



The Art Of Performance Evaluations

Most managers and employees view performance evaluations as necessary but difficult to do. Managers do not look forward to the process and most employees see it as a time when unfair demands or criticisms are made of them. They also see it as a one-sided (biased) view of their performance.

Reflecting on the performance evaluations many employees have experienced, there is good reason for the apprehension they feel about the process, which is the primary reason why evaluations are not done on time if at all. When an employee's performance deteriorates to a level that makes him or her expendable, it is often too late for performance evaluation. Yet if an evaluation is conducted, there is a good chance the employee could be saved. A retained employee increases company moral, reduces costs and increases productivity and profits.

Like many tasks in business, there is need for processes.

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Are You Providing Effective Employee Evaluations?

Fueling Personal Accountability

Maximize Results through Motivated People

A major responsibility of leaders in organizations has always been to develop plans and lead their people in successful execution. Today's business environment presents additional challenges to leaders in that change happens faster and more continuously than ever before! This means an

increased need for effective and frequent planning, and a smaller margin of error for plans that fail to produce results. We all realize this is a given in today's business environment.

In addition, have you noticed that the people who make your plans work have also changed? For example, their interpretation of "following the leader" has taken a new direction. In our workplace today, dictatorial leadership and micro management are being shunned by people who view multiple career moves as a normal part of working life. People now produce results for leaders who recognize and value their talents.

More and more people accomplish their jobs through networked teams, creative collaboration, flexible work arrangements, outsourcing contracts, and a "results only" focus – all of which emphasize the prized talent of personal accountability. Achieving success in our modern work environment now depends largely on your people being personally responsible for results.

What can you do, as a leader, to fuel personal accountability in your organization? The answers may be easier than you anticipate.

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Accounting needs them, customer service cannot operate without them, inventory management needs them, and so it is with performance evaluations.

Processes minimize the influence of personal bias so the focus can be on the task and the outcome of it. One might ask, what measurable results can a manager and employee expect from a performance evaluation session. Below is a partial list of objectives that managers and employees are experiencing.

Performance Evaluation Expectations

- ✓ A bias free appraisal of the job related performance of the employee
- ✓ Review of the employee's performance of specific job related tasks
- ✓ Review of the employee's job related relations with internal and external customers
- ✓ Review of the most effective way for the employee to communicate with his/her manager
- ✓ Review of the employee's communication style, and how it affects those he/she works with
- ✓ Review of comments made about the employee by internal and external customers
- ✓ Review of the best way for the manager to communicate with the employee
- ✓ Review of the employee's perception of his/her work environment
- ✓ Establish clear job related objectives for enhancing the performance of the employee
- ✓ Establish a clearly stated and agreed upon dateline for meeting enhancement objectives
- ✓ And, other expectations specific to the position and company culture

When companies benchmark positions to identify the personal talents and technical skills needed for the position, they create a set of key accountabilities the employee needs to adhere to and the manager must use to evaluate the performance of the employee. Evaluations conducted after an employee has performed badly

for a long time (a year or more) will produce a highly biased evaluation.

The greatest benefit for a performance evaluation is to provide employees with clear, unbiased directions and expectations for them to be successful. Managers may gain information about the employee's perception of the expectations that are not correct, *and how to correct them*, during an evaluation review. The need for better listening and communication skills between all parties going forward can be identified as well.

Identifying the key accountabilities of any position and holding the employee accountable for them is vital for building a company's ongoing success. Poor performing employees have impeded the progress of companies in all industries for a long time, which has contributed in no small measure to the current economic condition of our country.

When employees consistently receive accurate information about what is expected of them they perform better, with less stress on them and those they work with.

Performance Evaluations work – they build teams that build successful companies. ♦

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“Do just once what others say you can't do, and you will never pay attention to their limitations again.”
~ James R. Cook

Awareness Calendar – January

National Mentoring Month

National Mentoring Month (NMM) highlights mentoring and the positive impact it can have on young lives. Spearheaded by the Harvard Mentoring Project, MENTOR and the Corporation for National and Community Service, the first-ever NMM was held in January 2002. This month-long outreach campaign focuses national attention on the need for mentors, as well as how each of us – individuals, businesses, government agencies, schools, faith communities and nonprofits – can work together to increase the number of mentors and assure brighter futures for our young people.

Read more on... [National Mentoring Month](#)

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1. **Hire people to work for you who already have demonstrated a high level of personal accountability.** You can achieve this through a combination of effective talent assessments, reference checking, and behavioral interviewing.
2. **Become aware of the additional, unique personal strengths and talents your key people bring to their work.** Get to know each of them and what they do well, which is the best indicator of what they will most naturally be personally accountable for achieving.
3. **Regularly seek input, suggestions and commitment from each of your key people to create and support the success of your organization's plans.** People who play a role in formulating a plan are more committed to personal accountability in achieving the targeted results.
4. **Give feedback, recognition and rewards** to people for demonstrating personal accountability in support of your organization's success. People who are duly recognized for their contributions feel increased motivation to achieve further success.

Make a concerted effort to maximize and reward the level of personal accountability in your organization starting today – and achieve increased success through people! ♦

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Do You Know Your Employees?

If you want to increase the motivation among the people that work for you, you need to know what motivates them. Answer these questions for each employee.

She _____ working under pressure.

_____ excites him about his work.

She _____ when you walk into her office without knocking.

He _____ criticism.

She considers her biggest accomplishment to be _____.

He _____ working on a team.

Her goals for working for the company are _____.

He sees _____ as his biggest strength for the company.

She _____ when I am up-front and open with her.

He _____ being challenged.

If you don't know the answers to these questions, you need to spend more time with your employees. ♦

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One Minute Ideas

Hidden Time Killers

Gossipy colleagues, constant meetings and e-mail distractions eat up your precious time. But don't overlook these less obvious threats to your productivity:

Stewing over criticism. A co-worker makes a snide crack about your performance, and you drop everything to call a few friends and express your pain. Eventually, you get over it – after wasting an hour writhing in anger.

Solution: Realize it's not worth worrying about, say, "Thanks for the feedback" and move on.

Playing the Good Samaritan. Your well-intentioned efforts to help out can leave you overworked and overwhelmed. Beware of constantly agreeing to give 10 minutes here and there to lend a hand. Ignoring your needs to satisfy others will force you to put off your own responsibilities, creating a backlog later.

Solution: Say "No" more readily – without guilt. Stand aside and let others work through their own problems.

Zoning out. Ever notice that when you're truly busy, time flies? The converse is true: If you're bored, every minute crawls by.

Solution: Target activities that make you restless. Delegate them or do them first so dread and procrastination don't set in. ♦

Source: *Communication Briefings*, as adapted from *Working Woman*, MacDonald Communications Corp.

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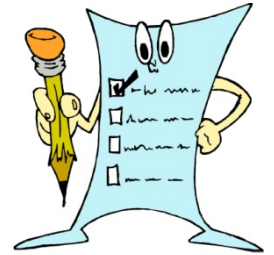
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Performance Discipline Checklist

When having to deal with an employee who is not performing according to company policy, here is a checklist that may help keep you on track as well as keep your emotions in check.

- ✓ Know the rules. Follow your organization's discipline system.
- ✓ Avoid sudden decisions made in anger.
- ✓ Do not terminate or threaten termination without seeking advice.
- ✓ Conduct discipline discussions in private or with another member of management present.
- ✓ Try to keep observations job-oriented.
- ✓ Allow the employee an opportunity to explain.
- ✓ Seek help when you aren't sure what to do or when a serious situation arises.
- ✓ Be consistent. Impose the same punishment for similarly-situated employees for the same offense.
- ✓ Be reasonable. Impose discipline that a reasonable person would agree was appropriate.
- ✓ Be equal. Ensure that your actions are consistent and reasonable across the various protected classes of employees.
- ✓ Be careful. If the person to be disciplined is female, older, from a certain race or national origin, religion, disabled, or a veteran, is there any evidence or perception that the discipline could have been influenced by that fact? Get advice. ♦



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Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
SHRM Learning System® is the preparation course for the HR Certification Exam <i>(Every other Saturday)</i>	Every Other Saturday 2/23 – 5/4	8:30AM – 4:30PM	www.cbu.edu/shrm
The Coaching Clinic® is a two-day workshop for executives, managers and leaders to experience and learn coaching skills and competencies.	January 7 & 8, 2013	8:30AM – 5:00PM	www.harmonycc.net/coaching-clinic.php
Leading at the Speed of Trust™ is a two-day workshop for anyone interested in increasing revenues, decreasing costs, enhancing/repairing relationships, or improving their credibility with employees or customers.	TBD	TBD	Email: info@harmonycc.net

