

Three Keys to Performance Management



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The role of ‘performance manager’ or keeper of others performance is one charged with a host of possibilities. These possibilities include the chance to mentor and coach new talent to levels of extraordinary performance. This level of direct responsibility can often send new and early supervisors to great lengths to avoid giving direct feedback that might be deemed negative or hard to receive by the identified employee. Conversely, the chance to assist a new professional to a level of accurate understanding of the extreme nuances of a designated technical field, including both the political realities and shortcomings of an industry are often highly sought after assignments because it constitutes the chance to ‘grow’ others in specific ways.

The difficulty arises for performance managers when they underestimate the initial impact of their work as well as their long-term impact on a protégé. The newer staff person is hoping for great guidance and not routine delegation or an assumed level of absorption of new knowledge. There are three keys to excelling as a manager of another’s performance.

Key # 1 – Place yourself (figuratively) both in and out of the role/assignment that you are evaluating. How would you react to the delivery method and content of the performance details that you are delivering? Would this information inspire you to try harder if you had experienced some struggles along the way? Would you feel like you got specific enough information that you know what to do to grow in areas where you had been struggling? Do you believe that the manager of your performance is an advocate for your fair and consistent treatment including future work opportunities?

Key #2 - Could you leave a performance management conversation such as those that you conduct, understanding with specific examples, how to monitor and adjust the areas where great use of strong skill or adjustment of a struggling skill set could be easily changed/upgraded?

Key # 3 – During the performance conversation was there a balanced give and take of dialogue? If not, why not? Is this indicative of your relationship as a whole? Is this the exchange rate that you want to sustain? Why?

A highly effective ‘performance manager’ serves as an accurate mirror for their protégé, reflecting appropriately the real levels of all efforts. The manager coaches continually in order to provide for suggested re-direction *before* a career-changing event for the protégé happens.