

Performance Monitoring - Management Guidelines

The objective throughout this procedure is to improve the work performance of an individual. Remember that this interview should focus on how performance can be improved and you should try to put this across in a positive manner. This is not a disciplinary hearing and therefore representatives and witnesses will not be included in the process.

Changing behaviour can be achieved by encouraging the individual to agree that a problem exists, to take ownership of the problem and suggest improvements. Standards and objectives imposed unilaterally are easily ignored.

1. **Collect your evidence** and ensure that you raise the matter with the member of staff as problems occur (in private) – it is not appropriate to save them up for the annual appraisal. Keep a note of your discussion and any action taken.
2. **Set up the meeting.** Once the problem is evident with no improvement despite intervention, inform the member of staff that you want to see them in connection with their performance. Set aside at least an hour for the meeting and ensure you have a private room.
3. **Prepare for the meeting.** Be familiar with the person's job description, the evidence you have and what support you can make available. Review your expectations of the person – are job requirements (e.g. tasks, levels, amount of work, deadlines) reasonable and realistic? Could the person's performance been affected by inadequate support, direction or unclear objectives/standards? Additional advice on reasonable expectations can be obtained from a senior member of the Human Resources Department.
4. **At the Meeting.** Tell the person why you have asked to see them – “We have spoken on several occasion about and I am concerned that the situation has not improved sufficiently. We are here to discuss this problem and improve things, set the standards of work that I expect from you and determine any support you may need to achieve this”.
5. **Establish if any problems exist** that are hampering their performance at work. Take any mitigating circumstances on board. However whilst they may be experiencing difficulties outside of the workplace it is still important to carry on with the interview and clarify standards etc. Are there any interpersonal difficulties at work which may be effecting their performance?
6. **Establish that the person knows what is expected of them,** have copies of their job description to hand. Ask them what they think their job entails and compare this with their job description. Do your perceptions match? If not, tell the person what you expect the job to be and discuss whether or not this is realistic.
7. **Refer the person to the objectives and standards of work** that you agreed during their probation or at staff development review. What does the member of staff think

they mean? Ensure that the standards of performance that are set are specific, realistic measurable and have timescales.

8. **Discuss standards of work and if the person is meeting these standards.** Ask what would they define as a good standard? What would they define as a poor standard of work? Given the evidence, where do they think their performance falls? If there is no acceptance of a problem then you will need to define what you think is acceptable and give evidence and specific examples to show where they are not meeting these standards. You may need to repeat this step for every aspect of the job description, particularly if you want to balance the positive and negative sides of the person's performance.
9. **Agree objectives and standards of work**, how they will be measured, over what time frame and how they will be monitored. The time frame should be sufficient to allow for improvement to be made and will vary according to the circumstances of the post (e.g. over three months with fortnightly monitoring meetings).
10. **Agree support mechanisms** and when they should be put in place. This can mean mentoring, coaching, shadowing a colleague etc and does not necessarily involve a training course. Ask the person – “what do you need in order to achieve these standards?” “What do you want from me as a manager in terms of support?” You too should make suggestions. You will need to determine what support is realistic. If nothing is forthcoming, you will need to say what you think would be helpful.
11. **End the meeting** by recapping what has been agreed and try to part on a positive note.
12. **Record** the meeting and the outcome of stages 9 and 10 above. Confirm this in writing to the individual, normally within three working days.

Repeat this process with shortened **but realistic** time scales until the desired improvement has been achieved and sustained or until you are satisfied that no further improvement can be made and in such cases, you should warn the individual that if their performance does not meet the required standards, the formal disciplinary procedure will have to be initiated. In the latter situation you will need to consult your designated Human Resources Manager to commence disciplinary proceedings. Bearing in mind, after formal disciplinary proceedings are instigated, you will need to continue monitoring and encouraging improvement in performance.