

TOOL: Prepping for Performance Reviews

From *Profit from the Positive*
Chapter 7 – Performance Reviews: Change ‘Em or Chuck ‘Em

“Like great sports coaches, business leaders have more influence over how well people perform than they may realize. Change the annual performance review into more frequent and meaningful conversations or get rid of it altogether.”

Remember, a performance review is another opportunity to recognize what your employee is doing well and what he could improve upon. And let’s not lose sight of the purpose: to get your employees to want to perform even more or better in the future. Think of the word energized. That’s how you want your employee to feel when he leaves the meeting. Unfortunately, these conversations often backfire and employees walk away from the meeting feeling anything but energized.

To do a performance review well requires some homework on your part – don’t just show up and think you can wing it. If you work in a large corporation you probably have forms that must be completed. Regardless of the process your company uses, follow these four simple steps and you’ll be prepared for a meaningful conversation with your employee:

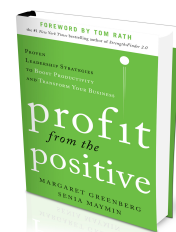
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Margaret Greenberg & Senia Maymin (McGraw-Hill, 2013).

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1. Solicit feedback from others

In most cases your employees interact with others – teammates, departments, business partners, customers, and vendors to name a few. Ask a cross-section of the people your employee interacts with the most for feedback. Solicit this feedback either through an email, phone, or in person. It can be as simple as asking these three questions:

- To get at areas of strengths: What does this employee do especially well?
- To get at weaknesses: If you could offer this employee a piece of advice, what would it be?
- To get at ideas for development: What suggestions do you have for his continued development? In particular, what experiences, exposure, and/or education would you recommend?

2. Jot down accomplishments

Make a list of what your employee has accomplished over the time period in question. Make note of what he has accomplished along with how he has accomplished it if you know.

3. Jot down areas for improvement and/or expansion

Make a list of things your employee could improve upon. Also consider areas your employee could grow into. Be mindful of the balance between accomplishments and areas for improvement. Remember you want your employee to leave the meeting feeling pumped up, not deflated.

4. Use strengths language

After you complete steps 1, 2 and 3, go back and review your employee's top five strengths. Think about how he applied one or more of his strengths in achieving results (accomplishments). Also consider how he could use one or more of his strengths to improve or expand in one of the areas you outlined for improvement. Finish writing your report by integrating your employee's strengths.

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