

5 tips for Improving Performance Reviews



Did you know that performance reviews were identified as one of HR's top three areas of improvement?

So, right now is a golden opportunity to elevate your employee-performance reviews with the following quick tips.



Reconsider your approach, at least for a while.

While we're still dealing with the pandemic, it doesn't hurt to revise your approach to performance reviews. With COVID's continued disruption to the workplace, many organizations are less focused on doling out raises or calling out weaker employees. For now, better to focus on reinforcing organizational values, nurturing company culture, and making employees feel safe, secure, and well cared for.



Look beyond the usual data and KPIs.

With so many people working from home, managers have less direct interaction with team members and therefore fewer opportunities to see them in action. (Beyond the periodic head-and-shoulders video conference call.) So, seek out alternate data sources and 360-degree feedback, including peer and self-evaluations. But, keep in mind that onsite and offsite workers may see things differently in terms of who's doing what. Beware of bias and look beyond each employees' deliverables and previous-review checklist.



Make your metrics a little more lenient.

Think about temporarily resetting your success benchmarks and making the bar slightly easier to hurdle for employees. We can learn a lesson from schools and adapt a model that many of them have implemented. Rather than grades (or numerical ratings typical in the work world), consider a pass-or-fail system. Make it flexible, factor in human hardship, and highlight accomplishments and wins. Because we don't want to punish our kids for COVID, or our employees.



Dial up the compassion, even more.

Understand that with employees working from home, home life matters more than ever. And the pandemic affects different people in different ways. Some people just don't do well being so isolated. Others are juggling work responsibilities with child or aging-parent care or taking care of sick family members—which puts added physical and mental strain on anyone. So, be sparing with criticism and discipline. Cut your poor performers a little more slack and give them additional grace periods to succeed.



Heap praise on your shiniest employees.

With a distributed workforce, it's easy to overlook tiny everyday victories. But they're still happening, just less visibly in kitchens, living rooms, porches and patios everywhere. And in the current environment, acknowledging your high performers is mission critical. Praise, especially now, translates to peace of mind, a heightened sense of job security and satisfaction-plus engagement and retention. Remember, if you don't lavish your best and brightest with thanks, your competitors happily will.



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