Head Light

The Performance Management Revolution – 5 fundamentals

part of our series of Tools

The Talent Cloud Platform

Developing Skills. Encouraging Performance. Boosting Recognition.

The 5 fundamentals

This article suggests five key fundamentals of the Performance Management Revolution which need to be in place. Use it as a resource when looking at how you can start to shape your Performance Management process.

#1- Get involvement in mapping out the new approach

Consult with employees and include them as you start to map out any new Performance Management approach. Ask them about what they want from Performance Management and listen to what they say. You could do this a number of ways. Focus Groups can be valuable and seek to get structured input from people across the business, at all levels, as to how the process could work more effectively for them, and what needs to change. It may be that you could work with IT to include a feature on your intranet site which encourages people to share their suggestions on how the Performance Management process could be improved. Look to set up a cross-functional, non-managerial working group and task them with putting a proposal together for creating a better Performance Management world. And finally, find some senior-level champions and role models – leaders and managers who really do Performance Management well – and get their support in spreading the word or gathering views and feedback.

#2 - Don't just fiddle with the form

Consider scrapping Performance Management altogether – sure – and if you don't have an online tool which allows people to capture objectives, record achievements, collect feedback and monitor progress, then start getting a business case together to acquire one.

But don't just make changes to your paper-based forms by adding a new field or two to complete, or a new box to tick. Doing this has never made anyone feel more positively disposed towards performance management!

#3 - Take a hard look at your policy on Performance Management – and change it if needed

In our experience, the more effective Performance Management processes seek to empower the individual. Find opportunities to put more accountability of the success of Performance Management in the hands of the employee. This reflects the shift observed currently towards greater flexibility, individual choice and personal accountability, as highlighted in our articles and webinars on the consumerisation of talent.

As an example, if your current process starts with the line manager writing objectives for his or her team, turn that on its head. Change it so that each individual contributor is responsible for setting their own goals and targets. Encourage line managers to use an open, collaborative process (such as Head Light's TOM – Team Objective Matrix) to set expectations, to build accountability, to facilitate collaboration and teamwork and to focus on strategic priorities.

#4 - Focus on the skills not the process

If you decide you need to retain the rating element of Performance Management, make sure you develop managers' skills in making these decisions.

This is about helping them making accurate and fair assessments of performance, so train and up-skill your line managers to be more effective assessors. Help them to understand how their biases and decision-making processes can impact on performance assessments and give them tools and strategies to manage and minimise their personal biases.

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#5 - Build in an audit of the quality of conversations

You'll want to know the impact of the changes you have made to your Performance Management approach so plan to include a question or two in your employee satisfaction or engagement survey about this. Ask about the quality of the performance discussions and the feedback that people get from their line manager. Start collecting data about where you have really good management practice and recognise and reward those managers accordingly.

Then identify areas where managers are less skilled at talking to people about performance, achievement, development and progression and do something about it to support them. Check your 360 degree feedback questionnaires – do they include questions (both rated questions and qualitative ones) which can help you evaluate managerial skill in these areas? If not, add something in. It's not always possible to add a rated question to an established questionnaire, but putting an open ended question in at the end should be easily actioned.

Next steps

If you would like to know more about how to support a shift in Performance Management practice, please get in touch.

About Head Light

Head Light Head Light is an award-winning talent management and talent retention software and consulting firm that works with clients to define and implement impactful talent management strategies.

Talent Cloud® is our cloud-based portfolio of integrated talent management platform tools designed for those who expect the maximum return from talent management processes. Our training and consulting services uniquely complement our platform that engages employees, managers and senior leaders in the selection, development and progression of people in their businesses.

Companies in the FTSE 350, public sector, large and small, from retailers to high tech innovators have all benefitted from our tools, techniques and expertise.

Founded in 2004, we are headquartered in the UK.

Head Light has attained the ISO 27001 standard for Information Security. Certificate No 217613.

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transition to Continuous Performance Management

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introduce robust Succession Planning

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spot High Potentials and Future Leaders

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How do I…

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