

Tips for a Great Performance Plan Discussion

DON'T MISS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP YOUR EMPLOYEES

- Practice two-way communication
- Let your employees ask questions
- Let your employees provide you with input on the development of their own performance standards
- Provide them guidance and explanation about your expectations
- Talk about specifics

MAKE IT A CONVERSATION

- Show that you care about them as a person
- Show that you want to help them grow and develop in their career
- Be clear on the direction they need to proceed
- Realize that each employee and each position requires something a little bit different
- Employees have different levels of detail and clarity that they need in order to feel like they know what is expected of them
- Figure out what each employee needs to succeed

BE PREPARED FOR THIS DISCUSSION

- Clearly define the critical elements and the performance standards
- Make sure you understand the benchmark standards
- Be able to describe the difference between a level 3, 4, and 5 performance for each of the critical elements
- Describe and help them visualize what their performance would look like at level 4 (Superior) and level 5 (Exceptional)
- Take some notes ahead of time and share them with the employee during the discussion
- Give ideas of projects or tasks that employees can accomplish in the coming year which could help them achieve a superior or exceptional rating

- Help them understand what exceptional performance, or fully successful performance, would look like
- Explain the gap between what the employees' performance is now and what it could be like in the future

HOLD YOUR DISCUSSION AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME AND PLACE

- Choose a convenient time and place for your discussion
- Get out of your office and find a relaxing place to have this conversation
- Shut off the blackberry or cell phone, and keep it out of sight – your employees deserve your full attention
- Don't schedule yourself so tightly that you don't have the opportunity to continue the conversation if you go over your scheduled time

DISCUSS THE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

USE A COACHING APPROACH AND BE CURIOUS

- Open up an environment for safe dialogue that encourages employees to ask questions
- Come to the conversation with a sense of curiosity rather than a sense of already knowing
- Remain open to more dialogue

WORK ON YOUR ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

- The more you practice active listening, the easier it gets
- Listen to discover things from your employees
- Provide the opportunity for open two-way dialogue in a safe environment
- Encourage employees to ask and get clarification if they are unsure