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Engaging your
workforce to love
their objectives
and want to
achieve more

A five-step guide

What is the purpose of performance reviews?

Modern workers require more than their predecessors – **they want something different**; they're demanding; they want meaningful work; and they expect their employer to make work more rewarding in many ways^[1].

The **work-life balance concept is growing**, and modern employees are accepting that work is a large part of their life – so they actively seek opportunities to enjoy it more.

Despite this, only 13% of employees feel actively engaged at work. More than twice this number **admit to being so actively disengaged** that they are likely to spread negativity to their colleagues^[1].

But why are employees so disengaged and unhappy?

Over half of organisations believe that their performance management process is 'weak', and only 6% of organisations state that their current processes for managing performance is **worth their time**^[1].

Herein lies the problem. Performance management should aim to ensure that employees positively contribute towards the business's objectives and this should be managed holistically through a range of HR activities and processes, with the employee at the **centre of communication**.

As part of the ongoing process, performance **management should establish objectives**, improve performance and link rewards and career progression^[2] and, if used correctly, will help to focus employees on their objectives and have them looking forward to their futures within the organisation.

With a 'weak' performance management process, it's hardly surprising that **66% of employees feel overwhelmed!**^[1]

However, with five simple steps it can be easy to convert your workforce into engaged colleagues looking to achieve more in your organisation, **so read on...**

Step 1. Get in the know

For performance management to be at its most effective, a relationship of **open communication needs to be developed** between manager and employee. If a relationship is built and understanding is developed, employees are naturally more inclined to achieve more for their manager and in turn, more readily accomplish team goals.

Managers who take the time to understand the backgrounds and values of their employees will have a **greater impact on employee attitudes** and motivation, resulting in a stronger connection to their employees^[3].

If an individual believes that their manager cares about them as a person, they are more likely to be engaged – **83% of highly engaged employees agree that their manager cares**, whereas just 4% of disengaged employees could agree with the same statement^[3].

Part of these issues stem from the traditional concepts of **the work-life balance** being lost due to the growth of technology and the breakdown in barriers between work and life – the **‘always on’** culture means that employees expect their manager to be involved in every step of their progress.

This doesn't just involve work-based conversations either – by getting to know what motivates your staff outside of the office, you may be able to **adjust their incentives and rewards** in reflection of their personal preferences to suit their stage in life.

If managers embrace two-way communications, encourage employees to share their process and successes, and avoid simply using this time to dictate work priorities, **employees will naturally be inclined to achieve more** for their manager.



Step 2. Build their skillset

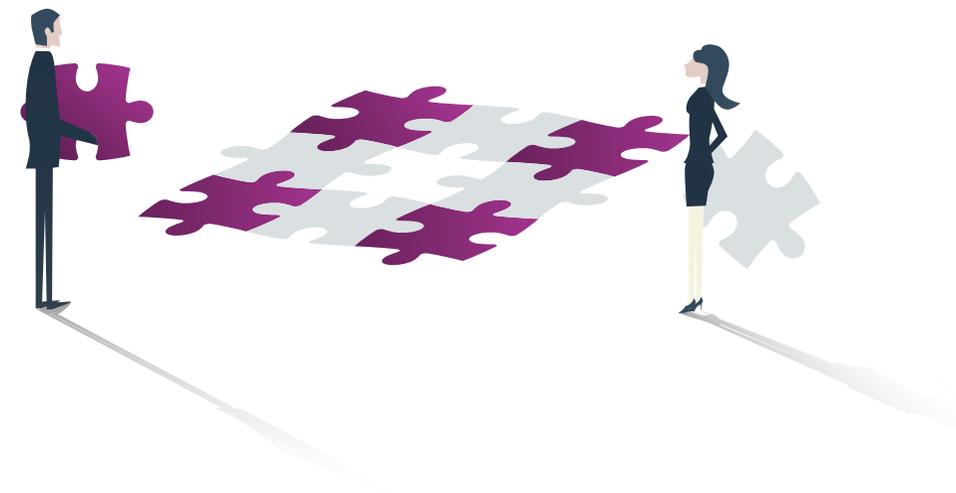
Some managers are reluctant to provide additional training to their employees, in the fear that their **team will become bored** by becoming 'too skilled' for the role, and consequently begin the job hunt.

However, studies have shown that when employees receive training, their **motivation will increase** which will positively affect their engagement and success in the organisation in turn. Whilst 80% of new graduates expect their first employer to continue their education in the workplace with formal training, many are left disappointed – **just 54% of graduates receive any form of training** from their first employer^[4].

Managers may not even need to provide formal training; providing an understanding of where the individual's role sits within the organisation and how they personally contribute towards the business's goals can be as **motivational as certifications**.

With 96% of engaged employees responding favourably to the statement '**I have a very clear idea of my job responsibilities**', it is evident that this understanding positively affects levels of engagement – particularly when just 37% of disengaged employees could agree with this^[3].

For employees to embrace their objectives, they need to **understand their function within the business** and how their personal objectives can help to achieve business goals. Upon seeing results, employees will automatically become better motivated – particularly if managers support this with ongoing feedback and training for employees as they **assume greater job responsibilities**^[3].



Step 3. Check-ins

Whilst the end-of-year review is still alive and kicking, it is now being supplemented with **regular informal meetings** in the modern workplace.

These informal check-ins provide opportunities to discuss growth and development – both of which are **key drivers of employee engagement**, with the added benefit of contributing towards organisational succession ^[3].

Managers are able to link their training and development programme to the business's strategic goals; as such, employees will be able to **understand their roles better** and appreciate how their role's function contributes towards the business.

These **regular check-ins** can help employees to feel valued whilst providing the opportunity for managers to ensure that individuals have everything they require to confidently fulfil their roles.

Managers should encourage employees to measure and **track their own performance** over the course of the year, and to record notable achievements of individual and team performance – including those that cannot be easily quantified ^[3].

In doing so, managers and employees can meet together regularly to informally review the individual's process against their personal development plans and **make adjustments to the plan** where required.

Top Tip: Use performance management software to help **managers and employees to stay connected** – both parties should be able to track and monitor the progress towards the individual's developmental goals.



Step 4. Demonstrate your appreciation

If employees feel appreciated, they are **more likely to continue to hit targets** and push themselves to achieve more. Conversely, if they feel that their efforts are going unnoticed, they are **unlikely to excel in their fields** as they may feel unmotivated and resentful.

As such, organisations choose to praise employees in differing ways; it could be as **simple as a ‘thank you’, to monetary incentives**. This can depend on the level of achievement and the individuals themselves.

Whilst significant tokens of praise are appreciated, **most employees readily welcome frequent recognition** throughout the year.

Research shows that the sooner recognition for a well-performed task is delivered, the more **positive and long-lasting the impact it will have** on employees^[3]. Some performance management systems have the functionality to send ‘kudos’ directly to employees; managers may even be able to **set up alerts** to be notified when an employee has achieved their target.

This immediate **recognition is easily given by managers** whilst helping to motivate employees; 55% of employees feel that recognition from their manager regarding their performance is very important to job satisfaction^[4].

83% of engaged employees feel satisfied with the level of recognition received for doing a good job – whereas only 3% of disengaged employees believe that they are recognised for their skillset^[3], revealing just how **harmful a lack of recognition can be**.

Praise can rectify smaller issues and can install confidence and **loyalty from employees** into the organisation; conversely, a lack of praise can be damaging – employees feel less valued and will not be motivated to push themselves harder.



Step 5. Focus their goals

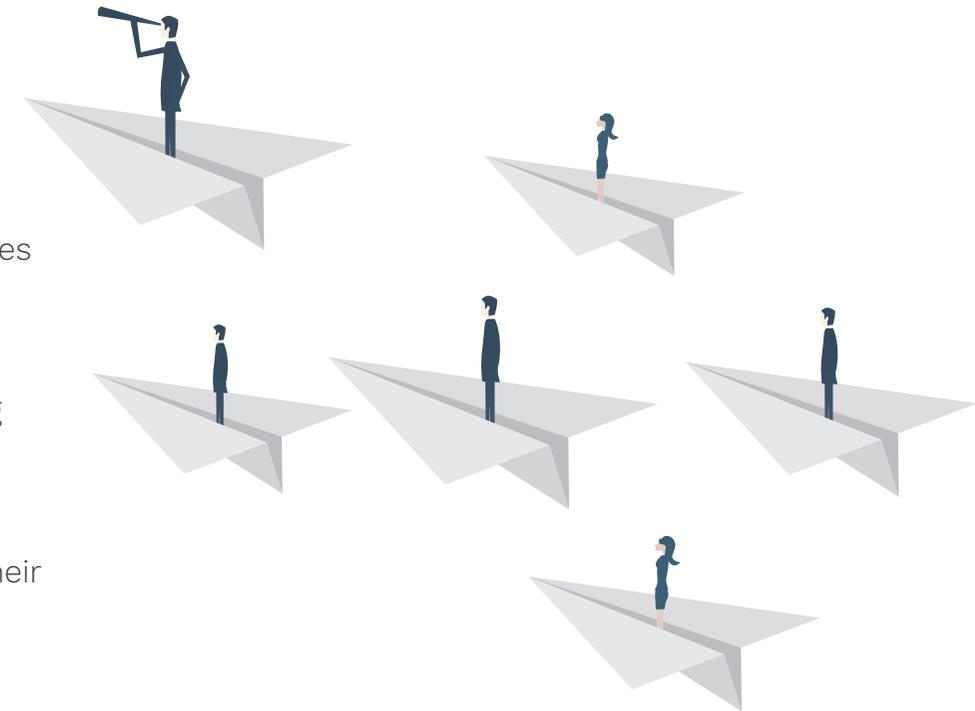
Managers should use the regular check-in sessions to **track and measure progress** with employees on a consistent basis^[3].

By meeting with employees regularly on an informal basis, managers can use these sessions to provide coaching in order to **keep individuals on track** with their ultimate goals. These goals could include their end-of-year goals, more immediate goals and longer-term career goals.

Regardless, each and every check-in meeting should be used for managers to **listen to their employee's concerns**, using the time constructively to coach individuals to stay on track to achieve their goals.

Most importantly is for managers to ensure that **all performance coaching is actionable**. Managers should cite specific examples with minimum time-delay so that employees can understand what they need to start, stop or continue to do in order to **improve their performance**^[3].

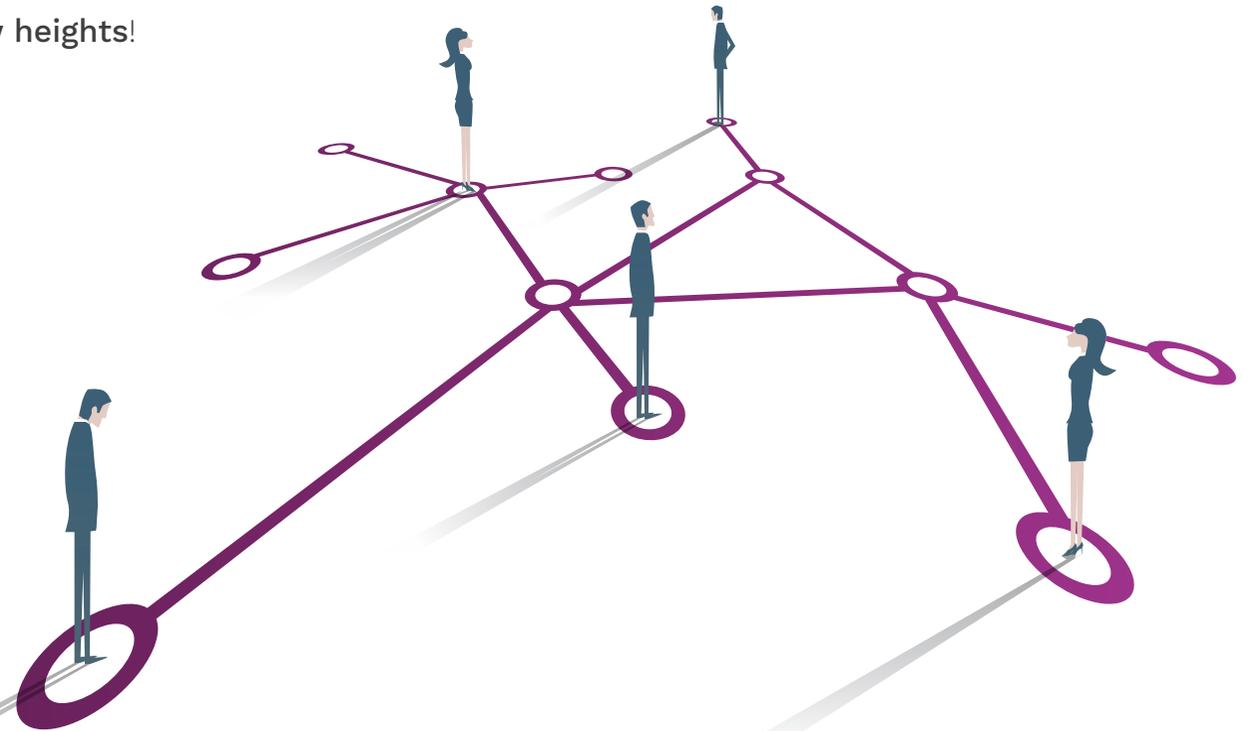
It can be helpful for **online performance management tools** to be utilised here – notes can be digitally and securely taken by both managers and employees to provide ongoing coaching tips and track progress. By allowing employees access to their development records, they are able to **take ownership of their development** and continually review their progress themselves.



Five steps for performance management success

1. **Get familiar** with your teams
2. **Build their skillsets** and allow them to be the best versions of themselves
3. **Check-in on individuals regularly** to make them feel valued – let them know how their role contributes towards the goal!
4. **Appreciate your staff** and reward them regularly for going above and beyond
5. **Focus their goals** – where do they want to be, and how can you help them to get there?

By documenting all steps of progression, **employees will feel motivated** by seeing how far they have come. This will help them to want to accomplish more of their objectives as they keep **achieving new heights!**



[1] Bersin, Josh. 'Why Companies Fail To Engage Today's Workforce: The Overwhelmed Employee.' Forbes, 15 March 2014

[2] CIPD, 'Performance management: an introduction', 31 July 2017

[3] TNS Employee Insights, Kantar Worldpanel, 2014

[4] Engage for Success, '5 Ways Performance Management Can Inspire and Engage Employees'



Help them to achieve their goals

Have **your workforce be motivated** by their personal development plan with Kallidus perform, **designed to support managers and employees** at every stage of the **performance management** process.

☎ +44 (0)1285 883911

✉ info@kallidus.com

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