

Hone



5 Tactics for Stress-Free Performance Reviews

Performance reviews are stressful.

This year, we hope you'll share these 5 'right now' tactics, developed by Hone, to take this year's Performance Reviews from stressful to successful.



01

Help Managers Continuously Measure Performance

The reason some Performance Reviews seem daunting and extra stressful is because it is the only time (or one of few times) that a manager provides constructive performance feedback. Instead of saving feedback for Performance Reviews, it's important your managers are giving that constructive feedback throughout the year.

Continuous feedback can happen via...

WEEKLY

- Work tools (project management tools, sales tools, etc.)
- 1:1s

QUARTERLY

- OKR-setting and review

ANNUALLY OR EVERY 6 MONTHS

- 360 Reviews
- Other formal performance check-ins



02

Set Expectations for the Structure of the Performance Debrief

With performance review debriefs, much of the stress and anxiety on both ends can come from not knowing what to expect. While that will be true to some extent, setting clear expectations for what the meeting actually entails will help both managers and direct reports.

A formula for successful performance review meetings



Check-in

5-10%



Summarize strengths

5-10%



Summarize areas for improvement

5-10%



Overall rating & formal decisions

5-10%



Discuss the path forward

10-30%



Ask for reactions

Asking for and receiving reactions should make up 50% of the meeting and can be broken up or saved for at the end.



03

Help Managers Prepare to Encounter Defensive or Difficult Reactions

If your direct report appears surprised or disagrees with the rating...

- ➔ **Ask for details**
“I’m learning that you feel differently than what the feedback is alluding to. What about this review do you consider inaccurate/unfair?”
- ➔ **Be prepared with your own details**
“Here’s more context for why I gave you this rating...”
- ➔ **Focus on the future**
“Let’s talk about what you will need to do in the next evaluation period to get the rating you had hoped for...”

If your direct report gets very emotional...

- ➔ **Use Active Listening**
“It sounds like you feel _____ because you need/value _____.”
- ➔ **Show Empathy**
“And I totally understand where you’re coming from...”
- ➔ **Reschedule if Needed**
“Let’s take some time and pick this conversation back up during our 1:1”



04

Dedicate Separate Time for a Follow-Up Plan

The follow-up is what gives the performance review process meaning. After your performance review debrief, make a plan to

- ➔ Independently reflect on the Performance Review and debrief
- ➔ Schedule a separate 1:1 meeting to align on a path forward
- ➔ Set aside meeting time for ongoing maintenance and check-in on the topics that emerged from the review



Reflection by direct report
Reflection by manager



1:1 to align on a path forward



Ongoing maintenance



05

Provide Training on the Review Process to Both Managers and ICs

As an HR leader, the biggest impact you can make on Performance Reviews is providing the necessary training to both managers and ICs alike. By scheduling live virtual training in advance of Performance Reviews, you will be setting your team up for a performance review experience that is both stress-free and motivates them in their growth and career progression.

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4.8

Average class rating

32

Learner completions

Give Feedback that Lands

Join Class



Skills Report

Active listening

Delegation

Coaching

Insights

96%

Class attendance

About Hone

Hone is the enterprise platform for continuous live virtual learning. By delivering live learning at scale in key human skill areas like effective team management, leadership coaching, and DEIB, we enable behavior change, human connection, and continuous development across the employee lifecycle. Many of the world's most innovative companies depend on Hone everyday to help their teams progress, grow, and lead.

Visit honehq.com to learn more about Hone's live leadership training.