



Soft Skills Top Tips

Effective Performance Reviews and Appraisals

Introduction

If conducted properly, Performance reviews/appraisals ensure the effective management and evaluation of staff. Appraisals can help develop individuals, improve organisational performance, and feed into business planning. Formal performance appraisals are generally conducted annually for all staff in the organisation. Usually, each staff member is appraised by their line manager. Directors are appraised by the CEO, who is appraised by the chairman or company owners, depending on the size and structure of the organization.

Annual performance appraisals enable management and monitoring of standards, values and behaviours. Expectations and objectives are usually agreed. Staff performance appraisals also establish individual training needs and enable organisational training-needs analysis and planning.

Use these top tips to ensure you utilise the soft skills required to conduct effective performance reviews and appraisals.

- ☐ It is very important to demonstrate commitment and consistency to your team members
- ☐ Don't delay appraisals, treating them as of secondary importance; they are of primary importance to the business and individual team-members
- ☐ Conducting timely and professional appraisals shows a level of commitment to your team
- ☐ Prepare for the appraisal in advance and encourage individual team members to do so
- ☐ Make the appraisals two-way and ask for feedback as a manager
- ☐ Don't talk *at* the person - encourage *them* to talk
- ☐ Encourage the individual to say what they want – good or bad - and encourage them to do so
- ☐ Honesty is key – say what you feel, not what you think the recipient wants to hear
- ☐ Encourage discussion about any obstacles to progression that may exist
- ☐ Talk about the past, but don't let this dominate; how to move forward and learn is key
- ☐ Leave with clarity, positivity and a meaningful plan for both sides
- ☐ Always document, and allow both the individual and manager to sign the agreement
- ☐ Meet regularly for one-to-one discussions between appraisals, to discuss any issues and if things are going to plan, so there are no surprises at the next appraisal
- ☐ Let individuals in your team know that you will meet with them at their request if required.

CIPS acknowledges the contribution from Richard Masser (FCIPS)