

5 Performance Management Scenarios: Navigating Everyday Encounters for Greater Results

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5 Performance Management Scenarios

Welcome! Before we get started...

- Use the chat box on the left to ask questions
- Audio for today's webinar will come through your computer speakers. Please be sure your speakers are turned on and you have the volume turned up.
- If you are signed on more than once, please locate the duplicate log-on and close it. This will create a better audio experience.
- All attendees will receive a link to the presentation and slides in a follow up email.

Learning Objectives

- Counseling techniques to improve behavior and output
- How to balance positive and negative feedback – at review time and year-round
- Coaching and mentoring tips to help motivate employees
- Conflict resolution tactics for when tempers interfere with team performance
- How to terminate employees fairly and legally when all else fails

First...a Quick Poll

How long have you been
managing employees?

Everyday Encounter #1: Counseling to Improve Behavior and Output



Scenario #1

Michelle



- Project manager – 3 years on staff
- Consistently hard-working, reliable and positive
- Strong performer with great attention to detail
- *But...*
- Work has been slipping over past few weeks
- Missed critical details on three separate projects
- Not tracking due dates and following up on late deliverables
- Two team members have shared concerns and implied Michelle has ‘personal issues’

What Should You Do?

DON'T...

- Ignore the situation and hope it will go away
- Commiserate or speculate with other employees
- Jump to a disciplinary action

DO...

- Address it quickly and directly with the employee
- Seek insight before deciding on action
- Follow through until it's resolved

The Counseling Conversation

- Schedule a private meeting
- Explain what you've noticed and why you're concerned
- Stick to facts and share examples
- Give the employee an opportunity to explain
- **Listen carefully to identify root cause**
- Be compassionate, but stay professional
- Determine a plan of action

Let Root Cause Define Your Action Plan

- **Problems at home** → Suggest counseling or other assistance (refer to EAP if offered); reduce workplace stress if you can
- **Conflict with team member** → Address the conflict
- **Boredom** → Give employee a challenging new assignment; redefine role; delegate routine tasks
- **Employee feels undervalued** → Evaluate management techniques; conduct salary review if monetary

The Bottom Line

- Be compassionate but maintain professionalism
- Be clear that performance must improve regardless of root cause
- Set specific parameters around what needs to change
- Establish a reasonable timetable for resolution
- Monitor and follow up according to the plan

Documentation Is Your Friend

- Keep thorough notes of all performance issues and discussions (don't rely on memory)
- Record events as they occur
- Add detailed notes throughout the process, all the way to resolution
- Consider using a performance management journal to facilitate note-taking
- *Documentation will help you immensely at review time and can protect you legally in employment disputes.*

Everyday Encounter #2: Providing Fair & Balanced Feedback



Scenario #2

Mark



- Just delivered his annual review
- Rated him 'average' on meeting goals
- Addressed recent issues
 - Not contributing ideas at department meetings
 - Missed important deadline last month
- He says review is unfair and won't sign it

Give Year-Round Feedback

- Set clear goals and expectations
- Stay plugged in to what your employees are doing
- Keep notes on the good as well as the bad
- Provide regular and balanced feedback
- Keep performance discussions in perspective
- NEVER address an issue for the first time in a review

Making the Most of Annual Reviews

- Review your journal notes before writing
- Use a standard appraisal format
- Lead with the positive
- Document issues even if they were resolved
- Communicate concerns
- Make it a two-way conversation
- Seek insights

Employee Engagement Study

In a recent Gallup survey regarding employee measurements, it was found that:

- Only 1 out of 5 employees strongly agree their performance is managed in a way that motivates them to do outstanding work
- Employees who strongly agree that their managers hold them accountable for their performance are 2.5X more likely to be engaged in their jobs.

“If you measure to motivate, not control, you should have no problem giving meaningful, specific recognition on a regular basis.”

Everyday Encounter #3: Coaching & Mentoring to Inspire Engagement



Another Quick Poll

Have you ever felt
disengaged at work?

Scenario #3

Susan



- 15-year employee
- Operates engraving machinery
- Good at her job & proud of her work
- Job is being eliminated
- Offered a job picking & packing orders
- Accepts but doesn't do well - SLOW
- No motivation to improve

Can Susan Be Saved?

- Does she understand why the change was made?
- Does she have the essential skills for the job?
- Did she receive proper training on procedures?
- Are you checking in with her frequently?
- Have you encouraged her to ask for help?
- Does she know you're on her side?

How to Coach in Five Steps

1. **Analyze** to determine how it can be better
2. **Show** the employee how to improve
3. **Observe** to assess performance
4. **Inspire** the employee to stretch
5. **Follow up** with praise and/or correction

Everyday Encounter #4: Conflict Resolution When Things Get Ugly



Scenario #4

Carl



- Sales manager with 4 sales reps
- Seeks input in department meeting
- Employees don't respond
- When pushed, one finally speaks up:
 - *“Why does it matter what we think? You're going to do what you want. Why are we even here?”*
- Carl is stunned; requests private meeting

Common Reasons for Workplace Conflict

- Poorly defined tasks or roles
- Conflicting goals
- Personality clashes
- Employee's poor performance affects others
- Employees don't feel valued

Symptoms of Workplace Conflict

- General lack of enthusiasm
- Lack of participation/awkwardness in meetings
- Presence of cliques
- Gossiping
- Information hoarding
- Finger-pointing when something goes wrong

Tactics for Conflict Resolution

- Be objective
- Get the facts from all sides
- Identify the core issue
- Listen and show respect
- Take charge
- Consider all options
- Focus on business goals

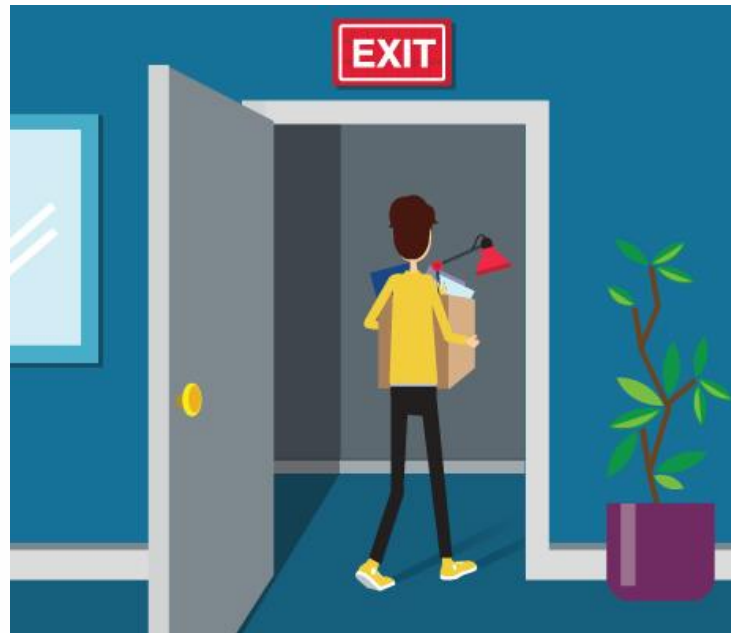
Back to Our Scenario

Carl



- Pulls himself together & meets with employee
- Problem: employees don't feel valued
- Acknowledges & commits to change
- Changes behavior
- Engages team in solution
- Conflict resolved and goals met!

Everyday Scenario #5: Firing as a Final Step



One Last Quick Poll

**Have you ever had to fire
an employee?**

Scenario #5

Michelle



- Things are getting worse...
- Continues to make careless mistakes & fall short on responsibilities
- Arriving late 1-2x per week
- Verbal and written warnings given... with no improvement
- Performance continues
- Projects are at risk

Progressive Discipline as a Best Practice

- Employee is given a series of warnings, with escalating seriousness
 - Verbal warning for first offense
 - Written warning if expectations not met within established timeframe
 - Final written warning to correct or termination will follow
 - Termination

The Importance of Documentation

- Not documenting is a common mistake – and very risky
- Documenting from the start speeds up resolution
- You may have to justify a termination long after it occurs (at an unemployment hearing or in court)
- The best way to prove your case is with written documents: job evaluations, warnings, thorough notes captured throughout the process, and concrete examples of poor performance (reports, work products, etc.)

Essential Components of Write-Ups

- **The facts:** detailed and precise
- **The specific rule or policy violated:** only if applicable
- **Clear expectations for improvement:** what the employee needs to do, by when
- **What the company will do to help:** if applicable
- **Consequences for failing to correct:** be explicit about possible termination
- **Signatures and dates:** Manager and employee sign

When It's Time to Let Go

It is your right *and* your duty as a manager to fire underperforming or policy-violating workers as long as:

- You clearly communicated expectations and shortcomings
- You provided fair and reasonable opportunity to improve
- You documented the issues and can prove your action is justified
- Other employees were treated the same in similar situations

The Termination Meeting

- Be clear and straightforward
- Have your documentation with you
- Have a witness present
- Stay focused
- Show sympathy, but don't soften the blow with compliments
- Avoid showing emotion even if the employee does

The Termination Meeting Cont'd

- Have employee sign the termination document
- If he/she refuses, have witness sign
- Let the employee gather personal belongings
- Terminate all access

A Final Thought

- Employees (and former employees) can be your best – or worst – marketing vehicles
- Handling sensitive employee situations with compassion and professionalism goes a long way in protecting your company's reputation
- Try to leave ALL departing employees with a good impression, even when termination is inevitable



Progressive Discipline

- FREE Employee Records App
- Web-based solution
- Easy-to-use and implement
- Other Apps Available –
 - I-9s & W-4s App
 - Attendance Calendars App
 - Job Applications App
 - Progressive Discipline App
 - Coming Soon – Time Off Requests App
- Affordable for small businesses

For more info visit:
www.hrdirectapps.com

Questions



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