

### What is performance management?

The overall objective of Performance Management is to **enhance the capacity and competence of individuals** so that they exceed organizational expectations and work **in a way that effectively and efficiently attains business strategic objectives**.

Performance management can focus on the performance of an organization, a department, or an employee. Performance Management principles are used most often in the workplace however they can be applied wherever people interact with their environments to produce desired effects including schools, churches, community meetings and sports teams.

In order to avoid a negative impact, it must be applied in a way that does not encourage internal competition, but rather teamwork, cooperation, collaboration, and trust.

This is achieved through an ongoing process of communication between a supervisor and an employee that occurs throughout the year. The communication process includes clarifying expectations, setting objectives, identifying goals, providing feedback, and reviewing results.

### What are the benefits of performance management?

The benefits of a good performance management program include:

- Direct financial gain such as growing sales, improving results or reducing costs
- A motivated workforce as employee engagement is improved because everyone understands how they are directly contributing to the organizations high level goals and there is transparency in the achievement of those goals.
- Results of the performance management process are used in employee development planning; providing factual basis for compensation & rewards; factual basis to be considered for transfers/promotions.

### In Companies:

Performance management is the term used to refer to processes and programs that are created to manage the performance of individual employees, teams, departments, and other organizational units. These processes allow employees to understand how well they have performed relative to performance targets or key performance indicators during a specific performance period. Typically, the performance period is 12 months and often corresponds to the organizations financial period. However increasingly companies are moving towards shorter review cycles – every 6 months, every quarter and in some cases weekly or bi-weekly. This review process is often known as the performance review or performance appraisal.

In school performance management is at the heart of it's development, as with most companies it is usually used to determine the award of pay scales or even Continued Professional Development needs.

## Coaching and Performance Management

Coaching is defined as unlocking people's potential to maximize their own performance. It is about an individual being able to perform to their potential by minimizing the interferences. It is a way of working alongside someone, giving him or her the opportunity to set SMART goals and then the support to achieve them. In essence, it is a highly structured way of working with an individual through a series of meetings. The coach will enable the learner to take responsibility for their own learning, develop an awareness of his/her situation and provide support to increase his/her skills.

A quick look at some of the ways coaching can support a business or school. It:

- Can accelerate the personal and professional development of staff
- Can assist in retaining staff
- Can improve performance and productivity
- Enhances team morale
- Generates responsibility on the part of the employee
- Creates a high-performance culture

This, in the context of this article, is about ensuring he or she makes and documents continual progress towards their Performance Management targets through the year and seeks the necessary support if required for the attainment of said targets.

### **Performance = potential – interference**

The biggest barrier to persons achieving their performance management targets is usually that they are engrossed in their jobs and thinking only about their targets when the time comes around to review them. Of course, there are lots of other interferences like

- an individual understanding his/her targets
- making or finding the time to collate things as you go
- work/life balance
- and often, motivation to focus on the said targets during the year.

Imagine if you had a system for dealing with these interferences and were just able to do your job while concurrently collating evidence for your Performance Management targets.

When we think of ourselves as an employee, we sometimes tend to put ourselves into one of four cultural categories (Galway 2017. The performance curve)

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Thought process</b>	<b>Maslow's Motivators</b>
1	Impulsive	Whatever happens, happens	Survival
2	Dependent	I follow the rules and do as I am told	Belonging
3	independent	I am a high performer	Esteem
4	interdependent	We are truly successful together	Self-actualization

Knowing these things about oneself, will allow a coach to help move individuals and teams from categories 1 and 2 (Interferences) and thinking "whatever happens, happens, to 3 and 4 (potential) we are truly successful together by "*working alongside, giving him, her or them, the opportunity to set SMART goals that align with the business and their aspirations, and then the support to achieve them*"

## The coaches' approach to the Performance Management cycle

There are four stages to most performance management cycles, these are

### Planning

A coach will partner with employees to create awareness of how they can best plan for a successful Performance Management goal setting meeting with their line manager. A good non-directive, non-judgmental discussion will always give employees a greater sense of what they can achieve in the meeting as opposed to going in cold.

### Monitoring

Coaches generally tend to have monthly meetings, to give employees opportunities to discuss where they are and create awareness and responsibility of their ongoing targets. These are two activities are without doubt crucial to achieving one's targets. Then the coach supports by being an accountability partner in the collation of evidence during the year in readiness for the mid-term meeting.

### Mid-term or quarterly review and feedback

At this stage the coach is available if needed to discuss progress, and prepare any clarification points the employee has for the leader. The coach will support the employee in framing questions, discussing challenges, and talking through any development needs that the evidence collated (or not) may have highlighted. If the monthly meetings are going well, this may not be necessary, however, some employees may find the time supportive.

### Final review and feedback

By the time of the final review meeting, the coach and employee would have had several discussions with respect to the evidence. The employee will have a sound understanding of their progress towards their targets. The meeting with the coach prior to the final review will serve to prepare the employee in articulating the evidence if any queries come up throughout the meeting.

### KEY POINTS

- Ensure you have a Performance review
- Ensure you are clear on what is expected of you – refer to the documentation the company uses
- Understand the company/schools' objectives for the year
- Think about any development opportunities you would like for the upcoming year
- Plan in a mid-term review or quarterly if your line manager is available
- Take time to document achievements throughout the year – trying to remember things you have achieved when you get to performance review time can be challenging
- In any review, be honest about your performance

This article was written by Richie Forde. Richie was an educator of 20 years and an ICF accredited Executive Coach whose focus is on creating success for teachers, students, and parents.

If you would like to know more about how coaching can help you achieve your Performance Management Targets, contact Richie Forde at [rforde@edgebarbados.com](mailto:rforde@edgebarbados.com) for an initial discussion about your aspirations for the coming year.

Remember, **coaching** is an investment in your future.