

There is a lot of talk recently about dumping the annual performance review. After all, without it you only have tax and the dentist to worry about. But it's **important** to set goals and measure performance, so how can we make sure performance reviews are motivational?

performance happens daily (reviews should too)

Really Useful annual reviews summarize information gathered and conversations held throughout the year. Nothing in them is a surprise or a reason to worry.

Nothing in them will cause this...



We want to get the best from employees, not scare them, surprise them, or stress them out so badly they go bald. We really really don't want them so preoccupied by their impending **Performance Review of Doom** that they can't concentrate on their work. Daily feedback eliminates the ARGH!

tip Any review that starts with "Since last year's review..." is probably not a prime motivational tool

performance reviews should be conversations

Managers and employees should be comfortable discussing performance, not having weird, uncomfortable, awkward, unnatural verbal exchanges...

Do you really want to waste time endlessly discussing whether someone was effective, exceptionally effective or monumentally earth-shatteringly effective? Probably not. Move on!



Describe the employee's key activities over the period, paying particular attention to any activities that have resulted in achievements to be noted in the Employee Review (section 37.2) and in schedule 22a (Manager) Guidelines and Expectations as mandated under Subsection 10.01(1) of the Employee Review (Manager) Act.

USELESS

Tim achieved Objective A.

And while we're at it, use systems to capture what was talked about - don't use them to drive the process and fall into the trap of only discussing what can neatly fit in a box on a form.

reviews should have a purpose



Why bother with reviews if all you do is fill out a form and file it away... somewhere? Motivational reviews have a purpose: they collect useful information that is put to work for the entire organization (and that means for employees, managers, the exec...) and they inspire people to improve.

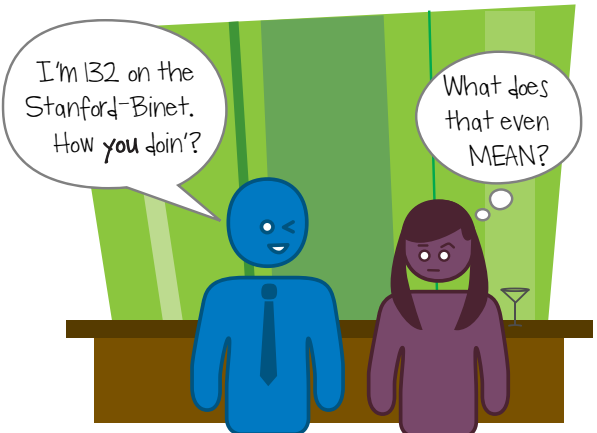
If people see the value of performance reviews, they'll get done.

have to do + useful = do it, get & use results

have to do + pointless = grudging compliance. and whining. lots of whining.

it really is ok to keep things simple

Simple, frequent reviews will give you a clear, current understanding of what is happening in the business, and contribute to individual motivation positively. Great companies position reviews as just another part of business, and consider reviews in terms of what works for employees and managers.



You want reviews to be straightforward, show teams at work and enable you to focus on the person sitting in front of you, not on deciphering the form or translating HR-ese.

Managing people is hard enough without having to deal with the effects of painful performance reviews.

avoid the vicious performance review of doom cycle

Simple reviews actually get done, and mean you don't scare (and thus demotivate) your employees. Yay.

horribly detailed review requirements scare the socks off everyone

reviews are held infrequently

HR breaks out the psych text & creates a magnum opus

everyone thinks reviews need to be really detailed to collect the year's worth of information

Exhibit A

reviews don't bite. much.

Most of us are still a little battle-scarred after years of terrible reviews. But it's not too late to fix reviews - to make them useful instead of something to be dreaded. It's all in your approach...

Great organizations

position reviews as part of everyday operations (not as an HR function).

Great managers

talk about performance every day, giving timely (and useful) feedback to staff.

Great employees

welcome feedback as a source of inspiration, motivation and reassurance.

Great performance management systems

encourage everyone to collect information on performance incrementally, and return that information to the organization to assist in decision making.

stick around - there's more to come!