Conducting Performance Reviews

WHAT TO SAY AND HOW TO SAY IT.
What Happens in Mid-Year Reviews . . .

I've finished all of my objectives for the rest of the year. What happens now? Do you double my salary, or do I take the rest of the year off?

You were wrong, Wally: there is harm in asking. Oops.
THE PROBLEM WITH REVIEWS

According to Supervisors...

- Take too long to write.
- People only want good news.
- It’s about “Show me the money!”
- Don’t improve performance.

Employees say...

- Never get one or it’s late.
- All checkmarks and no examples.
- No guidance about what to do differently.
- No link between performance and pay.
What do you want to know?
Why Conduct Performance Reviews?

- Opportunity for formal written feedback and dialogue about development.
- Emphasize a “performance” culture.
- Reinforce expectations & recognize achievement of them.
- Generate documentation and a record (+ and -).
- Justification for employment decisions.

Performance management should clarify:

- What is expected of me?
- Why is it important?
- How am I doing?
Performance Management vs. Performance Review

Performance Management
- Continuous interaction
- Part of the ongoing “routine”
- Ongoing development
- Observations with feedback for small incremental changes
- “Real-time” here-and-now orientation

Performance Review
- Singular meeting (2x’s/yr)
- “Dedicated” time
- Development “plan”
- Summarizes results against expectations
- Documentation of past events
Purpose of Performance Reviews

- GIVING Feedback
- RECEIVING Feedback

Engagement Regarding performance & development
Preparing for the Appraisal Session

“Before you rob your first bank, knock off a couple of gas stations.”

- John Dillinger

- Schedule in advance.
- Allow 15-45 minutes.
- Review your comments. Notes.
- Have examples. May have samples.
- Ideas for needed adjustments.
- Start with best performers (?)*

**OPTIONS ???**

- Top/Valuable Performers: Send forward/give copy ahead of time.
- Developing/Require Improvement Performers: Wait until face-to-face.
- Hand a copy to the person and walk them through it.
- Sit side-by-side and review one document together.
Staff member arrives open-minded.
**Supervisor** describes process & invites self-assessment.

**Staff** comments on self-assessment & gives examples.
**Supervisor** asks clarifying questions.

**Supervisor** identifies areas of agreement with own examples; provides rationale & examples to explain differences. Questions, validate and listen. **Staff** responds/asks questions to clarify.

**Supervisor** summarizes ‘core message.’
**Staff** member listens, responds, thanks supervisor for feedback.

**Staff** member and **Supervisor** discuss career interests & development activities.

**Development Discussion**
Conducting the Appraisal Session

- No interruptions!
- Open, pleasant atmosphere.
- Opening: Purpose, Process, Mutual
- Self-Assessment
  - Ask, “What achievement are you most proud of?”
  - Or, “What did you do that made a difference?”
  - And, “What did you learn this year?”
- Your Appraisal
  - Explain each rating & provide examples
    - Areas of agreement
    - Areas of differences
  - Invite questions/conversation
  - Discuss development needs & career plans
  - Summarize & send the ‘Core Message’ (The main message you want them to remember three months from now.)
  - Express confidence and thank the person
Be Descriptive and Have Examples!

- **Goals/Expectations**
  - Factual quality-quantity-date information that directly supports the level of attainment
  - Description of specific related activities; references to a work sample, project, incident

- **Behavioral Competencies**
  - Specific examples that show obvious connection to each competency.
  - Incorporate phrases from Appraisal Wizard along with a specific incident involving you.

- **Overall Comments**
  - General summary regarding the level of performance
  - Reiteration of key positive highlights/progress achieved
  - May contain “Core Message”
Challenging Reactions

- Significant difference in your rating vs. employee’s
- Defensive or argumentative
- Hurt
- “Don’t care” attitude
## Handling the Reaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hostile/Resistance/Denial</th>
<th>Indifference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do:</strong> provide examples, ask them to reflect and get back to you, explain impact of not addressing</td>
<td><strong>Do:</strong> ask them to reflect and confirm that they are committed to improving, discuss consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Don’t:</strong> get aggravated, change your evaluation, attack the person</td>
<td><strong>Don’t:</strong> overlook the indifference, lose patience, interpret as apathy</td>
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</table>
## Handling the Reaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of Confidence/Self-pity</th>
<th>Responsibility Skirting</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Do:</strong> allow time to gain composure, highlight the opportunity, reassure and support, suggests small steps toward improving</td>
<td><strong>Do:</strong> listen to their perspective, restate examples, clarify the expectations going forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Don’t:</strong> rehash the past, moderate the feedback, join in the pity party</td>
<td><strong>Don’t:</strong> agree with the employee blaming others, change your perspective</td>
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</table>
## Handling the Reaction

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<th>Shock and Anger</th>
<th>All Cases</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>• Do: acknowledge that they are not happy with the feedback, ask for their comments, restate examples</td>
<td>• Do: refer to EAP if the reaction is significant and/or does not moderate with time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Don’t: attack the person for being angry, get defensive, change your feedback</td>
<td></td>
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Using Open Ended Questions/Statements

- Tell me more about that.
- I’m curious, why do you say this?
- Given the results this year, what would you like to see happen next year?
- How would you like to proceed with this opportunity?
- What worked well in the past? How can you use that experience in this situation?
Validation

- It’s clear you are upset, it’s perfectly understandable.
- The anger in your voice is clear, anyone would be feeling this way in this situation.
- You’re reaction is understandable.
- The point you are making is clear and it makes perfect sense that you see it this way.
- You seem pleased with your results and you have every right to be.
Fishbowl
PERFORMANCE LEVELS

○ **TOP**
  - Exceeds expectations in most aspects of the job frequently.
  - Goes above and beyond what is asked.
  - Solves problems independently.

○ **VALUED**
  - Meets expectations in all major aspects of the position and exceeds some.
  - Sometimes goes beyond what is asked.
  - Takes initiative to solve problems.
  - Seeks learning and improvement.

○ **DEVELOPING**
  - New to the position or some duties are new.
  - More training/learning is needed to be fully performing all aspects of the job at the desired level.
  - Performance does not meet expectations for fully experienced person.

○ **REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**
  - Regularly fails to meet established standards/goals.
  - Lacks required skills, knowledge, willingness or capability to perform.
  - Fails to recognize effect on others and or does not make necessary changes when advised of the need. Not consistent with Core values.
  - Immediate and sustained improvement required.
Plan your **CORE MESSAGE** so they know:

- To what degree they met the goals/expectations.
- One area/item they can enhance (learn, improve, change).
- A major strength, area of potential or significant contribution.