

How to Deliver an Effective Performance Review

Target Audience: New and experienced managers of employees at XYZ Company

Objectives:

- Explain the purpose of the performance review as a component of the performance management process
- Describe how to prepare and set expectations for the review meeting
- Identify best practices for delivering feedback
- Identify best practices for holding constructive conversations with different types of performers
- Apply best practices for delivering feedback during a review

Course Structure:

- Opening Video
- Section 1: Tips to Delivering an Effective Performance Review
- Section 2: Putting Tips into Action
- Section 3: Wrap Up and Resources

Opening Video

Narrator	<p>Welcome! As part of the performance review cycle, every XYZ Company employee should receive an end of the fiscal year performance evaluation from their manager. Given XYZ Company uses a goal-based performance process, the achievement of goals that were established at the beginning of the year is the foundation of measuring performance at the end of the year. The performance evaluation process inspires strong performance for the upcoming year.</p> <p>There are two parts to the evaluation process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A written performance evaluation created by the manager which documents accomplishments and performance feedback, and• A verbal conversation, or performance review, about the performance between the manager and the employee to align on feedback, expectations, and next steps. <p>The verbal performance review is a conversation in which the manager and the employee talk about the employee’s accomplishments. Feedback on the previous year is discussed, in addition to the upcoming year’s goals and future development opportunities.</p> <p>Meet XYZ Company Manager June. June has recently recognized the importance of performance management to the success of her department. Let’s hear her thoughts about delivering performance reviews...</p>
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June	As a new manager, I was unsure of how to manage the review process. It was difficult to figure out how to deliver feedback effectively and how to talk about engagement or development needs. Then I spoke with my HR Business Partner, Gwen. She gave me great advice on how to prepare for and deliver an effective review.
Gwen	<p>The performance review is an important part of the evaluation process. Your employees will appreciate the time you take to discuss their performance and how they can develop. There are four key parts of the meeting that you'll need to keep in mind as a manager:</p> <p>Preparation: Prepare! Be sure to get organized early. Opening: At the start of the meeting, set expectations with the employee about how the conversation will flow. Dialogue: During the meeting, deliver effective feedback using the SBI, or Situation-Behavior-Impact, model, and Closing: When closing the meeting, be sure to confirm any action items and get the employee's signature.</p>
June	Breaking down what needs to happen for a review meeting has helped me better prepare and be confident in how I deliver feedback to my employees. My team seems to really appreciate the time I dedicate to the review process. They're also much more engaged in their performance and development since my conversation with Gwen.
Narrator	<p>While the process and timeline may vary by department, all XYZ Company managers have similar responsibilities related to giving performance reviews including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for the review meeting • Delivering effective feedback to their staff, and • Having constructive conversations about performance and development <p><note on screen related to course directing the learner on how to open the course></p>

Section 1: Tips for Delivering an Effective Performance Review

<This section will have a written introduction recapping the four components of review responsibilities. Each responsibility is segmented by a video and interactive activity>

Video 1: Preparing for and Opening the Review Meeting

Narrator	Preparation for the review conversation does not begin when the meeting starts. Managers need to thoughtfully plan ahead for reviews. Let's listen to XYZ Company Manager June share her thoughts on preparing for the review conversation.
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June	<p>The performance review conversation gives you and your employee an opportunity to get on the same page about performance over the past year and look forward to the year ahead.</p> <p>It's important to remember that writing the performance evaluation is only one part of the planning process.</p> <p>It is important to think about the main areas you are planning to cover during your conversation. Be sure to leave enough time to review the employee's goals and self-assessment, as well as time to re-read the evaluation that you wrote when you set up the meeting. The conversation should cover the year in full – not just the most recent events. There shouldn't be any surprises because feedback is ongoing throughout the year - be ready to paint a full picture of the person's performance.</p> <p>Although it's not required, you may want to consider a neutral location for the review rather than your office. This really helps my employees open up. Share the meeting agenda and expectations around the employee's participation ahead of time. If another person will be involved in the conversation, that's another thing you'll want to share with the employee ahead of time. Don't forget to be fully engaged in the meeting. Shut off your electronics. Focus on your employee.</p> <p>When the meeting starts, be sure to review expectations and let the employee know that there will be time for them to respond. A performance review should ideally flow like a conversation, but you can adapt the tone based on the level of performance. Listen and repeat back what your employees have said to make sure you are understanding them correctly.</p>
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Activity: Drag and drop tips into categories before the meeting, during the meeting, throughout the year.

Video 2: Delivering Effective Feedback

Narrator	<p>As a manager, it is important to recognize the impact that the review can have on your employee. The key to an impactful performance review is delivering effective feedback and identifying development opportunities for the year ahead. Listen to XYZ Company Manager June share her thoughts on delivering effective feedback during performance review conversations.</p>
June	<p>Delivering feedback can be challenging, especially when the feedback may not be what the employee wants to hear. Generally, the feedback conversation should be a combination of noteworthy accomplishments, behaviors that the person is performing effectively and areas to improve. You can structure the review by going over each of the employee's goals and the ratings for those goals, delivering feedback related to those goals, and then going over the overall rating and feedback for the employee.</p>

	<p>Here at XYZ Company, we follow the SBI framework for delivering feedback to help remain as objective as possible. SBI stands for Situation, Behavior, Impact. Start off by describing the situation. Be as specific as possible about when and where it happened. Then, describe the employee’s observable behavior. It’s important not to pass judgments or assume you know what the employee was thinking during the situation. Behaviors can be seen, heard or measured. Judgments, on the other hand, are an interpretation we make about the behaviors we observe. In other words, judgments are the stories we tell ourselves about the situation. It’s a behavior to smile. It’s a judgment to interpret smiling as “being friendly.” Finally, describe how that behavior impacts you and your team. Let them know what you thought or felt in reaction to the behavior.</p> <p>Since feedback is cumulative at review time, remember to highlight all the examples that support your feedback. By sharing specific situations, you offer support for your feedback and show the employee that you’ve been attentive to their progress towards their goal.</p> <p>The feedback shouldn’t end after SBI. You want your employee to leave the conversation with a clear understanding of what they should do more of, less of, or differently in the coming year. If feedback was constructive, come to a decision on what could be done if the situation arises again. Be encouraging and let your employee know that you want them to succeed.</p> <p>Delivering thoughtful feedback throughout the year should help ease review anxiety both for you and your employee. Have those tough conversations as situations arise, and the yearly review conversation won’t seem so daunting.</p>
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Activity: Describe 2-3 situations that require feedback. Give 3 different options for giving feedback and have the learner select the one that uses SBI.

Video 3: Having constructive conversations about performance and development

Narrator	When it comes to review time, managers will need to know how to hold constructive conversations with employees at all levels of performance. XYZ Company Manager June will now tell us how she navigates development conversations with her team.
June	<p>Performance and development conversations can be a great way to start looking ahead at the upcoming year, but it is important to make sure your employees understand the goal of the conversation.</p> <p>Employees in the “consistently exceeds expectations” and “frequently exceeds expectations” categories may view development conversations during their review as a time to ask about a promotion or raise. The review is not the time to discuss promotion. Instead, address these questions by listening closely, advising honestly, and never making promises that you can’t keep. For example, if an employee is</p>

	<p>asking about a promotion for which they are not prepared, share with them how they can obtain the proper certifications, training, or other necessary development opportunities to get there and appropriately set expectations around the amount of time it might take. Steer the conversation towards development rather than specific opportunities.</p> <p>Development conversations can also be challenging for employees who receive “fully meets” ratings. It’s important to consider how to keep those employees engaged and motivated. For these employees, find out where their interests lie and where they want to develop. If those areas of development align well with their job responsibilities, guide them in that direction. Reassure those employees of their value to your team and describe the impact of their work.</p> <p>Finally, employees who receive “partially meets expectations” or “does not meet expectations” may become demotivated by the constructive feedback conversation. Be honest and candid about what the employee must change and detail the steps that you both will take to ensure the change occurs. Before the review conversation, make sure you have talked to your HR Business Partner about anyone receiving a rating of “does not meet expectations.” This may lead, or have already led, to a performance improvement plan and could also impact inclusion in salary planner for those employees.</p> <p>Each situation is different, so you will need to adapt the review conversation to the types of performers on your team.</p>
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Activity: Describe 2-3 conversations and address varying opportunities or needs based on current performance. Give 3 different options for what Manager June should say to her employees.

Video 4: Closing the discussion

Narrator	Don’t forget to end strong! Let’s hear how Manager June ends her review conversations.
June	At the end of the meeting, remember to close out by thanking the employee for their time, confirming any follow up, and obtaining the employee’s signature. The review is not a time to negotiate. Your ratings are complete and there is likely no new information for the employee to give. Remember that the employee signature indicates that the review conversation has occurred, not that the employee agrees with the feedback. If desired, let the employee take the evaluation with them to review one last time before signing.

Activity: Flip cards summarizing the four tips: preparation, opening, dialogue and closing.

Section 2: Putting Tips into Action

<This section will have an introduction to the red, yellow, green activity and describe how June will be delivering a review to each of her employees. This will specify that the learner will only see parts of the conversations.>

June and Tom

<Intro to Tom: Tom is an average performer with a steady output. He rarely goes above and beyond, but June knows she can count on him to get a job done, and get it done well. He achieves mostly fully meets expectations ratings, with one or two frequently exceeds expectations ratings and one or two partially meets expectations ratings.>

<p>June</p>	<p><Manager June is in her office with her phone on her desk as Tom walks in.></p> <p>Good morning, Tom! Come in. I'm expecting an important email, so I hope you don't mind that I have the phone out.</p>
<p>Tom</p>	<p>Oh, that's okay.</p>
<p>June</p>	<p>I'm sure you've read the agenda, so we can go ahead and start.</p>
<p><i>Pause for Interaction</i></p>	<p>Red (correct) – Correct! Manager June should not have her phone out. She should give Tom her undivided attention for the review or he may feel like an undervalued member of June's team. She also should not skip over the agenda in case Tom needs to clarify anything. (Scenario continues)</p> <p>Yellow (incorrect) – Incorrect. While it was nice of June to alert Tom of her distraction, she should be giving Tom her undivided attention for the review or he may feel like an undervalued member of June's team. June should have also reviewed the full agenda so Tom could raise any questions. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Green (incorrect) – Incorrect. While it was nice of June to alert Tom of her distraction, she should be giving Tom her undivided attention for the review or he may feel like an undervalued member of June's team. June should have also reviewed the full agenda so Tom could raise any questions. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p>
<p>June</p>	<p>You had a goal this year to improve your active listening skills. I rated this goal "partially meets expectations" because of some behaviors I've observed in our team meetings. For example, when we were in the meeting a couple of weeks ago, you interrupted Amara. When you interrupt Amara, she has a difficult time expressing her ideas. I'd like to create space for everyone on our team to share their ideas. What are your thoughts?</p>

Tom	Oh, I'm sorry. I just get so passionate that I don't even realize what I'm doing! I really would like to improve. I did notice a professional development course on Emotional Intelligence that might help me with this. Could I take that course and we can evaluate how I'm doing in my one-on-one?
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June	Yes, that sounds like an appropriate solution. Let me know when the course is and we can add that to our agenda for our one on one.
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<i>Pause for Interaction</i>	<p>Red (incorrect) – Incorrect. June approached the situation appropriately using the SBI framework. She described the situation, Tom's behavior without passing judgement, and the impact on the team. She and Tom then agreed upon concrete steps on how to correct the issue. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Yellow (incorrect) – Incorrect. June approached the situation appropriately using the SBI framework. She described the situation, Tom's behavior without passing judgement, and the impact on the team. She and Tom then agreed upon concrete steps on how to correct the issue. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Green (correct) – Correct! June followed the SBI framework to describe the situation, Tom's behavior, and the impact on the team. She and Tom then agreed upon concrete steps on how to correct the issue. (Scenario continues)</p>
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June	Let's talk about your goals, Tom. You've fully met all expectations this year, which is great. You've kept your projects on track and the team knows they can count on you. How are you feeling about your performance? Are there areas of your role that you would like to further develop?
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Tom	I think I've done pretty well this year, but I am really interested in finances. I think I could help a lot with our budget. It would be great to build my experience in accounting.
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June	That's great! We really need someone to improve our processes around our department's spending. Can you draft one of your goals for next year around that? You might also want to consider enrolling in an Accounting program for an upcoming semester.
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Tom	What a great idea! I'll look into that and check in with you once my goals are drafted.
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<i>Pause for Interaction</i>	<p>Red (incorrect) – Incorrect. June has made sure to ask Tom about his opinions on development opportunities and given him some steps forward for creating goals related to his development. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Yellow (incorrect) - Incorrect. June has made sure to ask Tom about his opinions on development opportunities and given him some steps forward for creating goals related to his development. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Green (correct) – Correct! June has made sure to ask Tom about his opinions on development opportunities and given him some steps forward for creating goals related to his development. (Scenario continues)</p>
June	To recap, Tom, you did a great job this year. You'll work on active listening and take an Emotional Intelligence course to improve that skill. You'll write up your goals for next year and include one about budget. Did you want to add anything else?
Tom	That sounds correct.
June	Great, then please sign and return the evaluation to me before the end of the day.

June and Amara

<Intro to Amara: Amara is struggling to meet her goals and is not performing at the level that June needs her to be. Amara receives mostly partially meets expectations ratings, some fully meets expectations ratings, and one or two does not meet expectations ratings.>

June	<p><June is seen in a conference room reviewing Amara's evaluation when Amara walks in.></p> <p>Good morning, Amara! I was just looking over your evaluation.</p>
Amara	Good morning, June.
June	So let's review the agenda for today. We're going to go over your evaluation, diving into each of your goals. You'll have a chance to respond to what I've written here after I talk about it. Do you have any questions about the review process?
Amara	Nope, that's all clear to me. I'm ready.

<p><i>Pause for Interactivity</i></p>	<p>Red (incorrect) – Incorrect. June picked a neutral location, was ready with Amara’s evaluation, and reminded her of the format and agenda for the meeting. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Yellow (incorrect) – Incorrect. June picked a neutral location, was ready with Amara’s evaluation, and reminded her of the format and agenda for the meeting. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Green (correct) – Correct! June picked a neutral location, was ready with Amara’s evaluation, and reminded her of the format and agenda for the meeting. (Scenario continues)</p>
<p>June</p>	<p>You had a goal this year to successfully run the technology implementation project. However, you’ve missed a number of project team meetings. For this reason, you received “partially meets expectations.” For example, last week you missed the project team meeting because you arrived to work an hour late. You did not notify the team that you would need extra time to get into the office. Because you were late, Jose was scrambling to figure out what the outstanding action items were.</p>
<p>Amara</p>	<p>Oh, I’m sorry. I didn’t know that it impacted Jose so much.</p>
<p><i>Pause for Interactivity</i></p>	<p>Red (incorrect) – Incorrect. June effectively used the SBI framework, but she forgot to include next steps to prevent the issue from happening again. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Yellow (correct) – Correct! While June effectively used the SBI framework to deliver her feedback, she forgot to include next steps to prevent the issue from happening again. (Scenario continues)</p> <p>Green (incorrect) – Incorrect. June effectively used the SBI framework, but she forgot to include next steps to prevent the issue from happening again. (Option to rewatch or continue)</p>
<p>June</p>	<p>To recap, Amara, you will work on arriving to meetings on time or informing the team if you need coverage. Do you want to add anything else?</p>
<p>Amara</p>	<p>No, that sounds okay.</p>
<p>June</p>	<p>Okay, then please take this back to your desk, sign it and return it to me before the end of the day. Let me know if you have any questions in the meantime.</p>

June and Jose

<Intro to Jose: Jose is June’s top performing employee. He goes above and beyond when delivering projects. He achieves many “consistently exceeds expectations” and “frequently exceeds expectations” ratings and the remainder are “fully meets expectations.”>

June	Jose, you had a goal this year to voice your opinions in meetings this year. You received the rating “frequently exceeds expectations” because I have certainly noticed that you’ve done that.
Jose	Great, thanks. It’s great to hear that I’m doing well. Is there anything that I can improve?
June	Not that I can think of. As I said, you’re doing great.
Jose	Okay...
<i>Pause for Interactivity</i>	Red (correct) – Correct! June could have used the SBI framework here to describe exactly when Jose exceeded expectations. She should have also been prepared to talk about opportunities for Jose’s improvement. If she doesn’t work closely enough with Jose, she can check in with his colleagues for feedback. High achievers often look to self-improve and might lose interest without feedback. (Scenario continues)
	Yellow (incorrect) – Incorrect. June did not use the SBI framework appropriately. She could have described exactly when Jose exceeded expectations. She should have also been prepared to talk about opportunities for Jose’s improvement. If she doesn’t work closely enough with Jose, she can check in with his colleagues for feedback. High achievers often look to self-improve and might lose interest without feedback. (Option to rewatch or continue) Green (incorrect) – Incorrect. June did not use the SBI framework appropriately. She could have described exactly when Jose exceeded expectations. She should have also been prepared to talk about opportunities for Jose’s improvement. If she doesn’t work closely enough with Jose, she can check in with his colleagues for feedback. High achievers often look to self-improve and might lose interest without feedback. (Option to rewatch or continue)
June	You have had a really great year. You received “consistently exceeds” for a few of your goals. We should consider some development opportunities for you to continue growing. What areas interest you?
Jose	I don’t know of anything specific, but I’d like to know when I can get promoted.
June	I’m sure there must be something for you. I’ll ask around.

<i>Pause for Interactivity</i>	<p>Red (correct) – Correct! June should not be making promises that she can’t keep. Instead, she might say, “While I cannot guarantee this will get you a promotion, you can better position yourself for one by [taking a course, getting a master’s degree, etc.]” (Scenario continues)</p> <p>Yellow (incorrect) – Incorrect. Although June means well, she should not be making promises that she can’t keep. Instead, she might say, “While I cannot guarantee this will get you a promotion, you can better position yourself for one by [taking a course, getting a master’s degree, etc.]” (Option to rewatch or continue)</p> <p>Green (incorrect) – Incorrect. Although June means well, she should not be making promises that she can’t keep. Instead, she might say, “While I cannot guarantee this will get you a promotion, you can better position yourself for one by [taking a course, getting a master’s degree, etc.]” (Option to rewatch or continue)</p>
Jose	Wow, that’s amazing! Thanks, June.
June	Thanks, Jose. Please take this back to your desk, sign and return to me before the end of the day.

Section 3: Wrap Up and Resources

Wrap Up Video

Narrator	<p>The end of year performance review is an important touchpoint within the performance management cycle. Remember that this formal touchpoint is not the only time for feedback. Feedback should be continuous and ongoing throughout the year so there are no surprises during the review conversation. Employees should have a good idea where they stand long before the review happens.</p> <p>In this course, you learned how to prepare for and open the review meeting by providing your employees with clear expectations. You learned how to tie ratings to goals using the SBI framework, and how to adapt feedback conversations to your different levels of performers.</p> <p>Before delivering your reviews, be sure to check with your manager for departmentspecific processes and timelines.</p> <p>Scroll down to wrap up the course and review additional resources.</p>
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Resource Links

Deliver a Review Tip Sheet (to be created from the four tips, the Giving Feedback [tip sheet](#), and the [checklist](#))

[Evaluation Forms](#)

Ask the Expert Sign Up

Area to book HR Business Partners around review time – Feb/March, 2-4 different date options
(Microsoft bookings? Virtual and in person opportunities.)

LinkedIn Learning Videos

[Setting Expectations for the Meeting](#)

[Logistics & Other Preparation for the Meeting](#)

[How to Give Great Feedback](#)

[Giving Future Focused Feedback](#)