

16. Effective Performance Reviews

Well-Conducted Performance Reviews Can Increase Tenure

Conducting regular performance reviews is another key element in your human resource management strategy. When well conducted, performance reviews will help increase tenure. How can performance reviews improve retention? A consistent finding in employment research has been that employees who are learning, growing and feel they are making a contribution, stay on the same job longer. You have a duty to help associates learn, grow and become better performers through performance counseling.

The Performance Review

Though reviews are sometimes feared, in one sense, the fact of the matter is, they should be viewed as a way to build positive relationships between you and your associates.

Human resource research has shown clearly that employees are not very satisfied about their performance reviews. All such reviews may be conducted — but they are not if they are conducted infrequently, or not conducted at all.

The key to conducting a performance review is to **think** and **plan** the discussion in advance. You should know exactly what you want to discuss, your associate's strengths and weaknesses, and you should decide in advance how to handle the next time they're asked about any of these things. This is the key to outlining the session.

It is a common mistake to think that if the evaluation is right, you need only say it. However, you must send performance **messages** so that the associate can learn and act upon them. If your messages don't get thought through, they don't count, and you have not really conducted a performance review.

The following guidelines can be used as you outline your performance review discussion.

Evaluate Performance Not The Person

It is important that you use phrases and an outline that shows your focus on the **performance**, **not** on the person. Think about the following phrases that could be overheard in a performance review session:

1. "YOU are doing a great job."
2. "YOU haven't learned the proper cleaning methods."

Both phrases are harmful.

In 1. the associate may feel good momentarily, but doesn't know specifically what you're talking about. The associate cannot learn and act upon this information in order to maintain and improve performance.

In 2. the associate may feel bad momentarily, but also doesn't know what you are talking about and cannot act upon such information. Each statement starts off in the wrong direction — YOU — and goes nowhere.

The types of phrases that are overheard in effective performance reviews would sound something like the following:

"The job, as you know, requires quality. We have received many compliments and zero complaints from clients about you or the team. Clients have told me that you amaze them in the way you pay attention to details in the kitchen."

"As you know, the job requires attention to details in our cleaning procedures. Though we've covered this in our training, I noticed you didn't follow the procedure at the Smith house. We will repeat the training to ensure you know what the job requires that this is learned and followed to."

Those examples focus on the **job**, then provide specifics about the person's performance relative to the job. This type of focus in your performance review will help convey the message that associates can learn from.

You have two options for your focus on performance:

1. The Job Description (Team Member Job Description or Team Leader Job Description) and the Performance Review (or in the case of a training review, the Training Review Report).

The Job Description

In the job description, the desk and in view of you and the associate, it is a reminder that the job is the reason for the meeting — not to deliver compliments. Refer to items in the description as appropriate when discussing about associate strengths or weaknesses in performance.

Team Member Job Description

Team Leader Job Description

The Performance Review Form

One of the often-overlooked elements of reviews is the importance of motivating and reinforcing the outstanding performer. These associates still need to be told "what" they are doing right and "why" it is important.

This is valuable reinforcement. As good performers, they also need to be challenged to maintain such high standards and even reach for higher goals. Good people like challenges. Do not lessen the time or emphasis and a chance to learn from and act upon your review.

By going through each criteria from **Knowledge** to **Attendance** you are teaching the elements of performance once again and giving the employee with feedback about job performance. Your feedback message, whether the rating is a 0, 1, 2, or 3 should contain the following:

- What the criteria (such as **Initiative**) means
- Why it is important to the position
- What you have observed about performance on this criteria
- What rating is assigned based on the performance.
- What the employee can do to maintain or further improve their 1) performance.

The Performance Review includes your capability to rate the 8 Professional Criteria Categories and the 24 Job Requirements.

The required criteria which categories are assigned, and when performance accrues a rating of **LOW JOB PERFORMANCE, ACHIEVED JOB PERFORMANCE, and** when the rating is **EXCEEDING JOB REQUIREMENTS**.

The employee receives a rating of 0 – 3 on each of the 8 Professional Criteria Categories and the 24 Job Requirements.

THE PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW FORM

The form provided you is a 12-month Performance Review Form and is designed to be used as a Performance Review Form to serve as an evaluation tool (and to be used in the Performance Report discussed earlier).

Performance

The "Smart" Performance Rating Method

When the performance rating is 0 or 1, you owe the associate a game plan. It is not merely just saying — "you have to do better" — is not much help. Teaching someone so that they can do better requires that you help the associate set a **performance improvement goal**. One of the most useful techniques for setting performance improvement goals is the **SMART** model.

S = SPECIFIC

You need to be able to specify very clearly the goal for improvement. Instead of saying that — "attendance will improve" or "should volunteer more

often" — you need to write with the associate a one-sentence behavior-based improvement statement. These types of statements sound like the following:

- ❖ *"Will be at the job every day for the next four weeks."*
- ❖ *"Will find an opportunity to volunteer once a week for the next four weeks."*

M = MEASURABLE

The goal set must be stated in such a way that a measurement can be made. Was the goal met or not met? How will you know? How will the employee know?

As the old saying goes, "if you can't measure it, you can't manage it."

A = ATTAINABLE

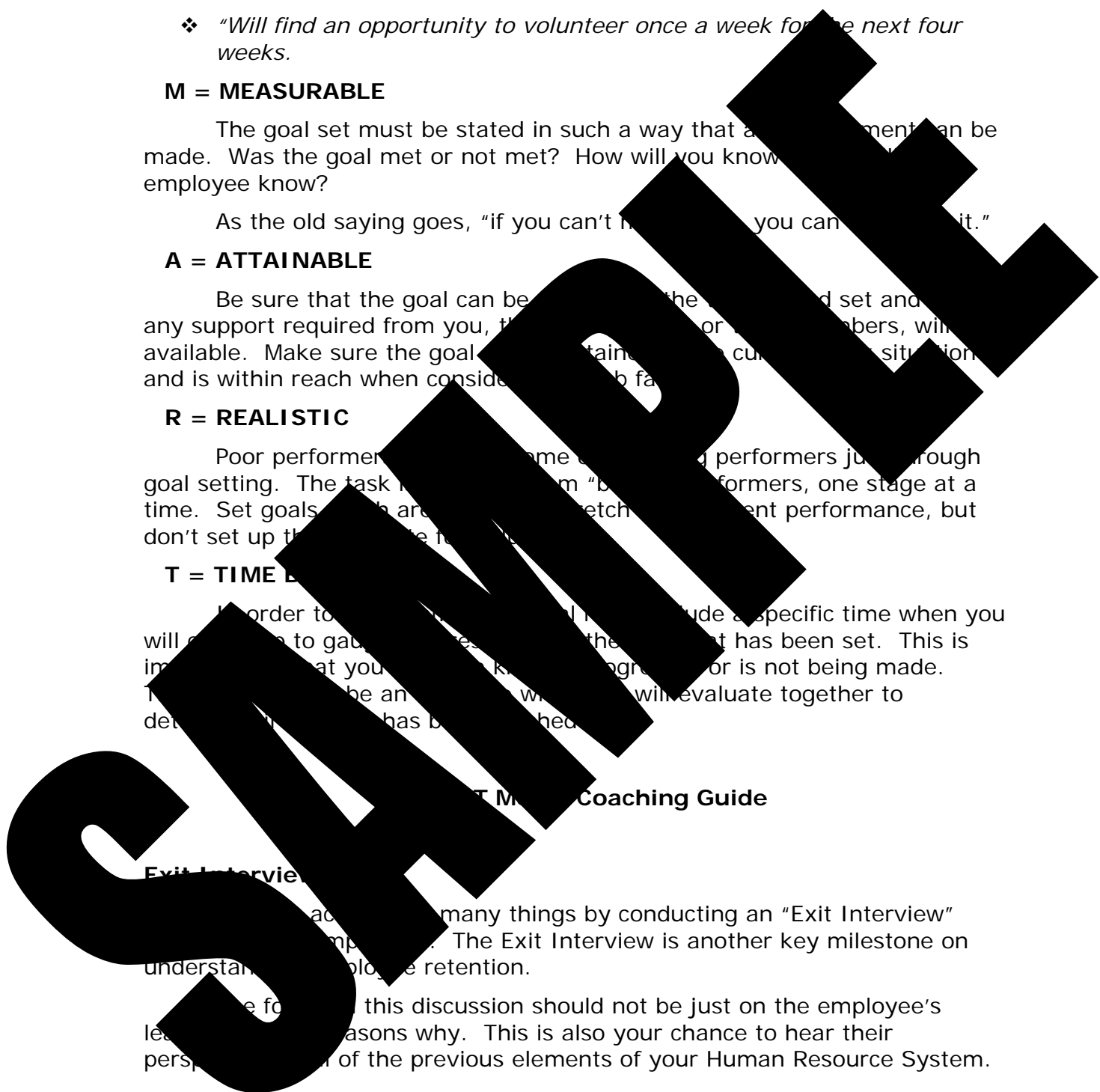
Be sure that the goal can be achieved. The goal should be set and any support required from you, the employee or other members, will be available. Make sure the goal is attainable in the current situation and is within reach when considering job factors.

R = REALISTIC

Poor performers and some average performers just struggle with goal setting. The task is to help them "do it" one stage at a time. Set goals which are challenging but stretch current performance, but don't set up the employee for failure.

T = TIME

In order to be measurable, the goal must include a specific time when you will evaluate to gauge progress. The time that has been set. This is important that you know if progress is or is not being made. The time will be an important one which you will evaluate together to determine if the goal has been achieved.



Exit Interview Coaching Guide

Exit Interview

accomplish many things by conducting an "Exit Interview" with your employees. The Exit Interview is another key milestone on understanding employee retention.

For this discussion should not be just on the employee's leaving reasons why. This is also your chance to hear their perspective on the previous elements of your Human Resource System.

Exit Interview Form

This is a good time for both of you to reflect upon and learn what happened regarding such experiences as:

- The original reason the employee wanted the job and thought it was a good match.
- The phone and personal interview experience.
- The orientation and training provided.
- The pay and recognition received.
- The job requirements and the behavior.
- The performance review.

In each discussion area, you will hear from the employee view the event, and whether you could have managed the situation differently, the length of stay on the job. Remember, an employee leaving is not a disgrace for you or for them. It is a learning opportunity. You cannot use this time as a learning moment for you.

Good employees will leave. Growth and change are necessary. This is a cause for good feelings on both sides. Sometimes things just work out and you terminate. Sometimes employees quit for no apparent reasons. This is also not a failure. It provides an opportunity for growth and learning in understanding the situation.

There is a story of a manager who had a great reputation regarding employee retention. This manager was praised by all previous employees who had worked for him. When he was fired, his former employees described him in the following ways:

"He was very direct with me. He told me what the job was going to be, what he expected of me, and what he was going to do. And he did it exactly as he said it."

"He told me to do what you were doing right and not to do anything else. I don't know if he liked me, but I know that he respected me and all the other employees."

"You know, consistent. It wasn't hard to know what he wanted and how he was going to react."

"He never says anything about the job that made you end up leaving. He never says anything about yourself. I don't know how he did that."

"I needed to leave my job, but I needed to move on to something else. I will always remember the things he taught me."

"He fired me and he took the time to explain it. I know he was going to do it even if I didn't like it."

Those types of comments took place not only because the manager was a special kind of person, but because he followed consistently a **system** of human resource management techniques and procedures.

From the Phone Interview to the Exit Interview, you will either have provided the structure and the system that works or doesn't work. If you put the quality in the system, one of the end results will be employee comments such as the above being said about you.

SAMPLE

Documents relating to

Effective Performance Reviews

Team Member Performance Review

Team Leader Performance Review Form

Training Review Report

Performance Review (PT) Manager's Approach

Record of Annual Work Review Employee Form

Employee's Record of Development Form

Performance Review Form

SAMPLE