

Performance Management: Performance Improvement Plan

Success Story in Performance Management

By Susan M. Heathfield, About.com Guide

Free Policy Samples, Forms, and Check Lists:

For those of you who feel that the staff person who needs a formal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) will never succeed in your organization, here is a success story. The newly promoted plant manager of a 150 person organization was failing miserably in the key deliverables his boss expected. A formal PIP was developed that cited eleven goals and their measures of success. A ninety day time frame was provided as these goals were challenging and not short term.

The manager was given a strong, supportive environment in which his supervisor's expectations for his success were a key factor. And guess what? He succeeded beyond our wildest dreams. All he had needed was serious direction about what he needed to do to succeed.

So, I am a believer in the power of a well-planned, measurable PIP that is reinforced by positive and expressed supervisory support and encouragement.

Performance Management: Performance Improvement Plan

The Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is designed to facilitate constructive discussion between a staff member and his or her supervisor and to clarify the work performance to be improved.

It is implemented, at the discretion of the supervisor, when it becomes necessary to help a staff member improve his or her performance. The supervisor, with input from the affected employee, develops an improvement plan; the purpose of the activities outlined is to help the employee to attain the desired level of performance.

The PIP differs from the Performance Development Planning (PDP) process in the amount and quantity of the detail. Assuming an employee is already participating in the company-wide PDP process, the format and the expectation of the PIP should enable the supervisor and staff member to communicate with a higher degree of clarity about specific expectations. In general, people who are performing their jobs effectively, and meeting the expectations of the PDP process, will not need to participate in a PIP.

In all cases, it is recommended that the supervisor's supervisor and the Human Resources department review the plan. This will ensure consistent and fair treatment of employees across the company. The supervisor will monitor and provide feedback to the employee regarding his or her performance on the PIP and may take additional disciplinary action, if warranted, through the organization's Progressive Discipline Process, if necessary.

The supervisor should review the following six items with the employee when using the document.

1. State performance to be improved; be specific and cite examples.
2. State the level of work performance expectation and that it must be performed on a consistent basis.
3. Identify and specify the support and resources you will provide to assist the employee.
4. Communicate your plan for providing feedback to the employee. Specify meeting times, with whom and how often. Specify the measurements you will consider in evaluating progress.
5. Specify possible consequences if performance standards are not met.
6. Provide sources of additional information such as the Employee Handbook.

Now that you are formally committed to helping your staff member improve his or her performance, please use the form that follows to document this commitment.

Employee Name:

Title:

Department

Date:

Performance in need of improvement: (List the goals and activities the employee will initiate to improve performance. Include skill development and changes needed to meet work performance expectations.)

Targeted date for improvement:

Expected results - list measurements, where possible:

Dates to review progress by the employee and supervisor:

Progress at review dates:

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: