

DEALING WITH EMPLOYEE WORK PERFORMANCE

Q. I find dealing with employees' inconsistent work and performance to be time-consuming for me to keep track of and address. Often, employees seem surprised when I raise issues with them. What can supervisors do to speed up the process of correcting performance?

A. Employees often state within EAP assessments that the supervisor hasn't clearly defined the expectations of their position. The following tips will help ensure you are communicating the role responsibilities clearly to the employee.



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1. Communicate the position roles, responsibilities, and standards and expectations. Review with your employee each of their job functions and the defined standards.
2. Check in regularly with the employee and give feedback on a scheduled routine basis. When you use this process, you are almost guaranteed to have no surprised employees when performance is corrected.
3. Use performance improvement plans to maximize clarity, and then rely on your HR or management advisor for guidance regarding how to implement them.
4. Empower your employees to take charge of their excellence and drive their future successes by having them suggest ideas and improvements.
5. Encourage a workplace culture where accountability is valued and expected. Employees will naturally take ownership of their performance, reducing the need for constant oversight.

Reference: [Work performance](#)

NEW SUPERVISOR MISTAKES

Q. I am a new supervisor. What initial mistakes might I make in this role that are typically committed by other new supervisors? I know I should avoid micromanaging, being overly demanding, and isolating myself in a closed office.

A. Some additional pitfalls as a new supervisor that you may consider are:

1. Failing to provide employees with clear expectations for their work. Not giving clear instructions leads to incomplete work and disappointing results that frustrate the employee and the manager alike.

2. Avoiding difficult conversations associated with employee behaviors leads to unresolved problems that nearly always grow bigger. Address issues as they arise before the problems becomes larger or systemic.
3. Trying to be everyone's friend. This can often blur the lines between professional and personal relationships and can undermine your authority and complicate decision-making.
4. Failing to enforce policies consistently among employees. Ensure everyone receives the same information for clarity to prevent misinterpretation and confusion.

For more information go to: [Harvard Business Review: 5 Mistakes New Managers Make](#)

Q. I get angry with workers who do not correct their own performance and seem passively resistant to change. I know I should remain calm, but I fear if I don't demonstrate anger and frustration, they won't take me seriously. What's the answer?

A. In all interactions with employees, demonstrate a calm, structured, and empathetic approach. Ironically, you will be more successful regardless of the situation. Remind yourself to remain calm, knowing that you will think more clearly doing so. If you feel anger during a discussion with an employee, pause before you react. Three to four seconds will seem like an eternity, but you will collect your thoughts and respond more constructively if you do so. The challenge is to focus on the behavior and not the person. This guiding principle helps you disengage from any personality features that may trigger your agitated response. Frame feedback in terms of behaviors and actions rather than personal attributes; that will reduce employee defensiveness. For example, "Alex, I've noticed that the last three reports were submitted two days past the deadline. This delays our project timelines, and we then can't proceed with the next steps." Seek more support for yourself from the EAP if needed. Be prepared to consider other administrative steps to help the employee improve performance.