

CREATING A HIGH PERFORMING TEAM



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That elusive holy grail - how to get your staff to consistently perform.... There are a lot of proponents to this but as with anything in life, in order to succeed at something you need to:

- Get started (reading this is a great start) - don't wait for some big formal management training programme
- Be organised and plan 'performance management' events into your calendar
- Be consistent



Managing a staff member's performance starts from day one of employment and the performance cycle goes right through the whole employee lifecycle.

Remember, plan it and proactively take actions to ensure and own an employee's success - don't just sit back and reactively wait for an employee to underperform. We know some of it might seem like boring paperwork but this stuff is critical to getting the right people onboarded and performing quickly and consistently over time.

1) SETTING EXPECTATIONS

To be a great manager with a high performing team you have to set clear, well defined and explicit expectations of your employees. Often we don't do this and end up being disappointed with our staff performance, we worry people will think we are micro managing but the solution is simple... each time we assign a task or action - think and define for the employee 4 things:

- Why is it necessary and what's the overall objective?
- Define what good looks like
- State when we want it done by
- Give examples (if possible)

TOP TIP: embed this at all stages in the employee lifecycle

2) INDUCTION PLAN

Setting a great performance culture starts with having an effective induction plan whereby you go through the key parts of information about your business **and go through their job description with them.**

Where they can find key information and any training that they need to know to do.

TOP TIP: Allocate them a buddy to out to lunch with in their first two weeks. Give them a budget of £10 each. Buddy shouldn't be their boss or even in their team - it's a great way to get people in different teams to meet each other and start working together to help high performing teams.

3) PROBATION

Next comes reviewing the employee in probation. This isn't about only the bad stuff and only meeting with them if they're not doing what they should be but instead should be a positive start to having regular one to one meetings with your staff. As a minimum, if it's a 6 month probation, we would recommend that you meet with them at end of months 1, 3 and 6. Do this in writing either online or in a document.

Set your expectations and key performance areas that they must achieve / by when and what support you will give them. Be clear in your expectations and don't expect them to second guess what you want / need. Extend it if you are in any doubt.

TOP TIP: Be proactive and book these 3 dates in your diary when you put in their start date

4) REGULAR ONE TO ONES

We recommend that these are carried out monthly as a minimum. Even just a quick 30 minute check-in. Time for your to LISTEN to your staff member. Where things are working / where they are not / how can you help / review priorities and deadlines / values etc.

Structure it as a 10 mins on them / 10 mins on you / 10 mins on career/growth/ development

TOP TIP: If you're new to managing a team, sit down with them all at the beginning and ask to see their CV's and understand what experience and qualifications they have already so that you know what kind of performance level you should be expecting of them (i.e. are they highly experienced or new to it all). Book them into your calendar every 6 months.

5) LEAD BY EXAMPLE

High performing teams have trust and will copy behaviours. If you want your managers to follow any of these processes and have the behaviours, then **YOU** as their manager need to do this too. You can't be "you must do this" and then not do it yourself.

The same goes with Values – if one of your values is Trust for example you can't then complain about other members of the team to other team members.

TOP TIP: "Walk the walk" and not just "talk the talk" as they say.

6) FEEDBACK

Like Christmas socks, it's the gift you need, not necessarily one you want. Things to remember:

- Your job as a Manager is to provide constructive, timely feedback. We all make mistakes at some point in our work and the best thing you can do is call it out when you see it and nip it in the bud as soon as possible. With our HR head on, we always advise follow up in writing with an email - we spoke about XXXX and we agreed XXXX. Remember, you will also damage your employee's long term prospects if you don't do this.
- Make sure any feedback is objective and data/evidence driven and provide actions to help stop it from happening in the future.
- Ask for feedback on yourself too. Make sure you encourage open and honest feedback and take it with a growth mindset. We are terrible at receiving this too, as our brains/egos are hardwired not to accept it - you may need to work on this.
- JFDI - Most people absolutely hate to give feedback if they think it may be negative or taken so. The best thing you can do is just practice doing it and the more you do, the better you will be.

TOP TIP: It's not what you say, it's how you say it. Speak from the heart and be objective, not subjective.

7) PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Own your personal and professional development and also encourage your team to do the same. Embrace and encourage a learning culture in your team. A learning, growing and developing team is much more likely to be a high performing one too. Talk about what you are doing and help and encourage them to do the same.

On the training side I always work on a 70 / 20 /10 model. 70% on the job training 20% self development and self taught. This can be online or by mentoring / shadowing other high performers either in their own team or other teams and then finally 10% formal training in a classroom type environment. There are so many resources online these days.

TOP TIP: Get your staff to look at what professional and personal development they are doing and pick-up in their one to ones.

8) COACHING

If you want your staff to step up and take responsibility and stop keep coming to you for answers then you really need to start coaching . This is a technique that allows the coachee to build the muscle around decision- making and to evaluate behaviour and options.

In asking the right questions and supporting people to find the right answer it not only empowers an employee to make decisions and then also gets accountability and ownership for doing the actions and solutions they come up with. Rather than you just telling them what you want.

TOP TIP: There is an amazing book we highly recommend you read and if you don't want to do that at the very least watch the Ted Talk by Michael Bungay Stanier – Tame your Advice Giving Monster.



FORMAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Sometimes with the best will in the world you may have staff that start to underperform. ***Our advice is here if you're starting to think you don't want someone in the business anymore then it is absolutely time to start the formal process.*** Be clear on your expectations and give them every opportunity to turn things around.

TOP TIP: You need to try and create a positive culture around PIPS (performance improvement plans) and for them not to be seen as a bad thing.

Before you groan this is a necessary part of ALL roles that have anyone reporting into them. This is what you are paid to do. It is not a HR role or your boss's role or anyone else. If you have direct reports - this is your responsibility 😊.

Now we know its tough to manage these difficult conversations but sometimes you have to do it in the best interests of the business and the other members of the team.

A Performance Improvement Plans. These can be implemented at anytime and normally I would say from between 6-12 weeks long. Make sure they are consistently applied across your team where necessary and give clear expectations of what you need by when and what support you will give to get there. Make sure you have weekly 10 minute check-ins on how the PIP is going.

B If the PIP fails and you need to move down the formal disciplinary / incapability process then there are clear guidelines you need to follow. This is a HUGE area in itself and some great resources can be found on ACAS website. Alternatively reach out here at help@tribalhr.co.uk and book in a one to one call to discuss a matter further.

NEED SOME EXPERT HR ADVICE?

If you want a copy of any of the templates mentioned
in this leaflet, or need any further HR advice:

Simply contact our team on help@tribalhr.co.uk



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