

A guidebook for efficient practices in performance appraisal reviews with interpersonal communication

Sara Cusell



| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Author(s) Sara Cusell | |
| Deegree program Degree program in Business Service Solutions and Languages | |
| Title of publication A guidebook for efficient practices in performance appraisal reviews with interpersonal communication | Number of pages 20+13 |
| <p>This is a product -orientated bachelor's thesis with a guidebook for new supervisors as the final product. It helps and guides new supervisors through their first performance appraisal reviews. It focuses on interpersonal communication and on how to make these reviews more effective for the company and the employees. One of the main focuses is how to deliver feedback and how to ensure job satisfaction throughout these reviews. This thesis includes two components: the theory part and the guidebook. This thesis was written in the spring of 2021.</p> <p>The objective of this thesis was to create a comprehensive guidebook which gives concrete examples and advice on how to handle performance appraisal reviews. In the theory part the goal was to explain why these reviews are important and how to conduct them efficiently. It takes the viewpoint of the supervisor and explains their way of communicating. It gives supervisors essential information about performance appraisal reviews and how the culture around them has changed.</p> <p>Performance appraisal reviews have been under a lot of criticism over the past few years but that is because the system has not changed. If everyone still uses old guides, results will not be good. The world is changing and so should old company guidelines too. This guidebook provides a modern insight on this topic. It leans more to the idea of self-evaluation with the help of a supervisor. This is a timely topic since these reviews are starting to be less in use in companies and that is just because these reviews are not done efficiently and there is not enough time and effort spent on them.</p> <p>For implementing this guidebook, the most essential elements were to recognize what kind of things employees' value and appreciate. This perspective allowed the guidebook to be subordinate friendly which will automatically improve satisfaction regarding performance appraisal reviews. Subordinated are all part of a bigger system but it should be remembered that they have to be treated as individuals.</p> | |
| Key words Interpersonal communication, supervisor, subordinate, performance appraisal, performance review, employee | |

Table of contents

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 2 | Performance appraisal review | 3 |
| 2.1 | Increasing potential in employees | 5 |
| 2.2 | Building employees self-esteem..... | 6 |
| 2.3 | How company objectives improve performance | 7 |
| 2.4 | Criticism towards annual performance appraisal reviews | 9 |
| 3 | Communicating efficiently with subordinates | 11 |
| 3.1 | The contents of the supervisor's communication role | 11 |
| 3.2 | Giving constructive feedback during performance appraisal..... | 12 |
| 3.3 | Delivering feedback to employees..... | 13 |
| 3.4 | Feedback to a supervisor..... | 14 |
| 4 | Construction and design of the guidebook..... | 15 |
| 5 | Evaluation | 17 |
| 5.1 | Self-evaluation on the thesis process..... | 17 |
| 5.2 | Assessment of learning and professional growth | 17 |
| | References..... | 19 |
| | Appendices..... | 21 |
| | Appendix 1. A guidebook for performance appraisal reviews for new supervisors..... | 21 |

1 Introduction

In modern society communication is more important than ever especially in business environments. With the fast-changing communication systems and more and more people talking to each other via numerous communication platforms it is easily forgotten what exactly is good communication. Getting a message across to your employees so that they can understand can be challenging at times. A lot can be lost between the lines especially in multicultural organizations. People want to be understood and people also want to understand and in order for that to happen employees and employers need common comprehension about how to get information delivered around in an organization so that everyone apprehends what is going on. Performance appraisal reviews are situations when communication often is insufficient, and the information is not delivered in the right way. These reviews play a major part in employees development which is why this subject is an important one. This thesis is about effective interpersonal communication between the supervisor and subordinate during a performance appraisal review.

The employee performance appraisal is an interesting topic because it is key when talking about the satisfaction of the employees. Multiple studies show that performance review discussions have been increasing job satisfaction and motivation and has been a huge positive impact on job performance, which makes this an extremely important subject. Working together towards common goals requires good communication in an organization. It is beneficial for the company to improve and develop in interpersonal communication between supervisors and subordinates since the staff of an organization are also the organizations brand ambassadors which makes it important to give your staff a good experience. Both the supervisor and the subordinate have the responsibility to maintain a trusting and transparent relationship with each other. Employees want to feel connected to the company and want to feel like they are a part of the company's journey and through good communication practices people feel more connected to the company their working for.

1.1 Objectives and methods of the thesis

The goal of this thesis is to give first time supervisors clear guidelines on how they can execute excellent manners in communication with their subordinate in an employee performance appraisal review in a western business environment. It is a productive thesis, and it will include a guidebook which explains which kind of things to consider when interacting with your subordinates face-to-face in an employee performance appraisal review and

how to get the best potential of your employees. The theory part explains why it is important to develop this subject inside companies and to give more insight on communicating, giving feedback and focuses on object-oriented work. The thesis will also explain different theories about performance appraisal and feedback and why these theories work or don't work and which ways are the best ways to actually conduct these discussions.

Many people who are in a supervisor position for the first time are unsure how to handle certain interpersonal encounters such as performance appraisal discussions or feedback discussions. This guidebook will help solve that problem for supervisors. These skills make supervisors look professional and that in return gives the employees more trust. Good interpersonal skills help the motivation of employees and increases the chances of them staying longer at the company. This subject is also timely now since people want to develop and get more feedback on how they are performing so that they can improve themselves. Employees become smarter all the time and want to be a part of giving feedback to higher ranks in order to create a dialogue. The bureaucracy inside companies is starting to fade away.

2 Performance appraisal review

Performance appraisals are a mandatory formal discussion that takes place at least once a year. It is a discussion between supervisor and subordinate where the subordinate has the opportunity to hear where she/he has failed and where succeeded, where she/he can still improve in and to check other things such as job description. The success of ones job is measured against the earlier agreed objectives. The goal of a performance appraisal is to help the employee to reach his/her full potential and to help them to develop as an employee. This discussion should not just be for subordinate but also for supervisors. For the supervisor, this discussion offers a chance to hear thoughts and views on his/her job performance and a chance to confirm common objectives towards which you should be working on. This discussion also should include topics such as performance target, special questions and making sure that the interpersonal communication is working efficiently. The prerequisite for this discussion is of course that the immediate supervisor has been observing the work of the subordinate on a regular basis and knows the working field well. These performance reviews usually have four stages: preparation, evaluation of work performance evaluation, the future work year and follow-up discussions. The success rate of these conversations often depends on the management team and if they understand that it is an extremely important part in leading people. The conclusion of a performance appraisal should be a concrete action plan for the future. (Juholin 2013, 206-208.)

The importance of interpersonal communication between supervisor and subordinate has increased significantly since the companies has changed their approach on how to manage employees. In the modern working place, a good way to communicate with each other is through dialogue and changing ideas and also accepting feedback as a supervisor. The hypodermic-syringe model which was developed in the 1930s was a popular theory throughout the other half of the 1900s. This linear communication theory suggests that messages are just injected to people's brains. It is then expected that the audience is passive and that the same message can be sent to everyone and that everybody would understand it the same way. In a business environment this was used in a way which prevented there to be any dialogue between supervisors and subordinates. Management just sent the message across to employees and expected them to understand it. The old syringe model is not sufficient enough anymore and more modern approach is needed. Some supervisors need more modern guidelines on how to handle encounters with employees.

Performance appraisal reviews should be done with Interpersonal communication. The benefits of good interpersonal communication skills help with numerus things inside a

company. It helps with problem solving and it builds trust. If done in a constructive way, it also helps with aligning business goals and strategies so that employees can be more aware of the direction that they are working to. Furthermore, it can help the culture of the company since with good communication skills there should be less misunderstandings, confusion, and conflicts. Employees will also feel more recognised when supervisors conduct good communication skills, and this show effective management and leadership. It improves success of employees and via that the whole company is benefiting from it. Interpersonal communication is a process where two or more people exchange ideas, feelings, or information with each other. This can happen in a non- verbal or verbal methods. The level of people's interpersonal communication skills can be measures through how effectively one can transfer a message to others. Interpersonal communication includes body language and gestures, facial expressions, and the tone of your voice. Interpersonal communication is usually referred to when talking about face-to-face interaction. (Smarp 2020.)

Performance appraisal is linked to feedback and how employees can develop even more in their position in the company. As a supervisor it is important to make sure that subordinates reach their full potential and in performance appraisal conversations it is essential to discuss the satisfaction of the subordinate, hence this will elaborate the situation of the person and their possible needs. The work of a supervisor is multidimensional, and it contains many different tasks. A supervisor is the employer's representative. In a business setting a supervisor is giving direction and guidance to a supervisee so that they are working according to plan and keeping a time schedule. A supervisor is a person who oversees other people's activities and helps them. He/she directs, guides, and controls a subordinate's work performance. Supervisors' main tasks are to maximise an employee's productivity and also, to help them with work related problems and helping them to improve and develop their skills at the organization. The supervisor should be concentrated on getting the best result and quality from his/her employees. (Sos Political science and public administration.)

A subordinate is usually a person who works below the supervisor. There are different hierarchies in different companies but the most common one is where the subordinate is in a second rank. A subordinate usually has to respond and report to someone at a higher rank than themselves. (indeed 2021.)

2.1 Increasing potential in employees

A commonly used model Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs model can be seen as something that supervisors need to keep in mind. This model describes the linear growth of an individual. During performance reviews it is good to discuss if every need of the employee materializes. The first level of the linear growth is physiological needs, which are: air, water, food shelter etc. The second level is safety needs which include personal security, employment, health etc. The third one is love and belonging which consists of friendship, family and connection. The fourth level is about esteem which is respect, status, recognition, strength etc. And the final step is self-actualization. Self-Actualization is the desire to become the most that one can be, a person has reached their full potential. All the other needs need to be fulfilled before a person can enter the last level. This last step of self-actualization is the level that a company wants to get their employees on. When an individual is on this level, his/hers work input is significantly better. Self-Actualization is something that plays a big part in a company and the relationship that an employee has with their supervisor. It is of high importance for a company to have supervisors whose goal is actually to develop employees rather just wanting them to get the job done as fast as possible. An employee's esteem needs have to be fulfilled at the working place with right development and support from supervisors. Once these needs are satisfied can an employee move on to the self-actualization phase. To reach this stage is vital and allows the employee to have more motivation to reach and work towards their own and their company goals. This will also allow the employee to feel high job satisfaction and excellent performance. (Charles T. Hampton Jr 2019)

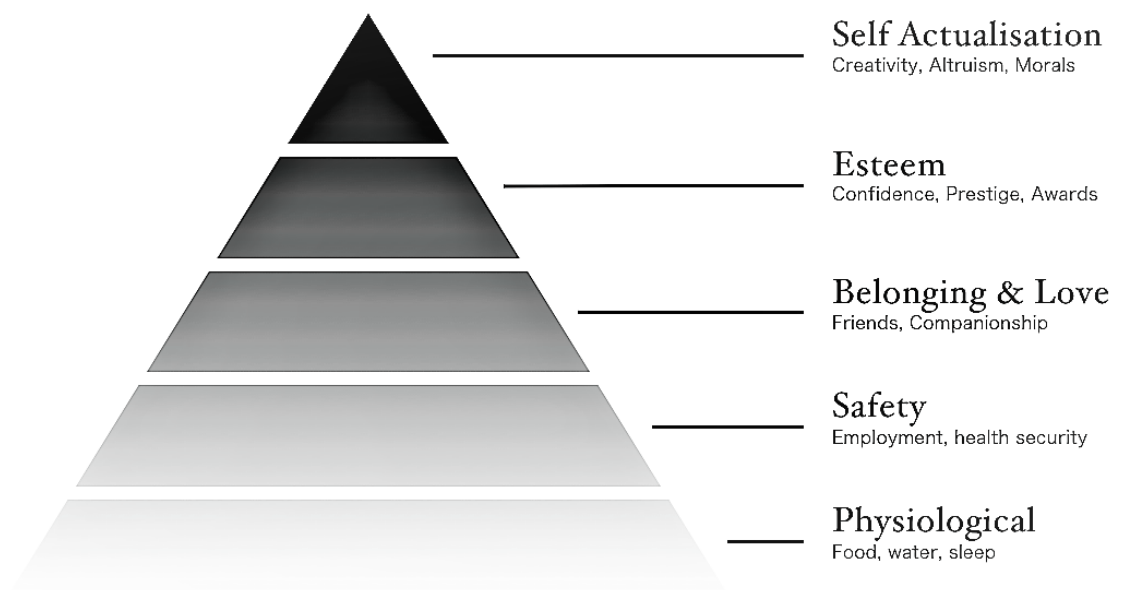


Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (after UX Collective 2020)

2.2 Building employees self-esteem

As explained before employee's self-esteem needs are important to be met in a company in order for them to thrive. As a supervisor you have to create an environment where an employee can be its best self and therefor achieve their goals. Employees with good self-esteem trust their self and their talent and potential. It is proven that with good self-esteem employees tend to be better at decision-making, having better interpersonal relationships and be more effective in a dynamic working environment. As a supervisor it is important to see your employees as people and connect with them on a personal level. This is why feedback should be given in person face to face. Interpersonal communication is the key in feedback conversations so that there can be a connection, which is something that is essential for people if they want to be honest about how they feel and explain if something is not satisfying them in their work.

A supervisors actions reflect on how a subordinate will feel about them. Respecting the employee and trusting them are key factors in creating a better environment to grow self-esteem. Giving a sense of autonomy to your employees will help build trust, which is needed in order for the employee to feel satisfied in his/her job. Discussing strengths and how they fit into the work task with a subordinate and developing those skills will also help them to feel more secure since it helps them to realize their skills are being acknowledged and used appropriately. Another important thing is to really concentrate on communication. It is essential that as a supervisor you are being understood and that you always make time to explain or to answer any questions. To have success in building ones self-esteem a supervisor needs to also reward his/hers subordinate this is a crucial step in giving feedback. When employees get rewarded, they are more motivated in the future since they know their work has been well received. Allowing your employees to fail or to make mistakes is equally as important than rewarding them. It should be made known to employees that they can learn from their mistakes. As a supervisor this in particular is something to pay attention to. How a supervisor reacts to a mistake made by a subordinate sets the tone for the relationship between the two. The reaction that a supervisor gives is always a message for the subordinate on how they feel about the work that has been done, hence it is crucial to pay attention to what kind of body language or what kind of words a supervisor uses in a situation that has not gone according to plan. In a case of a problem or mistake the subordinate should first try to analyse the situation themselves and realize what has happened and why and how to prevent it. After this the reaction from the supervisor to the mistakes should be a constructive discussion where the supervisor can help

the employee to fix the problem if needed and possibly explain how to avoid it in the future. (Raghavan 2019).

Effective supervisors encourage their subordinates to be creative and to engage in work culture. And the most important thing is that they give constructive feedback. This can help boost self-esteem if it is done in a respectful way. Feedback is ought to be a dialogue so as a supervisor you always have to give the subordinate a chance to give you feedback as well. When feedback goes both ways, it creates an environment where the subordinate can feel that they are on the same level as their supervisor. It creates trust and reduces misunderstandings and makes the subordinate feel like they are respected and that their voice/opinion is valued. All this will boost an employees' self-esteem.

2.3 How company objectives improve performance

Peter Ducker who is thought to be the father of corporate management developed Management by Objectives (MBO) in 1954 in his book "The practice of management" as a counter theory to a common understanding in the 1900's that effectiveness in communication is considered to be a natural and expected outcome. Ducker understood that this is not always the case and developed his own theory. According to Ducker effectiveness is the foundation of every company instead of efficiency. MBO is about a certain type of interaction particularly between supervisor and subordinate. According to MBO hierarchies within the company need to be changed. In the 1950's there was need for commitment, responsibility and maturity. MBO was designed to make the employee and the organization agree and decide on objectives. This helps employees to realize expectations of them and set individual goals. This helps employees to attain personal potential and the companies targets. This includes also keeping in mind the companies' strategies.

The Five-Step MBO Process

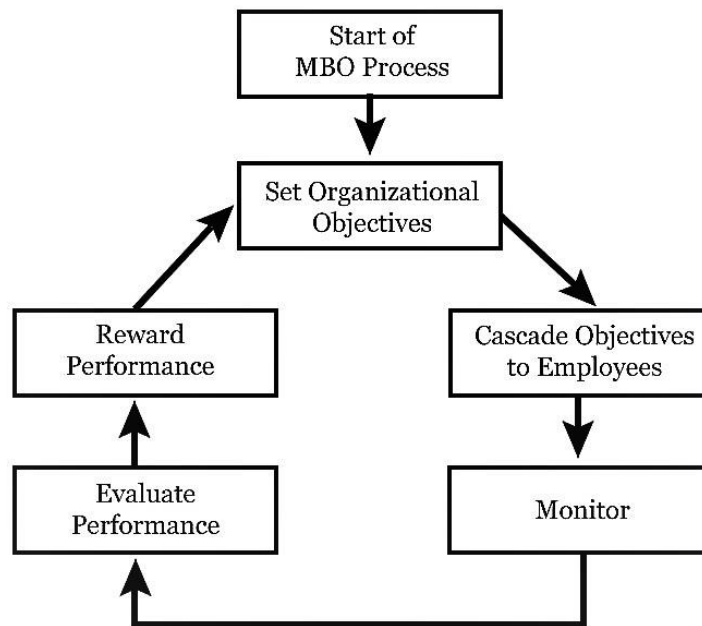


Figure 2. The MBO process (After communication theory s.a)

The figure 2 illustrates the process of MBO. The start of the whole process is to set common organizational objectives. Supervisors need to participate in the strategic planning so that it is ensured that the plans are implemented correctly. Managers are expected to apply performance systems accordingly to the strategy of the company. Therefore it is necessary to discuss company strategies with subordinates as well. When the supervisor knows the objectives, he/she needs to share them with subordinates, so they also know how their work benefits the company and therefore increases the feeling of their job being meaningful and taking pride in their achievements. In his book Drucker explained that objectives for an employee should be discussed together and they should be challenging but obtainable. Subordinates should receive daily feedback and it should be concentrated on rewarding instead of penalizing. Drucker emphasizes that feedback is to be given in a way that helps an individual to develop personal growth. The benefits of this is increased communication between supervisor and subordinate. The success rate of MBO is heavily based on the actions of supervisors and their implementation of the process. (Communication theory.)

Advantages of MBO:

- Objectives are discussed before being agreed upon directed (communication theory.)
- There is participation in setting of goals, deciding the action course and in making decisions directed (communication theory.)
- There is increased motivation and job satisfaction directed (communication theory.)
- Relationships between the managers and those under them improve directed (communication theory.)
- There is better communication within the organisation and increased coordination directed (communication theory.)
- Managers can ensure that objectives of the subordinates are linked to the organization's objectives directed (communication theory.)
- Objectives can be set at all levels and in various departments directed (communication theory.)
- Objectives can be set individually for each department especially in promotion, marketing, and financial planning directed (communication theory.)
- MBO can be applied in any organisation directed (communication theory.)
- Traits of MBO can be found in industries like the electronic media where performance objectives are carefully established and monitored, particularly in the areas of promotion, marketing, and financial planning directed (communication theory.)
- In an MBO system, employees are more self-directed than boss-directed (communication theory.)

This theory has also received criticism. The flaw that has been pointed out is that it focuses too much on objectives and not enough on planning to take systematic action. If the employees become too objective orientated, they might think that the goal needs to be reached by any means necessary which leads to using any time saving methods which can lead to decreased quality in products or services.

2.4 Criticism towards annual performance appraisal reviews

Performance appraisal reviews have been criticized over the years but nevertheless it is still a popular practice in many companies. If it is conducted in an efficient manner, it can be extremely useful, but many times supervisors do not know how to do it in the right way which can lead to an unsuccessful result where the subordinate feels bad after the review. It has also been pointed out that the annual review is not enough and that these kinds of discussions should take place more often than just once a year. Situations can change rapidly inside a company and therefore employees need feedback much more often.

It is common for new supervisors to make the performance appraisal review more into a lecture where the supervisor is the only one that is talking and telling how the subordinate performed during the year and what she/he can still improve. This is a wrong approach since performance appraisal should always be a mutual conversation where the subordinate can talk about his/her experiences. Sometimes also the contents of the performance appraisal review can get mixed up. A lot of the times a subordinate will only hear feedback and discussing the employee's development, skills and abilities is not taken into account. If employee's do not receive any developmental evaluation or improvement ideas it will not make the employee work any better the next year. Results will stay the same, and in

many cases that is not what companies want. Companies want to thrive and always do better than before because they want to grow. Hence if the contribution to the organization from the employee's is not improving nothing will change. (The balance careers 2020.)

3 Communicating efficiently with subordinates

In order to understand how feedback is to be given it is first important to understand how a supervisor communicates and which aspects it includes. The way a supervisor communicates affects the motivation and mood of employees. Many companies still use the old ways of leading, in which interpersonal communication is not valued that much. The companies still take examples of framework that has been set in the 1900's. These old models simply don't work anymore, since they are not motivating or inspiring enough. Steve Jobs is a good example of someone who used a different approach to leading his employees. He often arranged spontaneous meetings and random conversations here and there which were always held face to face. Apple is one of the biggest companies in the world and they are extremely successful. This is proof that interpersonal communication face to face can really boost the employees to think differently and that helps them to create new things. Management communication is not supposed to be one sided where upper management just informs employees on what to do. It is about interaction between management and the subordinates. It is also proven to be of good practice when management mingles with employees. Even just walking in the office amongst employees helps them to think about them in a more personal way. Of course, in big companies this is not always possible but then the immediate superior should make sure to execute these practises as well. (Juholin 2013,197-200.)

One of the most common reasons for people to resign from their job is the bad relationship with their immediate superiors. The job of a supervisor is very different compared to any other job description. They are the link between the organisation and their own unit. Their communication has to be excellent and there should not be any misunderstandings. Therefore, it is extremely important that the supervisor communicates with his/her unit in a comprehensive way. Interpersonal communication is better in this case than mediated communication. The presence of a supervisor already makes a huge difference. A supervisor needs to be empathetic, sturdy, inspirational and assertive. These qualities make a supervisor successful in his/her work. A supervisor however cannot be too involved in personal issues of the employees since this can create problems with performing his/her job properly. (Juholin 2013, 202-203.)

3.1 The contents of the supervisor's communication role

The figure 3 which is seen below is designed by Roger D'aprinx in 1996 and it defines the responsibilities of a manager. It is to be read clockwise. It shows that because of human nature we are firstly focused on ourselves and only after that we start to think about other people and other concepts. The first half is individualistic, and the second half focuses

more on larger entities. So peoples focus shifts when we are first clear and comfortable ourselves. Even though this model is already more than 20 years old it is still valid. However, the figure has to be interpreted from a different angle, a modern angle since times have changed. It is important to see that the answers to the questions seen in the model arise by interaction with others and not just to be pondered by ourselves. (Juholin 2013, 204.)

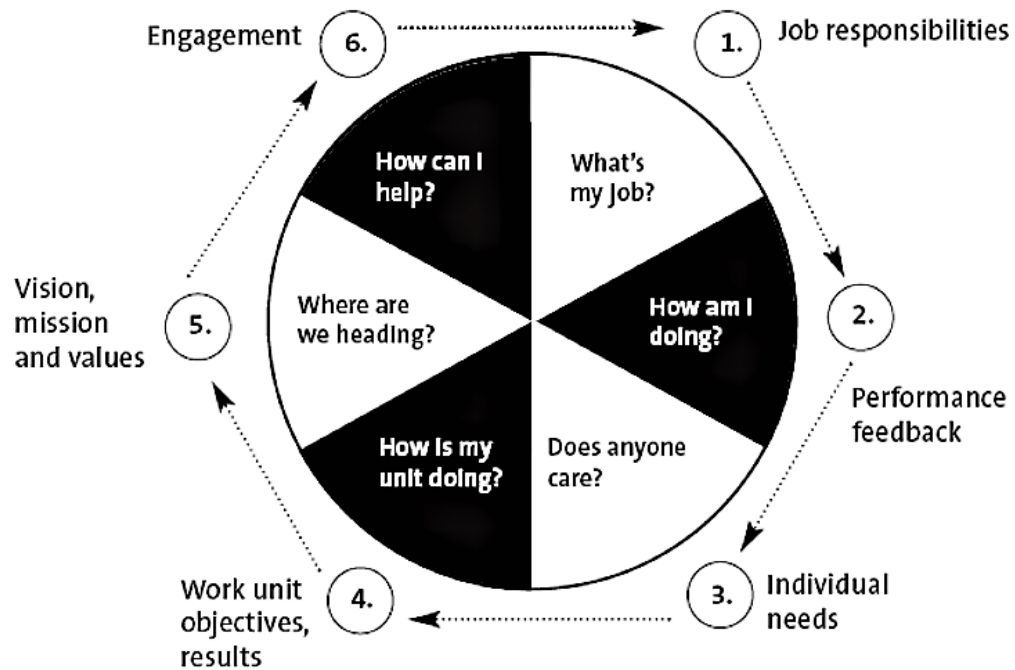


Figure 3. D'aprix manager responsibilities (After Juholin 2013)

3.2 Giving constructive feedback during performance appraisal

Feedback can be positive or negative but since negative feedback is harder to deliver and people find themselves struggling with that more, this chapter focuses on how to give negative feedback also known as criticism and usually it is given during a feedback discussion. It is important to note that positive feedback is as important or even more important even and should not be forgotten. Giving constructive criticism is not easy. But it is essential since it evolves the performance of employees. Giving feedback in a way that it is constructive means that the feedback is framed and delivered in an appropriate manner. There are two main parts that should be included when giving someone feedback and those are observation and impact. This means that when one gives feedback to someone, they should explain the observation they have made and then proceed to explain what the impact has been for the business of that behaviour. When a person sees the cause and consequence, it will help them to understand the issue better and change the problematic actions or behaviour. Criticism should also be given regularly and in direct way. (Juholin 2013, 206.)

3.3 Delivering feedback to employees

There are different ways to approach delivering feedback. Most commonly, the immediate supervisor has the role of giving feedback, but other co-workers might have better insights sometimes and feedback amongst employees should be elaborated more. However, it is still an extremely popular method in companies that the higher rank gives employees the feedback. One of the most famous used models for delivering criticism is the hamburger model which is also known as the sandwich model. According to the hamburger model feedback is to be given in a way that first you say something positive and compliment them on something good they have done after this you say the negative criticism and then you end it again with saying something positive. This can work in some situations, but there has been research which does not support this model. The problem with this particular model is that it can undermine the criticism that you are trying to give someone. The popularity of this comes from the thought that it is easier for people to hear something negative when it is given with positive feedback. But this however is an assumption. Some people prefer the negative feedback just as it is as directly as possible. Many people use this model also because they feel uncomfortable giving negative feedback themselves, so starting with something positive can make it easier to start the discussion. However, this can cause the listener not to pay enough attention to the actual feedback which is negative, and the goal of a feedback discussion is to learn something. It is sometimes better to be more transparent and just be straightforward with what you are going to say. An alternative for this hamburger model would be a more straightforward approach. In the beginning of the discussion, it should be stated and shared how the discussion is going to go and ask if that is okay. This works because everyone in the discussion now jointly knows the planned sequence of the discussion. Finally, it would be good for the person giving negative feedback to tell that he/she does not necessarily have all the information regarding the issue. This allows there to be an open atmosphere for further discussion. (Schwarz 2013.)

There are many ways how to construct the content of the feedback you are going to give. In delivering criticism it is good to remember that how you say something is equally as important to what you are going to say. But the key point in giving criticism is to make a change in a behaviour. During feedback discussions it is efficient to frame the discussion in a way that focuses on how to change and take the pressure away from any personal things but to really distinguish that the conversation is about action and behaviour. This is immensely relevant since the goal is to build and strengthen a person. It is necessary for a supervisor to use emotional intelligence in these situations. Using empathy helps to form

the feedback in a way that will make the receiver feel more comfortable. Stayin objective and showing respect are key when giving censure. (Forbes coaches council 2017.)

3.4 Feedback to a supervisor

Everyone wants to get feedback about their job. And it is actually more important to give feedback to supervisors than employees, since they are the ones making major decisions and who have to make their subordinates recognize what is expected of them and to innovate them. The information which they are giving needs to be comprehensible. The employees need to give feedback on communication and share their satisfaction about the way they are leading. Feedback should be given regularly and in a direct manner. This leads to the fact that the supervisor can change his/her actions in a way that is wanted by the subordinates instead of changing his actions in a way he/she just thinks is appropriate. Feedback is essential for organisations since it gives an insight on failures and success. This knowledge can be used to enhance the atmosphere inside the organisation. (Juholin 2013, 205.)

4 Construction and design of the guidebook

The approach to this guidebook has been throughout the importance of communication skills and improving employees work performance and satisfaction. There are many things to consider in performance appraisal reviews and from the supervisor's view point it can be challenging because the responsibility is big. Some supervisors and subordinates have doubts about performance appraisal reviews since they might have had bad experiences with them. Therefore, my goal was to create such a guide which avoids these unpleasant feelings and encourages employees to see them as a good thing. The guide has a broader perspective on performance appraisal reviews, focusing on the employees' individual level but also on the organizational level. This guidebook gives tools for a comfortable conversation from which the employee can learn something and better themselves and leave the discussion with a good feeling. This guide will show employees that these reviews are valid, fair and beneficial. It focuses on creating a good relationship and bond between supervisors and their subordinates since that is beneficial in the future for both parties.

4.1 Guidebook process description

Before starting off with the guidebook I had to think about the initial question of this thesis: Which things does a new supervisor have to take into consideration when giving a first performance appraisal review? And additionally, how to give feedback in a constructive way? And how to make employees reach their full potential and satisfaction in their job? Based on these questions I was able to make a guidebook that has solutions to these problems. The process started with the literature review, I gathered the information and researched which methods and procedures are the most beneficial to use in performance appraisal reviews to get the best results. Then I organized the theory by themes. The topics which are covered in the theory part emerge also in the guidebook which creates a dialogue between them. Finding the best methods was challenging because many people approach and react to performance appraisal reviews in different ways which leads to the difficulty of making guidelines which suit everybody. The guidebook provides concrete advice and gives an insight into process of a performance appraisal review.

The process of making the guidebook was interesting because there were a lot of things to take into consideration. For instance, thinking about cultural differences was also something I needed to think about. This guidebook is a good guide in western societies, but other countries have different kind of working culture, ethics, morals etc. I had to narrow it down to the western part of the world. It is important to keep in mind that western societies are also already quite different from each other so situational and cultural intelligence

is required if this guidebook is to be adapted in different countries. Filtering the right information was one of the most time-consuming things in this process. There was a massive amount of information and so picking the right references proved to be hard sometimes. As someone who has not been a supervisor it was also challenging to think of this from their perspective. On the other hand, I also think it was an advantage because as an employee I have a better understanding of how it feels to be on the receiving end of these reviews hence, I know which kind of things employees in general do not like and what kind of things they appreciate. I came to notice that producing this kind of a manual requires a lot of research and knowledge about some psychological behaviours and an understanding of basic emotional intelligence. While writing the thesis, I was able to use many skills which I have learned from my personal life as well as the skills which I have obtained in Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences.

5 Evaluation

In this part of the thesis I will evaluate the results and the writing process of the thesis and how I managed to do it. The evaluation will also include assessment of my own learning and how it has affected my professional growth. This chapter will conclude the thesis.

5.1 Self-evaluation on the thesis process

Making this thesis was definitely difficult at times but despite that, I am satisfied with the results since my objective for this thesis was achieved. The result is a useful guide which I believe can help many people and which can change opinions on what has been thought earlier to be unpleasant. That is why I think I reached my objective. Achieving this objective however was not always easy. In these kind of time consuming big projects it is important to schedule your work but even when you do, schedules do not always hold. This project took a lot of planning and self-management which I am good at. However, at times it turned out to be more strenuous than I thought. The part where I succeeded well was the assembly of the contents for the guidebook. I was able to pin out which topics were relevant from my theory part and write those in my guidebook. The area where I found the most difficulties in was to find reliable sources and to find accurate studies and articles. Another area which was hard at times was academic writing, but eventually I was able to get a hang of it. I also improved as a writer and noticed certain things about my writing which I was able to correct when analysing my own text.

5.2 Assessment of learning and professional growth

I learned a lot about myself during this process and I experienced different feelings and situations throughout the writing process. During the writing of this thesis, I learned to work independently and to trust myself and my own skills more. I consider that a very valuable lesson which will be beneficial to me in the future. Also learning how to do proper research and reading different studies was interesting to me and I gained a lot of knowledge via that. Creating a guidebook suited me very well since I was able to use my creative side and it was very hands-on kind of work which I prefer. It gave me an insight on what kind of work could suit me. This topic was interesting to me so writing about it did not feel tiring or boring. It also helped me to find out what kind of work I might want to do in the future. This experience helped me to grow as a person and changed my mindset about certain things.

For my professional development writing this thesis was a big learning moment. This was the first time making such a comprehensive research paper and first I thought it would be

a bit scary since it is such a big part of my studies. Gradually via making a plan and chopping down the big things into smaller levels it started to shape itself and I felt more confident in writing it. The topic that I chose also contributes to my future work life as I have gained confidence in doing something completely new and that even though something might seem extremely difficult in the beginning, I will always manage to do it. This process also taught me how I act under stress and how to reduce it. That is an extremely valuable tool to use in work like. This topic gave me intriguing insights on performance appraisal reviews which I am now able to use in my own working life. When the situation comes for me to participate in these kind of reviews I know what to expect and what to do myself.

6 References

Smarp 2020. Definition, importance and Must-Have Skills. Luettavissa: <https://blog.smarp.com/interpersonal-communication-definition-importance-and-must-have-skills> Luettu: 11.3.2021

Indeed 2021. What is a suoridante -supervisor relationship in the workplace. Luettavissa: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/subordinate-supervisor-relationship> Luettu 18.3.2021

Sos Political science and public administration. Luettavissa: http://www.ji-waji.edu/pdf/ecourse/political_science/MBA-HRD-402-MANPOWER%20POLICY%20AND%20PLANNING-MEANING%20&%20SIGNIFICANCE%20SUPERVISION-converted.pdf Luettu: 17.3.2021

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville 2019. Supervisor-Subordinate Relationship and its Effect on Job Satisfaction and Job performance. Luettavissa: https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3323&context=utk_chanhonoproj Luettu: 07.4.2021

UX Collective 2020. A practical view and application od psychographic segmentation in UX. Luettavissa: <https://uxdesign.cc/a-practical-view-and-application-of-psychographic-segmentation-in-ux-3801048729e4> Luettu: 07.4.2021

Mystory 2019. How to boost employees' self-esteem at work. Luettavissa: <https://yours-tory.com/mystory/how-to-boost-employees-self-esteem-at-work> Luettu: 16.4.2021

Juholin, E. 2013. Communicare! Kasva viestinnän ammattilaiseksi. MIF. Kopijyvä.

Forbes 2017. 15 ways to offer truly constructive feedback. Luettavissa: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/06/19/15-ways-to-offer-truly-constructive-feedback/?sh=697cb6306e9b> Luettu: 30.4.2021

Harvard Business Review 2013. The "Sandwich Approach". Undermines Your Feedback. Luettavissa: <https://hbr.org/2013/04/the-sandwich-approach-undermin> Luettu: 30.4.2021

Communication theory. Management by objectives (Ducker). Luettavissa: <https://www.communicationtheory.org/management-by-objectives-drucker/> Luettu: 6.5.2021

MMA 2016. Millainen on hyvä kehityskeskustelu- vinkkejä esimiehelle. Luettavissa: <https://mma.fi/ajankohtaista/artikkelit/millainen-on-hyva-kehityskeskustelu-vinkkeja-esimiehelle/> Luettu: 12.5.2021

The balance careers 2020. 4 common problems with performance appraisals. Luettavissa: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/performance-appraisal-problems-1918857> Luettu: 18.5.2021

Kim, T & Holzer, M 2014. Public Employees and performance appraisal: A study of antecedents to employees' perception of the process. SAGE. Luettavissa: file:///C:/Users/cusel/Downloads/PerformanceappraisalTaeheeKim_ROPPA2014.pdf Luettu: 21.5.2021

Appendices

Appendix 1. A guidebook for performance appraisal reviews for new supervisors



Performance appraisal review

A guidebook for new supervisors

Table of contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| In general | 2 |
| Things to do before the review | 3 |
| When and where should the review be | 4 |
| Layout of the discussion | 5 |
| The contents of the main topics | 6 |
| Get your employees talking | 8 |
| Body language | 9 |
| Communication and more communication | 10 |
| Efficiency tips | 11 |

This guidebook for new supervisors explains which things are to be considered in a face-to-face performance appraisal review. Performance appraisal reviews are an extremely important part of employees development inside an organization. This guidebook will help you to prepare and get through these reviews smoothly and efficiently step by step.

Key preparation points

To do before the the review:

- Inform the subordinate about the review 2-3 months prior.
 - Think about what exactly are you going to say. Make an agenda and notes.
 - Some examples about their job performance: pros & cons.
 - Check necessary data.
 - Think if there is anything in particular you want to discuss.
- 03.



When and where should the review be?

The place matters!

The performance appraisal review should be held in a neutral environment. A supervisors own office is not a good choice since the setting puts the supervisor more in power. A meeting room or a common area space are good options. If you choose a common area make sure that you have reserved it such a way that nobody else can hear the onversation.

Timing is everything!

The review should be held at a time when the subordinate is not under extreme stress or pressure. A preferable time would be towards the end of the year since then enough time has passed for the supervisor to get the full image of the work performance. It is important that the subordinate has time to think about the changes before the next year so he/she can apply them.

04.

Lay out the schedule of the discussion

The first thing to do when your subordinate joins you is to tell them how the conversation is going to proceed and why these reviews are held. Tell them which things you are going to discuss. Below you will see the main topics to be discussed:

- The objectives, results and accomplishments
- Job satisfaction as well as satisfaction regarding achieved objectives
- Job description and its possible developments
- Resources and a personal development plan
- Discussion about atmosphere at the working place
- Discussion about the organizational operations



05.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL REVIEW | SARA CUSELL 2021

The contents of the main topics

- Dialogue is everything!

06.

Discussion about the organizational operations

Organizational goals

It is important to recap the organizational goals and to talk about how the work of subordinates contributes to the company's set targets. A supervisor should refer to MBO and use that as motivation for employees.

Job satisfaction

Communication

Ask about employees job satisfaction and how it possibly can be enhanced. Be sure to communicate openly with your employees at all times. Emphasize the importance of face-to-face discussions. Satisfaction with ones job is of high importance and should be discussed more often than once a year.

Resources and a personal development plan

Needs

The performance appraisal review is a good opportunity to check on the employees. Ask them if they feel like all of their needs are met so that they can reach their full potential and improve themselves.

Concentrate on their personal growth and discuss ways how to develop it.

Job description and it's possible developments

Feedback

Get straight to the point but be friendly. Ask and listen to the subordinate and remember to keep it as a conversation. While giving negative feedback do not scold but instead ask how actions or behavior could be changed in order to prevent unsatisfying results.

Remember to give more positive feedback than negative.

The objectives, results and accomplishments

Objectives

Check if objectives have been met and which objectives are to be set for the next year. Discuss about previous objectives and how they have been reached. Ensure that there is a clear action plan for the next year which will ensure future development.

07.

Get your employees talking

- Ask for feedback!



Performance appraisal reviews are a two way street!

Encourage your your subordinates to give feedback or criticisms to you. Be open minded and see it as a learning experience. Show that you really listen to them by writing down their feedback points. Ask if something is unclear and discuss together how to improve your behavior or actions.

Body language



Pay attention to your tone of voice

Be sure to speak with a supportive and warm tone. Do not raise your voice at any point. Remember to nod once in a while and say "yes" or "mhh" to show the other person that you are listening. Communicate caring and listening also with facial expressions.



Mind your posture!

Sit next to or opposite your subordinate and maintain an open posture. Avoid crossing your arms. Try not to have a posture where you communicate dominance. Stay relaxed and smile. Generate a positive environment for both of you. Try to keep eye contact while you are speaking and listening.

9.

Communication and more communication!

During the review make sure you communicate very clearly and make sure that the subordinate understands exactly what you mean. Supervisors are the link between the organisation and their own unit hence communication needs to be excellent and there should not be any misunderstandings. It is extremely important that supervisors communicates with his/her unit in a comprehensive way.

Efficiency tips

- Remember to make the subordinate comfortable. This creates trust and enhances communication.
- Performance appraisal reviews are supposed to be a dialogue. Supervisors should only talk 20% of the time while the subordinate should talk the remaining 80%.
- Avoid assuming things when talking about performance or about an example where something has not been done in the most preferable way. Always ask how the subordinate feels about it and give them a chance to explain what happened without judgement.
- Talk about strengths and how they fit into the subordinates work description. Discuss how to develop those skills furthermore. This will also help them to feel more secure in their position and helps them to realize their skills are being acknowledged.
- Try to have other feedback discussions more often.
- Be transparent with everything you say and focus on the future.

Good luck!

