Three Tips for More Effective Performance Management

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When youâ€™re going on a trip, the most important thing to do to reach your destination is to plan ahead. Effective performance management is much like planning a trip. You must provide employees with a clear path to get them from point A to point B, and give them the tools they need to help them reach their destination. Providing an employee with clear goals and expectations, giving a meaningful performance review, recognizing an employeeâ€™s contributions and utilizing performance management software to streamline the process can turn a below average employee into one that meets and exceeds expectations.

Provide Clear Goals and Expectations

The "Performance Measurement, Management, and Appraisal Sourcebook" reports 70 percent of management fail to provide employees clear goals and directions. An employee must be told what tasks to accomplish, instructed on how to complete them and how the achievement of tasks can benefit the organization. Also, an employee must be instructed on his expected behavior. An employer who just gives orders but fails to give meaningful instruction can quickly bring down morale.

Meaningful Performance Reviews

The "Performance Measurement, Management, and Appraisal Sourcebook" also reports 70 percent of employees complain that management fails to give them an annual review that realistically reflects their performance and provides them with ways to improve. Many performance reviews use numerical rating systems to judge an employeeâ€™s performance. This is a subjective system which tends to rate one employee against another.

A better system is one thatâ€™s similar to athletic coaching. Management should coach an employee throughout the review period, letting them know if they are meeting goals, and advising them on areas of improvement. They should provide a game plan for an employee to follow and strategies and training to help them improve. Communication is an integral part of performance management and the results of a performance review should never be a surprise to an employee. Work during the upcoming review period should never be decided on by management without first discussing it with the employee. This could lead to a lack of buy-in and decreased morale. Itâ€™s important to consistently follow-up on the employeeâ€™s progress throughout the review period.

Employee Recognition

Employees need recognition for their efforts. Over 70 percent of employees feel management does not appreciate them and the jobs they do. Rewarding an employee for a job well done lets him know he has made a positive contribution to the organization, which may motivate him to consistently exceed expectations. Failing to acknowledge an employeeâ€™s efforts can turn an exceptional employee to one that simply begins coming to work just to collect a paycheck. Recognition does not always have to be monetary; a simple "Thank You" can change an employeeâ€™s attitude towards his job. Regardless of whether an employee has gone above and beyond expectations, or he simply met managementâ€™s expectations with a good attitude, part of effective performance management is letting the employee know he is appreciated.

Utilizing Performance Management Software

Effective performance management includes communication, instruction and recognition of an employeeâ€™s performance. A good performance management software can tie all of these individual entities together, greatly streamlining the process for the HR department. Finding the right performance management software makes achieving a common goal much easier because it gives employees a way to track their own performance.

It also allows employees and management to set notification alerts to keep tasks on track--a virtual to-do list that ensures nothing gets overlooked. Utilizing performance management software to communicate with employees and track performance encourages accountability and increases performance. It helps with the review process by ensuring all information is available to both management and employees and helps with HR decisions, such as training, development and compensation.

Taleoâ€™s performance management system uses talent intelligence to drive better business results and retain top performers by transforming the typical performance review process into a continuous dialogue between managers and employees. It integrates with desktop productivity tools which enables employees and managers to provide regular and timely updates and feedback. Continuous employee performance evaluation conversations ensure that employees are being regularly assessed and coached rather than just automating the annual performance review process.

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