

Write Your Review

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Why are performance reviews important? When was the last time you gave a review? What went into the review and how effective was it? These are all good questions we must ask ourselves in order to successfully evaluate our employees on a consistent basis. Reviews are an effective way to develop employees and evaluate a set of expectations or standards which hold them accountable for their performance. A well thought-out review requires a lot of time and effort in order for it to be a valuable tool.

A review is a performance-based evaluation of an employee given once annually by a superior. How effective it is depends upon what its contents are and how it is tailored around the job description. No two evaluations are alike and there is no right or wrong way to write one which is what makes a review personal. A good idea is to have separate reviews for each position offered and, if needed, translate it to Spanish.

A standard review may be one where you answer a question or task by circling the number that best fits their accomplishments. When complete, you add up the total numbers and match it up to a set standard score and this score is your review. What is wrong with this picture? If I just scored an 80 out of 100 total points, that means I have 20 percent more to work on. What is that 20 percent? Tip #1, if you are telling someone they are not meeting expectations in a certain area, be prepared to give them specific feedback on how to meet the standard. Go in depth and have a comment section because constructive criticism and feedback is crucial to developing a great team. A standard review may not even scratch the surface on evaluating the team member properly so use it as a guideline to help you form a more effective review. Having different reviews based upon job descriptions can benefit you by tailoring your expectations for each job title. For example, a spray

technician needs different feedback than a ground technician, but they are still held accountable for the same basic morals of the club.

Your basic morals in a review may include work performance, work habits, communication, strengths and weaknesses. Basically, we as managers want a set of core morals for our team to follow. Work performance is easy to measure by the quality of the work completed, how much gets done and the timeliness it gets

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done. Individual work habits include punctuality, reliability and drive to improve. With communication, how well does someone portray their message in writing and speaking? Communicating with other team members in Spanish may also be important depending on your crew. Finally, strengths and weaknesses; this area is important to emphasize and have at least three examples of each. Everyone needs feedback, good and bad, to develop themselves professionally. Your employees need know how to soar with their strengths and minimize their weaknesses.

Reviews are also good tools for new and problematic employees. It is important to sit down with your team at the beginning of the season and explain what they will be reviewed on. This clearly sets the standard right away. Documentation is crucial for problematic situations and reviews are a good place to start. For

example, if an employee has an attendance issue, you can show them what you went over at the beginning of the season and have proof that you talked to them. One thing we have to keep in mind is if we give a team member an unsatisfactory review, it should not come as a surprise. They should have been given feedback throughout the season and know what they had to improve on. If we do not hold our team accountable, a good employee's performance will drop to meet the slacker's performance because they know what they will get away with.

Timing is everything, so when is the best time to give a review? One would be anytime you give a pay raise, a review should go along with it. For seasonal employees, a mid-year evaluation will ensure they are following the direction set by you at the beginning of the year (spring). I believe two reviews per year, a mid-year and annual review, will set your team up for success.

However, I don't think it is effective to have a review at the end of the year when no corrective action will take place because employees are laid off for four months.

When giving a review, it is best to do it behind closed doors. This is a confidential conversation between the employee and the supervisor and that is where it stays. When finished, both parties sign and date the review and shake hands to ensure no animosity.

Implementing a review system at your facility will help you get the most out of your employees. Although this seems to be a lot of time and effort, its dividends will pay out in the end. Over time, employees will get accustomed to your system and begin to take interest in their personal development. How does your current review system look? Take a look and see what you can do to maximize your employee's production.