

Do you dread performance evaluations?

I started my career in hotel management when the yearly review was thought of as an HR event tied to the annual salary review and may have been the only formal feedback received. The global workplace has driven the need to move beyond managing by yearly feedback to communication that happens more frequently as a process instead of an event. Strong companies recognize the importance of defining their philosophy for performance management (PM) across all areas and levels of the company. Strong leaders recognize the importance of defining for themselves their own philosophy for PM and seek ways to change their style of leadership to incorporate those beliefs more regularly.

My personal performance management philosophy is rooted in my belief that we all perform best in an environment that promotes constant learning. That means regular feedback in addition to the annual performance evaluation. Regardless of where your company falls on the PM spectrum, as a manager you can influence the process by doing a better job conducting performance reviews. Below are some of my suggestions for how to do that and suggestions from the article by the Forbes Human Resources Council, "Changing The HR Game: 13 Ways To Make Performance Reviews Less Stressful".

Ways to improve performance reviews

Be transparent – Take the time to make a new hire's first performance review a positive experience by preparing them beforehand on the process, paperwork and things they need to bring to the meeting.

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Sit on the other side of the desk (next to the person)– Michele Markey, SkillPath, suggests you ask, "What would you like to accomplish in the next year, and how can I help?" because it is an open-ended question that starts the conversation with growth and development.

Choose your words wisely – Vague words and general feedback are less effective than being specific on behaviors you want your employee to stop, start, and continue.

Change your mindset – Adam Mellor, ONE Gas, Inc., says, "what you promote is what you get" so if you go into the review with a negative attitude then that is the take away from the review. Likewise, a positive view of the meeting will yield better results.

Make communication a part of review – Talk about the most effective way for the employee to communicate with internal customers, external customers and his/her manager. You can also use the time to talk about the employee's communication style, and how it affects those he/she works with.

Don't wait until annual review time – Evan Lassiter, Cloudreach, says that when, "consistent communication happens throughout the year," surprises will be reduced at review time. Saved feedback to have something to write on an review is a sign of a poor leader.

Look forward, not backward – Spend part of the time on setting measurable goals. John Feldmann, Insperity, says that you want to change the review, "from an all-encompassing yearly evaluation to one of many goal updates."

Put a date on it - Establish a clearly stated and agreed upon dateline for meeting objectives. If your company does not have systems to track the dates, then use your calendar or other technology to help you continue the dialog and conversation on a regular basis.

Make it meaningful - Spend less time telling people what to do and learn to apply coaching skills. A coach will be more impactful than a teacher or cheerleader.

Highlight positive soft traits – Use the opportunity to reinforce the need for soft skills, like confidence, good public speaking or engaged listening skills, that are not part of formal review process

Remember the reason for the conversation – Remember that when employees consistently receive accurate information about what is expected of them, they perform better, with less stress on them and those they work with.

What you need to know about Continuous Performance Management

Curious learners spend the time to understand current business trends. Whether you are in HR or not, watching HR trends is a way to understand the underlining shifts in the workplace. The evolution to continuous PM is driven by today's dynamic market place, increase in teams, flatter organizations, and flexible technology that captures higher quality qualitative and quantitative data. These changes are reflected in the fact that 79% of surveyed executives consider redesigning performance management a high priority, according to Deloitte's 2017 Global Human Capital Trends research.

Continuous performance management is about developing an ongoing process for goal setting, evaluation, and feedback. Coaching is also a big part of the new process because it is about helping people unlock their potential. Steve Dunne in the Forbes article, "Global Study: Continuous Performance Management Increases Competitive Advantage" states that, "companies that embrace continuous performance management drive greater business value" and "are 1.5 times more effective at engaging and retaining employees than those with an annual process."

The article quotes Mark Judd, vice president of product strategy of EMEA at Workday, as saying, "Next-generation employee performance is about being forward-looking, business-aligned, collaborative, continuous, and engaging," and "workers are looking for ongoing dialogue and development with their employers, and a greater focus on building career experiences—elements which are not possible with the traditional annual performance review."

A continuous PM process considers changes to a job that are not tied to a calendar year, but necessitate a new development goal, an addition of a team goal, or a new

business initiative that needs to be added to the goals. It adds more dimensions to the conversation with more focus on self-reflection and crowdsourcing feedback. It makes room for managers to act more as a coach and less as an authority figure telling them what to do and rating their performance. The process is not centered around information flowing to senior leaders and HR but instead increases information to managers, teams and individuals.

The shift to continuous performance management is really a cultural shift. Gartner research shows 37% of the skills employees use today were learned in the past year and 57% of employees develop new skills through their interactions with colleagues. Make sure that you put your time, money and energy into developing your employees on a continual basis and building more opportunities for that learning to happen naturally within your organization.

Harmony Coaching and Consulting can help your company develop the knowledge, skills and abilities your workforce they needs. As a coach, we facilitate classes to add coaching skills to your leadership and communication toolbox and as an executive coach, we can help you maximize the human talent present in your company regardless of where they work. The next Coaching Clinic workshop is Feb 19&20. Sign up for Coaching Clinic As a consultant, we offer a Virtual HR Director retainer service allowing your organization to contact HARMONY as necessary regarding daily human resource challenges, supplementing in-house expertise or providing that expertise. If you're interested in exploring any of these services contact Bill Burtch at Harmony for a consultation at 901-272-7390 or bburtch@harmonycc.net



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Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
<i>The Coaching Clinic</i>	<i>Feb 19&20</i>	<i>8:30 am – 5:00 pm</i>	

