

Performance Management Toolkit



...a better way to manage

the
happy
manager

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HOW TO BE A BETTER MANAGER

Performance Management Toolkit

What's in this guide:

Page

4	<u>About the "How to be a Better Manager..." Series</u>
5	<u>Performance Management Toolkit</u>
6	<u>The Value of Tools</u>
7	<u>How to Use the Tools</u>
9	<u>Diagnostic Tools</u>
10	<u>Tool 1: Rating Your Performance Management System</u>
12	<u>Tool 2: Assessing Your Performance Review Process</u>
13	<u>Tool 3: Performance Management Process Self-assessment</u>
14	<u>Tool 4: Performance Management Process Matrix</u>
15	<u>Tool 5: Performance Management Skills Assessment</u>
16	<u>Tool 6: Performance Management Skills Matrix</u>
17	<u>Tool 7: Skills Development Planner</u>
18	<u>Tool 8: Reflect on Skill Development</u>
19	<u>Process Tools</u>
20	<u>Tool 9: The PERFORM Model</u>
22	<u>Tool 10: Flow Diagram for Conducting a Performance Review</u>
23	<u>Tool 11: The Performance Management Cycle</u>
24	<u>Preparation for a Performance Review</u>
25	<u>Tool 12: Recognizing Potential Tool</u>
26	<u>Tool 13: Putting Expertise to Work – Question Checklist</u>
27	<u>Tool 14: Preparing for a Review Using the PERFORM Model</u>
29	<u>Tool 15: Checklist for Managing a Performance Review Meeting</u>
30	<u>Tool 16: Performance Review Preparation Tool for Team Members</u>
32	<u>Tool 17: Performance Review Meeting Agenda</u>

33	<u>Conducting a Performance Review</u>
34	Tool 18: <u>Conducting Regular Mini-reviews</u>
35	Tool 19: <u>Performance Rating Scale</u>
36	Tool 20: <u>Reviewing Results – Assessing Performance</u>
37:	Tool 21: <u>Reviewing Results - Training and Development</u>
38	Tool 22: <u>Competence Tool</u>
40	<u>Goal Setting and Action Planning</u>
41	Tool 23: <u>Tool for Setting SMART Goals</u>
43	Tool 24: <u>Taking SHARP Action</u>
45	Tool 25: <u>Aligning Team Goals</u>
46	Tool 26: <u>Setting SMART Goals that Motivate</u>
48	Tool 27: <u>Opportunity Checklist</u>
49	Tool 28: <u>Resources</u>
50	Tool 29: <u>Motivation Checklist</u>
51	Tool 30: <u>Summary Notes of Performance Review Meeting</u>
53	<u>Supporting Performance</u>
54	Tool 31: <u>UCOACH: Coach for Performance Improvement</u>
55	Tool 32: <u>Guidelines for Giving Feedback</u>
56	Tool 33: <u>Process for Dealing with Under-performance</u>
57	Tool 34: <u>Managing Under-performance – Diagnostic Questions</u>
58	Tool 35: <u>Re-focus Motivation Tool</u>
59	<u>Develop Your Own Performance</u>
60	Tool 36: <u>Discover Your Strengths</u>
61	Tool 37: <u>Management Skills Assessment</u>
62	Tool 38: <u>Addressing Weaknesses</u>
63	Tool 39: <u>Releasing Time to Perform</u>
64	Tool 40: <u>Action Plan to Eradicate Busyness</u>
65	Tool 41: <u>Energy Sources</u>

How to be a Better Manager ...

The Performance Management Toolkit is one of a series of practical, thought-provoking guides, designed to help you deal with a wide range of management ideas, activities and situations. Whether you are a new manager, or one who wants to hone or develop existing skills, we're sure you'll find something valuable in any of these guides.

This series of e-guides is published by Apex Leadership Ltd. The guides have been developed by a team of professional managers, consultants and educators. The full range of titles is available from [Apex Leadership Ltd](#), or from [the Happy Manager.com](#). Use these guides to benefit from our wealth of management expertise. Let us help you find: **a better way to manage...**"

Phil Higson & Anthony Sturgess
Directors, Apex Leadership Ltd

The Performance Management Toolkit

The performance management toolkit is part of our PERFORM mini-series of “how to...” guides. These guides are designed to help you raise performance levels, both in your team, and in your own performance. The series comprises:

- **It’s All About Performance** – an introductory guide complete with self-assessment tools
- **Managing Performance and Potential** - exploring the essentials of performance management. This guide sets out the key principles and practices you’ll need to know, in order to manage performance.
- **Conducting a Performance Review** – using numerous practical tools to help you implement a step-by-step guide to the process of conducting reviews.
- **How to Motivate Employees to Perform** - explaining how to use the PERFORM model to place the emphasis on performance, not just on process. At the heart of superior performance is motivation. This guide builds on your understanding of performance management essentials, and on the practical advice on how to manage performance, by showing how to take performance to the next level.
- **Managing Your Own Performance** - a series on performance management wouldn’t be complete if it didn’t address the importance of your own performance. If you’re going to manage other people’s performance, you’ll need to make sure yours is up to the task!
- **15 Performance Management Tips** – This guide is essential reading and gives you concise but vital tips to help raise performance levels. It is a quick and easy access guide, with the key tips from the PERFORM series, thought-provoking quotes, and actions you can take to start to improving performance immediately.
- **Performance Management Skills** – a resource to help you identify the specific skills needed to manage performance effectively, and to set about building your capability.

Each of the PERFORM guides contains a range of practical tools. These are conveniently packaged in this separate toolkit, especially for managers who feel they don’t need the guides and who want to get straight into action. The performance management toolkit will allow you to do just that.

The toolkit comprises the range of tools offered in the guides, and provides guidelines, handy tips and processes to help you manage superior performance. It also includes some extra tools, not included in any of the guides.

Use these tools to improve your skills and to help you turn ideas into action.

The Value of Tools

The performance management toolkit contains a wide range of tools. You probably won't need or want to use them all at once, so they have been designed to be used singly or in grouped themes. Use whichever suits your needs as required. The tools give you flexibility, recognising that different situations are likely to need different tools.

"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."

Abraham Maslow

You may find it helpful to think of tools in three distinctive ways. Tools can be used for:

- Building foundations
- Creating structure
- Doing maintenance

Foundations are needed whenever we build something new. Many of the tools in this guide can be used in this way, helping you build the foundations of your knowledge, whilst you're developing your capability. Use these foundation tools until you have developed your competence and confidence, and good practice has become a habit.

Some tools can be used to help develop structure or frameworks. For example, process tools, flow diagrams, forms and templates are often used as on-going tools to help you manage performance.

Finally, some tools can be used for maintenance purposes. Use them to help you make periodic checks on systems, processes and practices. Assessment tools and checklists can be particularly useful in this respect, helping you keep practice and skills at their most effective.

Of course, each manager and each situation is different. It's unlikely you'll need to use every tool, or all of them all of the time. However, you may find it useful to think carefully about each tool, and the ways in which we've grouped them - especially if you are a new manager, or have taken up a new post. When you're learning new skills, or trying to improve those you already have, it's often a good idea to follow clear guidelines. Or use the tools individually, perhaps simply as prompts or helpful checklists to remind you of activities you may do infrequently.

Remembering our quote from Abraham Maslow, it pays to have a range of tools at your disposal. Ensure *your* toolkit is well-stocked. And don't be afraid to make the tools your own - adapt them to suit your own needs and situations.

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Diagnostic Tools

The tools in this section will allow you to:

- **Rate your performance management system.**
- **Assess your performance review process.**
- **Self-assess your competence to handle performance management *process*.**
- **Self-assess your performance management skills.**
- **Plan for your own skills development.**
- **Reflect on your skills development.**

The first step in any development programme should be to consider the current situation. Use the first tool to evaluate any strengths or weaknesses in your existing performance management system. The second tool provides you with a more specific diagnostic of how performance reviews (or appraisals) are conducted. It will also help you to determine what you find difficult in the process.

Having used these two tools you can begin to focus on your own development priorities, so the remaining tools focus more on your skills. Firstly, asking the question: how well do you think you manage the performance management process? Next there is a tool which links specific process areas to the guides we have produced. As well as needing the ability to manage the process, you need the skills to manage performance. Use these tools to assess your own skills needs.

Having self-assessed your skill needs, you can also use the guides to provide you with the know-how to develop those skills. Finally, use the last two tools to plan your skills development, then to reflect and learn from your practice.

Tool 1: Rating Your Performance Management System

Use this tool to help you evaluate the performance management process in your organization (it may be called something different, like an appraisal or development review system). Then turn to the next page for some guidance on how to use the results.

How does your organization rate in its approach to performance management? Complete the chart by circling the number closest to what you observe around you.

The skills & abilities of individuals are used flexibly & effectively	5	4	3	2	1	Individuals stick to fixed way of working
Performance reviews focus on developing people's strengths	5	4	3	2	1	Performance reviews focus mostly on peoples weaknesses and gaps
Individuals would say they use their strengths consistently in their work	5	4	3	2	1	Individuals say there is little opportunity to use their strengths their work
Individuals are clear about what is expected of them	5	4	3	2	1	Individuals are unclear about what is expected of them
Individuals are very clear about how their objectives fit with their team and the organization	5	4	3	2	1	Individuals are unclear about how their objectives fit with their team and the organization
The right kind of skills are developed in the organization	5	4	3	2	1	There is no real focus on skill development
Individuals receive regular feedback on their performance	5	4	3	2	1	Feedback to individuals is rare
Regular performance reviews are held through the year	5	4	3	2	1	Performance reviews only happen annually
The performance management system is effective	5	4	3	2	1	The performance management system is discredited/ignored

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Process Tools

The process tools provide a framework and structure to help understand how performance management works.

Firstly, use **the PERFORM Model Tool**. This model provides a framework to help you manage the factors contributing to effective performance. This tool first asks you to think about your own performance and your own situation. Thinking through each of the PERFORM factors will help you to gain a better grasp of your own performance needs before then doing the same for your colleagues.



Flow Diagram for Conducting a Performance Review illustrates a typical flow chart for a performance management process. At a glance it shows how the different stages of a performance management process fit together.

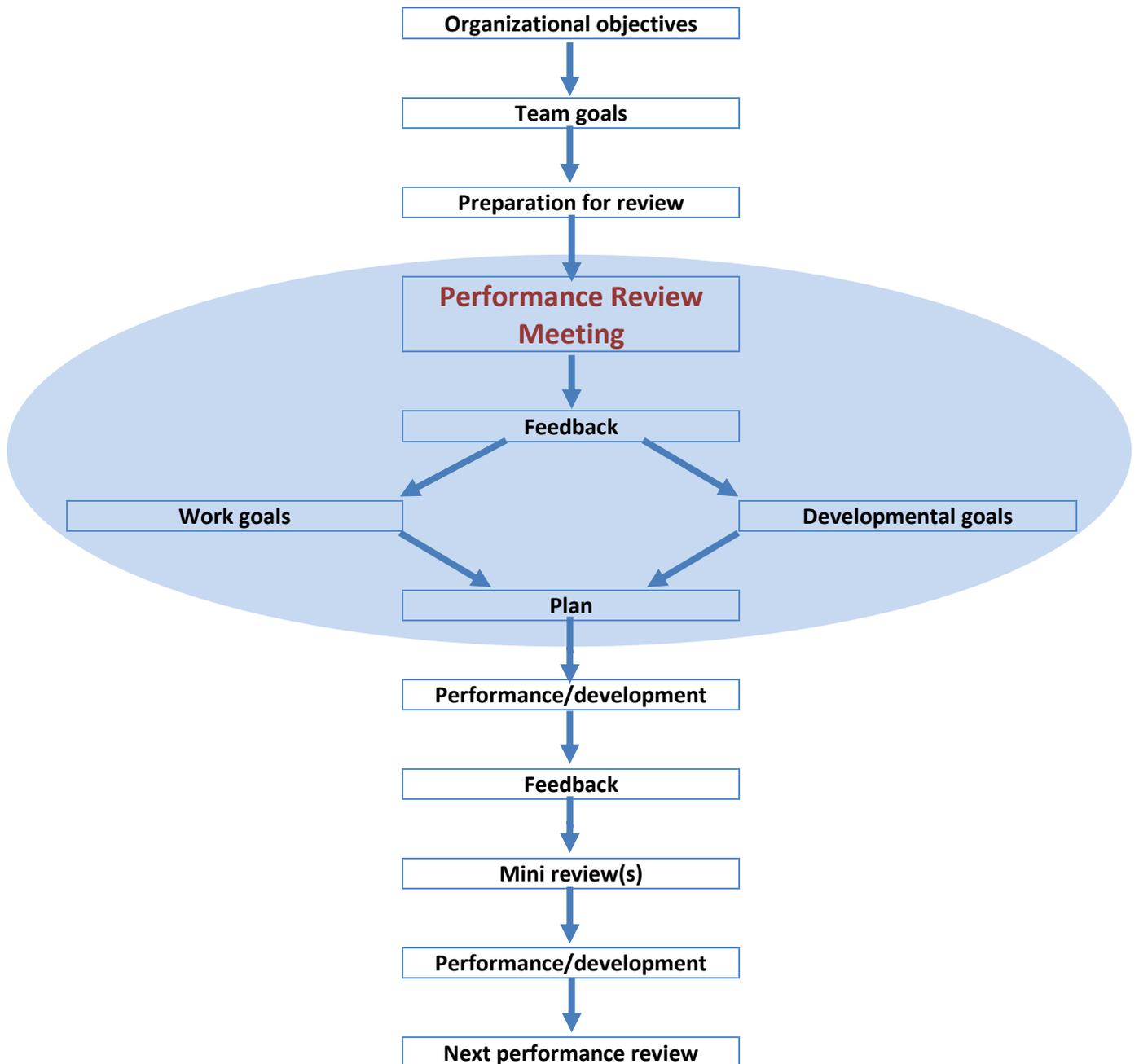
The next tool is **the Performance Management Cycle**. This can be used to help you understand and manage the cyclical nature of performance management.

The tools in this section help to illustrate the full-range of the performance management process and of the factors that need to be managed effectively.

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Tool 10: Flow Diagram for Conducting a Performance Review

A key element of performance management is the ability to conduct effective performance reviews. Use this tool to consider where and how individual reviews fit into the overall performance management process. This is illustrated in the diagram below:



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Tool 18: Conducting Regular Mini-Reviews

Interim reviews help to keep everything on track. A record of these mini-reviews might be useful. Here is a straightforward tool to use as an aid for conducting and recording a mini-review. The tool uses Progress, Issues and Plans as a structure.

Name:		Date:	
Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review progress towards agreed goals - what has been done to date? What progress has been made based on the plan? Propose any changes/modifications to goals based on changing needs 		Notes:	
Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is affecting progress – hindering or facilitating? What needs have emerged which may need different support? Are resources appropriately allocated? Have the right opportunities been created for performance to be demonstrated? 		Notes:	
Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are issues to be dealt with? What needs to be done to help maintain progress? What actions need to be taken if you have agreed modifications to objectives? What are the next activities that need to be done? What coaching support might be needed in the next period? Date and time of next review? 		Notes:	

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Tool 40: Action Plan to Eradicate Busyness

So, how do we deal with busyness? Before you can manage it in others you must first consider your own use of time. Use the 10 steps in this tool to deal with busyness.

Firstly ask yourself four questions to clarify your own working practices:

1. **Are your objectives clear, unambiguous and SMART?** - specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bounded.
2. **Is it clear which activities deliver results?** - in relation to your objectives.
3. **Does the task/activity need to be done?** - does it add value to your organisation?
4. **Does the activity do anything meaningful for your customer?** - do they value it?

Now you are clear about the nature of the work you're doing, put some practical steps in place to combat busyness:

5. **Be clear about what you are doing** - so that you can be clear about what you don't need to do.
6. **Ask "why?" (nicely and often)** - both of others asking you to do something, and of yourself in what you do.
7. **Say "no"!** - as often as is needed to keep busyness under control.
8. **Prune and review regularly** - stop busyness creeping in by remembering: anything run by human beings will tend towards complexity.
9. **Don't get too busy!** If the day is *filled* with activity then it is *too* full.
10. **Don't confuse activity with productivity** - or allow others to do so either.

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Updates

For more information on the content of this e-guide, and other related topics, visit: www.the-happy-manager.com

Join the community: subscribe to the Happy Manager Newsletter for regular updates and advice on better ways to manage.

Join the conversation: bookmark the Happy Manager blog.

(www.the-happy-manager/blog) Leave any comments, suggestions or examples of your own experiences for the benefit of other readers.

Titles available:

How to be a Happy Manager
Have a Good Workday
How to Build a Happy Workplace
Workstyle, Lifestyle

Build a Better Team
Team Building Exercises
Team Health Check
The Problems with Teams
Why is Teamwork Important?

Leadership Essentials
Defining Leadership
Leading with Style and Focus
Leading Insights

Transformational Change
Sustaining Change
Making Change Personal

It's All About Performance
15 Performance Management Tips
Managing Performance and Potential
Performance Management Skills
Performance Management Toolkit
Conducting a Performance Review
Manage Your Own Performance
Motivating Performance

Managing for Strength to Strength
Managers Make the Difference
Re-defining Middle Management
Do More with Less
Managing Time and Priority
Extreme Thinking: Unlocking Creativity
SMART Goals, SHARP Goals
Making Better Decisions
What's the Problem?

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