

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

A road map for you and your employees



In your role as a manager or employee, performance reviews are critical to your success. They are road maps that let you know where you are today and what you need to do to move ahead. Performance reviews not only help us identify our strengths and weaknesses, they help build winning teams.

Several steps are involved in conducting a performance review to help you assess and critique your employees and develop a plan to move forward. The first step is to set aside a specific amount of time for the process. It's important to let your employees know what you will be discussing with them, and that you will give them time to prepare for the meeting, and that they should prepare to be asked to assess their own performance.

Next, have the employees deliver their self-assessments to you well ahead of the meeting so you can learn where they see themselves, now and in the future. Ask them to examine their interactions with customers, coworkers, and other team members, and identify where they think they excel and where they can improve. Also, ask them if there are any roadblocks they are facing, and how they would like you to help them deal with or remove them.

Don't forget to prepare by completing your own performance assessment to help you grade your employees' actions and their past improvement. This step will include reviewing the employees' files and

referring to any notes you've taken during previous performance reviews regarding their previous performance, the expectations they've met, their specific achievements, and any notable incidents, positive or negative. Some standards that you should address include the employee's reliability, work habits, initiative, skills, job commitment, and attitude toward coworkers and customers.

Use that documentation to gauge the success of your past goals and create a plan for continued improved performance. Share your assessments with the employees before the meeting, so they will be familiar with the process and the questions you'll be asking them. Follow up with the employees in advance of the meeting by reminding them of its scheduled date and time.

During the performance review, avoid any and all distractions. This includes turning off your phone and letting employees and colleagues know that you are not to be interrupted for the next hour. This is important, because it lets the employees know that they will be your entire focus for that time, and that they will have your full, undivided attention.

Work with each employee to create a plan and get their buy-in for implementing it. This step will require that you have an open dialogue with the employees, inviting their input on the ways you can help them improve their performance. Ask the employees to assess your performance and suggest what you can do to improve your interactions and communications to help them improve and perform at their best.

Performance reviews are important and should be conducted regularly. They let the employees know that you value them and want to do whatever you can to help them succeed. When your employees succeed, you do too.

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