

Getting the most out of staff appraisals



Here are some tips for more effective staff appraisals ..

Staff appraisals provide a valuable opportunity for you and your employees to work together to achieve future growth – for the employees' personal careers and for the business as a whole.

They give managers a chance to understand – and if necessary reassess – the role of individual members of staff within the company, and they also allow both parties to air any grievances before they become serious issues.

However, without proper attention these meetings can be treated as a matter of routine, and are not managed in such a way as to realise their maximum benefits. To help get the most out of the appraisal process, try following procedures

1. A formal structure

Prepare a standard form on which you can set out an overview of each employee's role. This should include a statement of their main responsibilities and achievements, as well as constructive suggestions for future development. You can use the form as the basis of the appraisal meeting.

2. Put staff at ease

While the interview should have a formal setting, make it clear that the objective is not simply to judge past performance. Highlight the employee's positive attributes, and make it clear that you are keen to help them develop their skills further.

3. Invite feedback

Giving staff the chance to air their views and ideas may help to uncover any issues which may not be addressed in general staff meetings, and can enable you to identify potential problems in the early stages.

4. Offer training opportunities

Your staff are one of your company's most valuable assets, and by investing in them you will also be investing in your company. Offering training, a salary review, or other benefits will also make staff feel valued, thereby increasing loyalty and improving performance.

5. Draw up an agreement

Once you have agreed on the way forward, you should set it in writing. Keep a record on file and give a copy to the employee. Make sure the comments are accurate and fair, in case of any future disputes.

6. Follow up the points raised

Having agreed on an appropriate plan of action, you should schedule a series of follow-up meetings, perhaps six-monthly or annually, in which you can assess whether the targets set in previous appraisals have been reached.

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