a set of resources for teams to enable systems to...	Manages large parts of infrastructure that enable an organisation to run efficiently. Ruthless about policing peers' output	Heavily involved in creating efficiency in full teams workflows or processes. Building a set of resources for teams to enable systems to...
Technical Understanding The ability to empathise with engineers and technical peers, and write code	Can understand the technology they're designing for on a high level and how to avoid difficult or out of scope technical decisions.	Understands in depth the technology that the company uses, the debt and constraints of their product, and works to bring engineers into their...	Is able to speak technical language fluently with engineers and other peers. Is able to contribute more meaningfully to the product...	Is a true ally to technical staff. Spends meaningful time in code, contributing to production codebases where necessary and reviewing the...	Is able to speak technical language fluently with engineers and other peers. Is able to contribute more meaningfully to the product...
User Focus The mindset that defaults to thinking about the needs of a user primarily, advocating for them and building real users into their everyday work	Can describe the typical user and some of their needs and problems. Works to observe users regularly	Regularly in contact with users, and actively advocates for them as part of the design process	Actively organises for teams around them to participate in user-focused development, advocating for the user at all stages	Ensures that their entire organisation is customer-focused, actively designing better communication of and empathy with user needs...	Actively organises for teams around them to participate in user-focused development, advocating for the user at all stages
Using Data An understanding of the power of data in informing their decisions, and an ability to harness that data.	Aware of the top-level business data, and uses it to contextualise their work. Works with analysts to answer data questions they have.	Actively surfaces data relevant to the team, and designing tests based on data-driven hypotheses.	Helps their team use data as a tool, working closely with analysts and thinking through short and medium term experiments	Designs the data they want to see as part of their products and ensures it's robust when they ship. Queries and explores data on their own, and helps...	Helps their team use data as tool, working closely with analysts and thinking through short and medium term experiments

Tracks

Tracks break down a team into sections, for example Individual Contributor (IC) and Management.

Tracks provide managers and their reports with a simple view of the different progression pathways within a team, whether they're vertical or lateral.



Positions

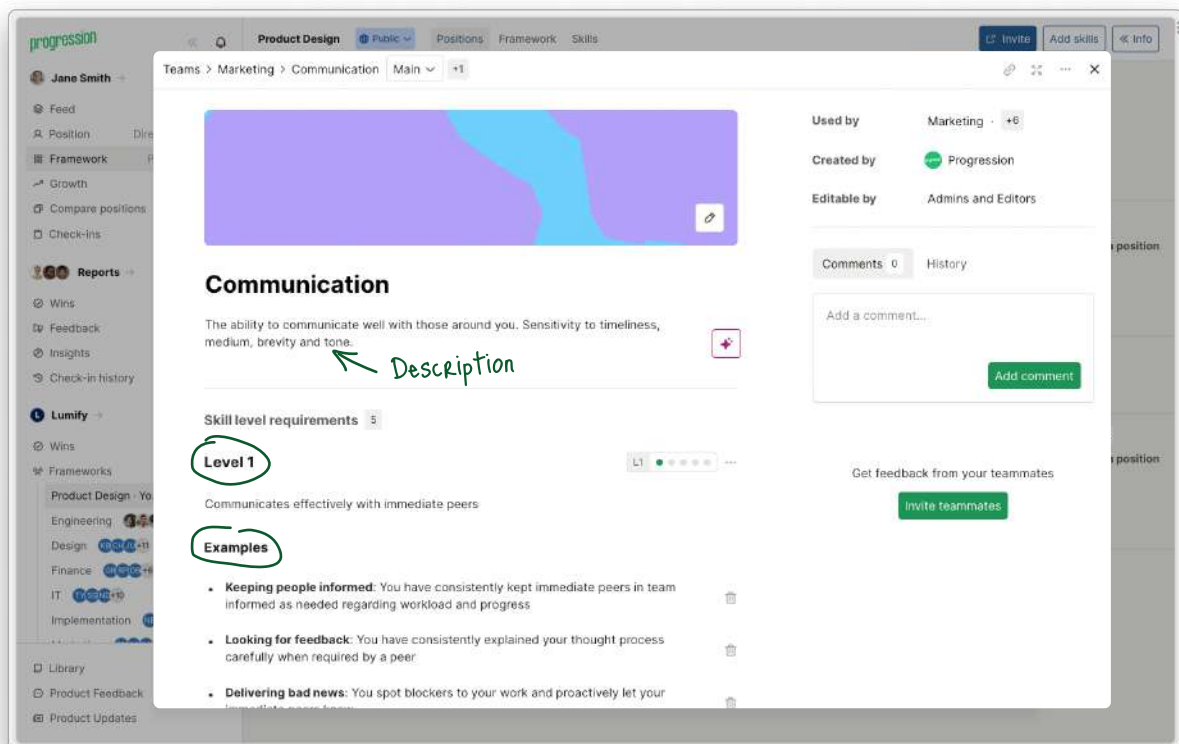
Within Progression, a position is a job title within a team. Positions sit within tracks in order of seniority. Everyone in your team should be assigned a position.



Skills

Every position within a framework is made up of skills. Skills are integral to your framework because they bring the responsibilities of a position to life, giving team members the clarity they need to progress and forming the criteria for managers to track, evidence and support growth. They may also be referred to as behaviours, competencies or abilities, but here at Progression we call them skills.

Typically, frameworks will have a mix of organisation-wide, team-wide and position-specific skills. But regardless of the skill type, they all include three key things — a description, skill levels and examples.



Description

The description acts as an overview of the skill, helping everyone understand it at a glance.

Skill levels

Each skill has different skill levels, usually ranging from one to five. And each position in the team is assigned a level of a skill. Skill levels matter because they explain what's expected of someone in their current position, and what they need to demonstrate to progress or move into another position.

Examples

Examples are the observable behaviours of a skill level, making them actionable and leaving far less room for interpretation.

How can I use the framework?

Identify **opportunities for growth**

Set a quarterly cadence to sit down and 'check-in' against all the skills within your report's position. Decide together whether they're 'working towards', 'meeting' or 'exceeding' the skill level associated with their position — what can your report do next to develop their skills? And what can you do to support them? Set goals to keep actions front of mind, and review them in 1:1s and the next quarterly check-in.

Create focused **training and development** programs

Use the framework to look for common skills gaps within your team, then focus your training time and budget on developing in these areas.

Give your team **career clarity**

Ever been asked by a report what's next for them within your organisation and been unsure how to answer? Your team's framework outlines what's expected of them in their current position, and the skills they'd need to have and demonstrate to move into another one, whether that's in your team or elsewhere in the organisation. With this clear, transparent structure your reports can take ownership of their progression, with your support.

Advocate for your people

Get into the habit of capturing evidence of the work your team does everyday to develop their skills. Encourage them to create their own brag doc and note down achievements as they happen — that way nothing gets forgotten and both you and your report have the evidence needed to advocate for what they deserve.



Frequently asked questions

Won't my report want a promotion if they think they're exceeding in a skill?

Your team's career framework should be considered a flexible guide for career development rather than a rigid tool.

While it can be a useful indicator of when a report might be ready for a promotion, ultimately the decision will be based on a combination of factors, like the business need, budget available and impact.

Encourage your report to use the framework to unlock new opportunities to develop in and own their career. Yes, that opportunity might be a promotion, but it could also be fresh responsibilities and training, new projects, or lateral movement into another track or team.

Use the framework to focus in on the skills still needing development too, and build out a list of actions that'll support your report to grow.

My report is operating at a level above their current job title — how can I advocate for them?

If there's scope to promote the report, start by gathering examples of the work they've done that evidences the ways in which they're exceeding the skills levels associated with their position. Capture their achievements in a shared brag doc, which can then be referenced during the next promotion cycle, or shared with your HR Business Partner.



Frequently asked questions

What should I do if my report disagrees with the level of a skill their position has been assigned?

One of the benefits of career frameworks is that they can help get everyone on the same page about what's expected of a report in their job, minimising opportunities for disagreement. But occasionally, a report might disagree with the level of a skill they've been assigned. There's a few ways to handle this.

First, consider whether the skill level examples are representative of the requirements of the report's job. If they feel too generic or thin, speak with your Framework Rep about updating them — this might be your Function Lead or HR Business Partner.

Next, ask your report to build out their brag doc with achievements that evidence how they're exceeding the level they've been assigned.

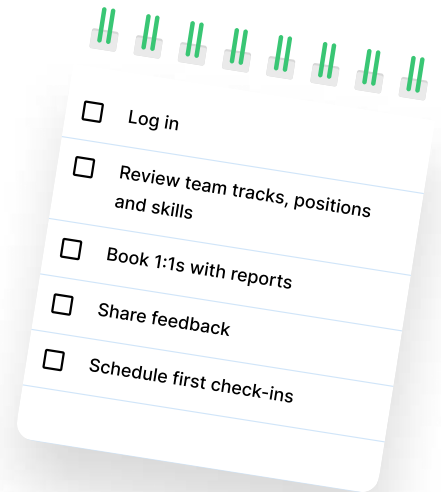
Identify any gaps in the report's skillset, and decide together what they can do next to develop, and what you can do to support them to grow.

We're not using the framework — how can I get my team engaged?

We'd recommend referring to your framework during 1:1s, and at the very least during your quarterly 'check-ins'.

Reinforce the value of the framework by creating a career development plan closely tied to it. Identify your report's strengths and areas for improvement, then set goals to keep skill development front of mind.

Sometimes, disengagement is an indicator that a framework's content might be too generic, too thin, outdated or misaligned to your team's goals. In these instances, speak to your Framework Rep — there may be an opportunity to refresh and develop the content. We'd recommend regularly reviewing your framework's content to ensure it's still fit for purpose.



Next steps

What should I do now?

1. Log in and look around

The way you log in to Progression will depend on your organisation's setup. If you're unsure how to log in and haven't received an email with login instructions, speak to your Framework Rep.

Then take a look around. We'd recommend starting with your team's framework. From here, you can view the tracks and positions that make up the team, as well as your framework's skills.

2. Run through 1:1

Once you've familiarised yourself with the content of your team's framework, it's time to review it with your reports individually. Ask yourself and your reports these questions:

- Are the skills outlined representative of your job?
- Do the levels of each skill match up?
- Are the positions right?
- Do we need to add more examples to a skill to bring it to life?

3. Share your feedback

Make a note of any feedback and share this with your Framework Rep to action.

4. Schedule quarterly check-ins

Get into the habit of reviewing progress with each of your reports at least quarterly.

We're on hand to help!



Ask your **Framework Rep**



Find an answer in our [Help Centre](#)



Email us at support@progression.co



Send a message [in-app](#)

