GuidanceResources®

For Leaders:
Effective Performance Reviews

For many managers and supervisors, annual employee performance reviews are about as much fun as doing taxes or getting a root canal. It is no wonder so many put off doing performance reviews, and some even skip them altogether. However, supervisors who delay or skip annual performance reviews are missing a great opportunity to motivate employees. The following suggestions can help in preparing for reviews.

Tips to Keep in Mind

- Keep the performance review as objective as possible. An objective review will measure employee performance levels, not personality traits.

- An accurate performance review is not done within a few hours. It is an ongoing, yearlong process. Keep a file open for each employee where you can easily add monthly performance measures, compliments and complaints, along with observations of the employee's performance. An employee can tell the difference between a rushed review and one that is carefully crafted.

- Do not surprise an employee with a performance review. A motivated employee requires ongoing feedback on a regular basis, so do not save it all up for a once-a-year praise or criticism meeting.

- Use the same measurement standards and criteria for all employees who have the same job descriptions. Do not evaluate an employee in areas that go beyond the job description.

- Use the employee's last review as a benchmark standard for their next performance review.

- If you are a new supervisor, ask the employee's last supervisor to help complete an upcoming employee review. If the employee's last supervisor is not available, ask for feedback from other supervisors who have observed the employee's work.

- If you are giving a poor performance evaluation, try using phrases such as, "In the future ...," "I expect ..." and "Let's plan. ..." You should make the goals and consequences known, but deliver it in an approachable manner.

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