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7 Ways To Make Performance Reviews Meaningful And Relevant

Both managers and employees often feel that performance appraisals are simply an admin-intensive waste of time – something that they're required to do because HR says so. But the truth is that when you put effort into performance appraisals, and get them right, they can add much more value than they're given credit for. As [Lisa Quast](#) says in her article '[How To Make Performance Reviews Relevant](#)':

When you make finding the right talent and coaching that talent your number one priority, the rest will fall in place much more easily – such as achieving revenue targets/quotas, cost control, process improvement, completing projects, etc.

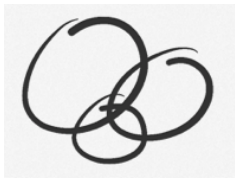
Putting your best effort into performance appraisals will result in benefits exponential to the time spent during the process.

She goes through 7 key points to make performance appraisals more relevant and meaningful. Here's a quick look:

- 1. Preparation is key.** You need to know the 'message' you want the employee to leave the meeting with, and lack of preparation inevitably means a less valuable message being conveyed to the employee.
- 2. Consider the logistics of the discussion.** The location of the discussion should facilitate a natural conversation flow and let the employee feel at ease, which will help the review to be more effective.
- 3. Open with the agenda.** Giving employees an idea of what to expect contributes to putting them at ease. It's even better if you use a performance review system like [Engage](#) where both parties can review all feedback on the employee's goals before the review meeting takes place, meaning there are no surprises or room for heavy debate.
- 4. Encourage candid discussion.** The review meeting needs to be a [dialogue](#), where the employee has as much opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns (and ask for support or resources), as managers have to give feedback.
- 5. Give praise and credit where it's due.** Employees need to hear about where they have done well, and why. [Positive feedback and reinforcement](#) can be a powerful tool to help improve performance. And this brings us to the next point...



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6. Don't shy away from dealing with issues. While it's great to focus on the positives, don't skip over the negatives or 'areas of development'. It may be difficult to have these conversations, but the reality is that something will never be fixed unless it is addressed. **Here are a few tips for making sure feedback is effective.**

7. Don't end the review until you're on the same page. Ideally, you'll be on the same page before the review meeting has even started (see point 3). But finishing a performance review where there isn't an agreement on the outcome isn't going to be beneficial to anyone.

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