

9 Strategies to Deliver Effective Performance Reviews

The dreaded performance review! Leaders don't like to do them, employees don't like to get them, and they don't ever make the top of anyone's priority list.

However giving feedback, providing input, and working with our teams to help them improve is the highest and best use of your time as a leader. We all want engaged employees, and the best way to create it is to develop a culture where connecting with employees is prioritized, and getting feedback is valued.

Here are 9 Strategies to Deliver Effective Performance Reviews.

1. **Commit** – make it a core value, something that is a non-negotiable and prioritized by your leadership team. What you focus on gets done, what you measure gets completed. Take the lead and be a role model for your team, and then place importance on holding them accountable to do it too.
2. **Clear Outcomes** – before you begin the performance review process you need to be clear on what you are reviewing the employee about. Performance reviews, their objectives and what they are measuring need to be defined and communicated ahead of time with both the reviewer and the employee.
3. **Get the Facts** – performance reviews need to be based on facts and facts only. No opinions or emotions. Before doing a performance review you need to get input and feedback from those who know and work directly with the employee for whom you are doing the review. Then before including that feedback, you need to separate fact from fiction.
4. **Let Them Talk** – first that is. People want to be heard more than anything, and if you want them to be open to your feedback then get their feedback first. Beginning a performance review by asking employees to speak first will create a far more meaningful conversation.
5. **Be Transparent** – when reviewing an employee it is important to tell them what they are doing well, and where they need to improve directly. Do not try to soften the blow, or beat



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around the bush. Employees trust you and give value to the feedback when they feel you are being open and transparent with them. Be respectful but direct.

6. **Listen for Feedback** – once you deliver your message, allow time to get their input on your feedback. And listen, really listen, not just wait for your turn to talk. If you want them to buy-in to the review, you need to allow them to weigh in on it.
7. **Create a Plan** – together, create a plan together. Once you have delivered your feedback, and they have weighed in, you can create a plan of action. The key is to do it together. People support what they help create.
8. **Schedule Creatively** - one major reason we do not like performance reviews is that they come at the worst time of the year – the end of the year. So why not schedule creatively. There is no hard, fast rule that says performance reviews have to be done year-end, and even if there is just break it!
9. **Check-in Regularly** – whether an employee is doing well, or whether they have some work to do should never be a surprise. Giving feedback and checking in with employees regularly should be part of your routine as a leader. By the time the performance review comes around everyone should be on the same page.

The highest and best use of a leader's time these days is with employees. Coaching, developing and yes giving performance reviews. **Your only competitive advantage left in today's marketplace is the engagement level of your teams.** Now isn't that worth investing a little time in performance reviews?



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