



CRA BULLETIN

Issue 102 – 4 May 2018

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

Getting the most out of your staff starts with a good performance review process. Below outlines the importance of performance reviews and why they're an essential part of your staff management system.

Lead by example, as the saying goes, and as an employer this is vital if you want to get the best out of your staff. Keeping lines of communication open will help to ensure an understanding of expectations is reached, and regular performance reviews should be a part of this.

What is a performance review?

A performance review is dedicated time for a manager and employee to review the employee's current performance; discuss any issues relating to the role or position within the organisation, professional development and promotional opportunities; and set goals for the 6 or 12 months ahead.

The value of self-assessment

A good performance review will involve an element of self-assessment by the employee. How well do they believe they have performed in their role? Have they met expectations? Deadlines? Deliverables? Have they grown within their position and added value to the organisation? And would you agree?

The self-assessment aspect of a performance review is a valuable tool for employees to reflect on their performance to date and to improve morale. It's an opportunity for them to self-critique their own strengths and weaknesses and to identify where opportunities for improvement and enhancement lie, without feeling criticised from management, no matter how constructive that criticism is intended to be.

Encourage, listen and respond

As an employer, your role during the performance review is to be one of a coach and listener. Remember, you want to get the most out of your staff and constant put downs or a focus on negativity, things that could have been done better, faster, more efficiently, won't create a positive environment.

This doesn't mean you need to gloss over what hasn't gone right, and if you have concerns about your employee's work ethic, this is a time to raise them (though not the only time). It's important not to let any concerns you have build-up and be discussed only during a performance review. Give your staff time to correct any mistakes, learn from their omissions or change their approach.

When it comes time to conduct the performance review, make it as relaxed as possible. After all, you have employed this person because you believed he or she could do the job. If you have concerns about their performance, what's preventing them from being the employee you believed they could be?

Review your own performance

A good performance review won't be one-sided. It's also an opportunity for you to seek feedback from your employee on your own performance. Are you providing them with enough tools, resources or support to do their job most effectively? What type of working environment can you provide that will enhance their job productivity and their enjoyment of the role? Ask them for suggestions in areas that you could improve, or areas within the organisation they believe changes could make a real difference.

Asking each of your employees for a critique of your own performance and the working environment you have established for them, will enable you to see if any trends start to emerge. If so, action them.

5 key components of effective performance reviews

1. Be specific - make sure your employee knows exactly what you appreciate about their work, what your concerns are, and what goals you want them to work towards.
2. Think big - don't focus on your employee's most recent work; think holistically. Factor in the last six or 12 months since their last review, not the few weeks leading up to their performance review.
3. Invest time - prepare for every performance review you are undertaking. You will expect your employees to come prepared so lead by example.
4. Create a relaxed atmosphere - employees often dread performance reviews, so make yours a little different by conducting a performance review over a coffee at the local café.
5. Listen - make sure your employee knows the performance review isn't something you have simply ticked off your 'HR must-do' list. Take on board their self-assessment, make changes where appropriate and ask them for a review of your own performance too!