



Standard Operating Procedure

9 Block Performance Evaluation

Background:

Performance Management in organizations is a critical skill for Leaders, and is a process that is highly impactful on overall organizational results. For people to do their best, they need to know what is expected of them, and receive regular feedback on how they are doing.

Although most performance evaluation systems are formally conducted once per year, there is no need to limit such a key process to an annual review period. For those organizations who do conduct reviews at greater frequency, the improved communication and feedback is beneficial in keeping people on track, and improving overall organizational results

9 Block Performance Reviews

Originally introduced by General Electric, 9 block performance reviews are a simple, yet effective means of conducting the performance evaluation review process. The template is also useful in displaying the overall performance levels of teams, showing how each individual falls within the 9 block framework. This can be particularly beneficial when looking for high potential candidates to fill future key roles.

From an individual performance evaluation standpoint, there are a few key features of the 9 block process that enhance the processes value for organizations:

1. It is quick and easy to implement, and not heavy on administrative documentation
2. It is collaborative, in that the employees review themselves prior to setting down with the leader. This encourages two-way communication, and improves buy-in for the process
3. It focuses on two primary dimensions: the results achieved, and the behaviours demonstrated to achieve those results. In this regard, it is much more holistic than alternative review systems
4. It is focused on what the objectives were, how the individual performed with regards to the objectives, what the next objectives will be, and employee interests/professional development opportunities

As with any system, the important thing is the discussion, not the document, although documentation is an important part of any performance management system.

Standard Operating Procedure:

1. Print a hard copy of the form, and the standard operating procedure, for review with the candidate being evaluated
2. Explain how the process works, why the organization has such a process, and the benefits to the organization and to the employee. Answer any questions the employee has with regards to the process
3. Have the employee take the form away, and give them adequate time (ex, a week) to reflect on their performance over the past review period, and to fill in the form as to how they would evaluate themselves
4. Schedule a review meeting in advance, giving the employee sufficient time to be prepared
5. Have the employee review their evaluation notes, and once they are done, discuss why and how they reached those ratings
6. As a coach, the Leader then comments on each of the sections of the 9 block, giving open and honest feedback on how they would rate the employee
7. Through further discussion, come to an agreement on the final ratings on the review. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Leader's rating is the one that is finalized, although the employee's views are also documented on the sheet
8. Finally, make sure the interests and development plans section is filled in as well
9. The final 9 block rating is indicated in the 9 block diagram at the top of the form.
10. The Leader then keeps a copy of the 9 block form used for the evaluation session, and over the next week or so, completes a clean copy summarizing all of the pertinent points
11. A final review session is scheduled with the employee, and once completed, both the Leader and the employee sign the document. If the employee refuses to sign, the Leader writes "refused to sign" in the space where the employee's signature would go
12. A copy of the finalized review should be given to the employee, and a copy (or copies) filed per company policy

Outcomes:

Having a robust, regularly conducted performance evaluation system for employees, is an important tool to communicate performance expectations, and to measure current performance against those expectations. This communication tool is key to managing and improving overall organizational performance, and allows for the people within the organization to maximize the value they contribute to overall levels of performance.