

The importance of performance reviews

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May 2026



Performance reviews are important because they help align expectations, improve performance, and support growth. The best approach is the 360-degree notion which reviews performance of individuals from different angles and perspectives. This usually involves gathering feedback from an employee's manager/supervisor, direct reports, peers and sometimes even clients (in the case of HE – students). The employee also completes a self-assessment that shares achievements/successes and aspirations/KPIs for the period ahead.

The argument being – this holistic approach aims to provide a more balanced, objective, and actionable insight into an individual's strengths and areas of improvement.

See -

Understanding 360 Degree Evaluation and Feedback (2025) - [Understanding 360 Degree Evaluation and Feedback](#)

The approach is also consistent with the notion of distributed leadership with its focus on developing a culture of collegiality, encouraging initiative, and enhancing overall engagement.

See -

Distributed leadership in a Higher Education setting (2026) - [6113ad_f85c99d2ad3145cf91a675879d744a8c.pdf](#)

The value/benefits of performance reviews

The value/benefits of performance reviews are significant –

Clarify expectations – Reviews help employees understand what is expected of them and how their work is being measured. Often the lack of direction can create tension and disappointment. This often leads to disengagement and departure.

Recognize achievements – Reviews provide a formal opportunity to acknowledge strong performance and contributions. A key element of a good review process is enabling staff to identify the things that they have done well during the performance period and have this acknowledged and rewarded.

Identify improvement and future focus areas – Reviews highlight skills or behaviours that may need development and provide the opportunity to project future foci which can be developed into KPIs. The involvement of the employee in the process of developing suitable KPIs is critical to achievement and 'buy'. This may include strategies to improve performance moving forward.

Support career development – Reviews can guide promotions, training, and future goals. The establishment of clear direction and focus, then, is essential.

Improve communication – Reviews encourage regular dialogue between managers and employees. If well managed and the 360-degree concept is embedded – collegiality across the organisation can be enhanced.

Strengthen accountability – Reviews ensure both employees and managers can track progress against agreed objectives. If these KPIs can be achieved through collaboration – this usually results in better outcomes and greater participation.

and

Benefit the organization – Reviews can facilitate better individual performance which in turn contributes to team success and broader business goals.

The notion of reviews being collaborative can make the entire process much more positive and appropriate. The tired model of employer-employee only processes is tired and far less enabling.

Also worth reading –

Non-Hierarchical Management Systems (2026) -
[6113ad_270f77f30a2841eebd105bce3de92668.pdf](#)

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