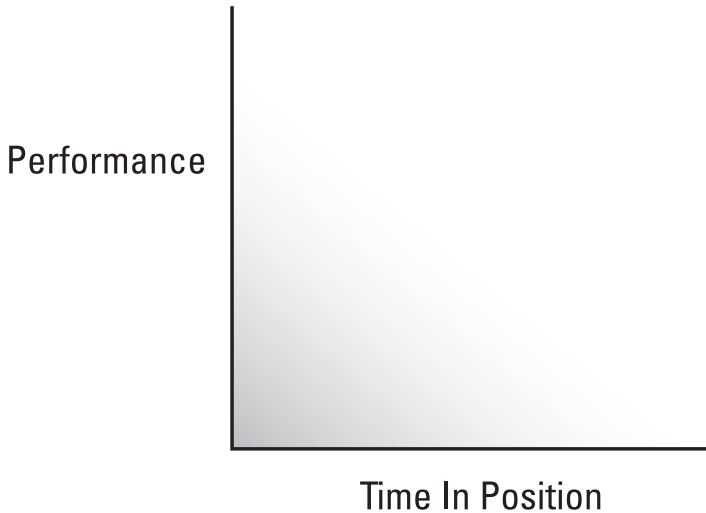


# The Performance Curve

The performance curve is one of the most useful diagrams a manager can use with an employee to come to a common understanding regarding that employee's current level of performance, and the need for continued development in a position.

## *Diagram One* – The Two Variables

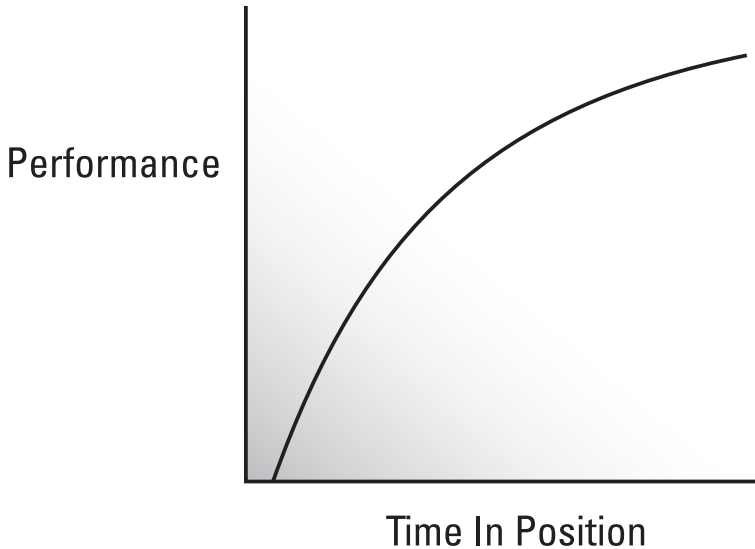


*Diagram One* shows that there is a relationship between the two core variables: Time in Position and Performance. All else being equal, it is expected that an individual's performance in a position improves over time.

Simply stated, we should be better at doing a job after three years of experience than in the first three months on the job.



*Diagram Two* – Performance Over Time Is Not Linear



*Diagram two* shows that the correlation between performance and time is not linear. We learn the most improve more rapidly in the early stages of a new position, with continued growth slowing over time. There may even come a time when we have reached our personal performance limitations for a position based on our intelligence, knowledge, skills or natural talents. There is a certain competence level in any position beyond which a particular person will no longer improve.

Professional athletes provide a striking example of this truth. Very few athletes can achieve the performance levels of Michael Jordan, Babe Ruth, or Bobby Orr. Limitations of natural talent and skill create the upper limits of a performance boundary line. This is true for virtually any person in any position. At the same time, very few people actually reach performance levels at the fullest depth of their potential.

This is the natural evolution of any skill development model.

