

BE INTENTIONAL: BUILD TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS DIFFERENCE

- Talk straight
- Demonstrate kindness
- Be loyal
- Be accountable

HOLD REGULAR, INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION MEETINGS

Avoid: **Recency bias**; meet regularly throughout the year. Take and retain good notes so that you have easy access to a year's worth of records.

PROVIDE ON-GOING, THOUGHTFUL AND WELL-PLANNED FEEDBACK YEAR ROUND

- Be clear about the purpose
- Consider cultural context
- Be descriptive and specific
- Focus on impact, not intention
- Commit to learning and growth
- Pay attention to timing
- Check for understanding

CONDUCTING PERFORMANCE REVIEWS TIPS FOR MANAGING BIAS

1. Recognize all human beings, ourselves included, are biased. That said, bias is an error in judgement that happens when a person allows their conscious or unconscious prejudice to affect their evaluation of another person.

2. Then learn to recognize and address the types of bias that can show up in performance reviews:

Affinity bias: our tendency to favor our own social group

Stereotypes: beliefs that certain attributes, characteristics, and behaviors are typical of members of a particular group of people

The 'halo' effect: the tendency for a single attribute or our general, overall impression of someone inform our assessment rather than examining performance against multiple, specific indicators

The 'horns' effect: is the opposite of the halo effect, when a manager's overall impression is negative based on a single piece of evidence or no evidence at all

Confirmation bias: our natural tendency to seek and readily recall information that confirms preconceived beliefs

Recency bias: we most easily recall recent performance information even when reviewing a much longer assessment period

Expediency bias: when we rely on information most readily available to us, at the expense of more valuable or relevant information

Central tendency bias: prevailing comfort rating people in the middle of a rating scale

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WHY SOLICIT FEEDBACK?

People who regularly solicit feedback report higher job satisfaction, greater creativity, faster adaptation to change, and lower turnover.

Seeking constructive feedback correlates to more positive workplace relationships and higher job performance.

Soliciting and acting upon feedback models learning culture behavior for direct reports, peers, and even superiors.

Content adapted from numerous sources including:

Felicity Menzies: *Identify your top performers: Eliminating bias from performance appraisals*

Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen: *Thanks for the Feedback*

Seven Covey: *The Speed of Trust*

Z.Chen, W. Lam, J.A.Zhong: *A new look at individual-level negative feedback-seeking behavior and team-level empowerment climate. Applied Psychology*

3. Take steps to mitigate bias

Reflect. Ask yourself:

- What kinds of bias have I experienced myself? How have they affected me?
- What part of my own agenda is being served by or reflected in my assessment of this person?
- Does this employee remind me of someone else? Is that association applicable?
- Are there differences in work style between me and the person I am reviewing? If so, are they problematic or just different? Are these differences affecting my judgement?
- What assumptions am I making about this persons career development aspirations and motivation? Is this my imagination or have they told me?
- What strategies and tactics can I put in place to fully and consciously engage in this process and set my biases aside?

Review. As you draft someone's performance review, and after you've completed it, notice:

- Did you consider performance throughout the entire review period?
- Are your ratings aligned with criteria provided?
- Is the language you are using objective, specific, and clear?
- Does your review include observations, opinions, feedback that you've never shared?
- Are you only assessing behaviors, skills, and abilities directly tied to the job at hand?

4. Solicit feedback. Regularly ask for specific feedback from direct reports. Are there ways that you can be more helpful or supportive? Are there ways in which you are inhibiting someone's success? Invite trusted colleagues to help you notice when your unconscious bias may be impacting decisions or actions.

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