



## FARRAR'S FAUCET

ACTIONABLE THOUGHTS ON PRINCIPLED BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

### 60 Second Guide To Performance Agreement and One-Up Meetings



**You know the importance of multiple sources of information when doing performance reviews or giving performance ratings to your employees. A great source of information that will help you understand your team's performance and help them to improve is an open performance consensus meeting with your manager and peers. Over the next 60 seconds, we'll bring you up to speed with the latest way to help your employees reach their maximum potential.**

#### **0:60: What is a Performance Agreement meeting?**

A Performance Agreement Meeting is a discussion between a manager and one or more of their supervisors where they come to an agreement about performance ratings before the supervisor meets with their employees. They are also called One-Up Meetings, Performance Calibration Meetings and Performance Consensus Meetings. Together you raise the bar on performance by consistently applying the highest standards to all your employees.

#### **0:54: Why bother?**

Apart from raising the bar on performance, we know that one of the things most important to employees is being treated equally and fairly in the workplace. Performance ratings have such a huge impact on career development, job opportunities and work distribution. It's important that every employee feels they are being judged by the same standards.

#### **0:48: You mean it's like diversity?**

Exactly. We're used to diversity requirements that ensure we treat employees equally and without fear or favor based on their race, gender or age. Ensuring performance ratings are applied equally by different supervisors is just an extension of the same principle.

#### **0:42: Don't I already have enough information?**

Perhaps. The truth is supervisors don't always get it right. There are at least three reasons why you might not have the right information to rate your employee alone. Sometimes other people see different things you do...we all know employees who behave differently around their boss, for better and worse. Sometimes you have a different "yardstick" to everyone else...what you call unreasonable may be OK by the rest of the group, and vice versa. Finally, sometimes supervisors are just wrong. Our own judgments aren't always right and it's wise to have a second, or even a third and fourth opinion to take into account.

#### **0:36: Won't it take too long? It doesn't sound very practical...**

The key is to focus on short, focused discussions without lengthy procedures and processes.

#### **0:30: Does this mean my managers don't trust me? Don't I know my employees best?**

The process works best when there is openness and trust. It's about helping, supporting and developing supervisors so they can do their job more easily and develop their careers. Managers know supervisors have the best knowledge of their employees' performance. That's why they want to be involved through the process. They don't just want to know when there is a problem, they also want to know when people do well.

## **0:24: OK, but how do we get the conversations going?**

First, the ground rules: there has to be confidentiality and trust. Be open to hearing what others say about your employees, and be prepared to share your view of their performance. Use the discussion as an opportunity to get more input and prepare better feedback for your employees.

## **0:18: So what are some good discussion starters?**

Use these simple starting points for your discussions:

1. The Start-Up Test: Who would you take with you to start up a new role, department, or company.
2. Riding, or Pulling the Wagon: Talk about who you think the employees would judge is pulling their fair share, and who is "riding in the wagon".
3. The Incredible Shrinking Job: Some people seem like perfectly good performers, but we make allowances for them so that their job shrinks each year. Maybe they don't know how to use the latest technology, or they've been here a long time and no-one wants to rock the boat by asking them to stretch themselves. Which of our employees has an Incredible Shrinking Job?

These three exercises give an opportunity to explore the manager's view, the peer view and the market view respectively. With the first test, really look closely at identifying the top two or three. With the wagon test review 360 feedback where available and other data to support the "riding or pulling" decision. Finally, really look at your employees and decide if they are still as valuable as we thought they were when we hired them, and how would the market value them today.

## **0:12: What happens next?**

At the end of the day the final rating the employee gets is still the responsibility of the supervisor. After an open One-Up Meeting with your manager and your peers you will have good feedback to know that your ratings are fair and consistent with how others in your group are evaluated.

## **0:01: How do I arrange a Performance Agreement meeting to help me rate my employees?**

Performance Agreement Meetings should be just a normal part of managing your staff. You can probably arrange discussions for a couple of hours two or three times a year with your manager to make sure your evaluations of your staff are fair and consistent. Contact anyone in your Human Resources Department.

### **ABOUT ME: DAVID FARRAR**



An Australian living in the US since 2001, David is a psychologist with international experience as a consultant and professional speaker. David studied at the Royal Military College of Australia, (MUR), University of Melbourne, and Northwestern University, (Kellogg Business School). David has degrees in economics and psychology, graduated his master's program with honors, and qualified as a psychologist in Australia. David is the President and CEO of FGRAssociates, LLC. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Saint Mary's University and the College of Saint Scholastica where he teaches Ethics, Leadership and Conflict Management in MBA and other graduate programs.

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