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Appraisal Guidance for Line Managers

Introduction

An appraisal is a two-headed process of looking backwards to analyse past job performance and looking forward into the future with a view to improving future performance.

The overall objective of an effective appraisal process should be to help each colleague to maximise their job performance for the joint benefit of your colleague and the organisation.

This guidance aims to help you as the line manager understand the processes involved in conducting effective appraisals. There are different tools you can use to boost performance, with the aim of ensuring that each person in the organisation thrives and contributes to its success.

The purpose of appraisal

The main purpose of an appraisal should be to assist colleagues to improve their performance. This will be of benefit to both the colleagues and the organisation.

When we refer to colleague performance, there are two dimensions to consider.

First, what is the colleague delivering? Are they meeting the requirements outlined in their job description and the goals they have agreed? However, to maximise performance, we need to go one step further. Are colleagues given opportunities to realise their potential through reasonable stretch opportunities and fulfilling work?

The second dimension of performance looks at the "how"; the way in which the colleague delivers. Is the colleague exhibiting behaviours that are important to the organisation? Are they behaving in line with the organisation's values? This can be just as important to maximising the performance of colleagues as what they are delivering.

An appraisal process may be designed to include some or all of the following elements:

- a review of the colleague's past performance;
- discussion of the colleague's strengths and development areas;
- discussion of any problems and constraints, with a view to identifying solutions;
- a review of the extent to which the colleague has achieved set targets;
- discussion of appropriate targets for the forthcoming year;
- identification of training and development needs in relation to the colleague's current job;
- identification of training and development needs in relation to a job that the colleague may do in the future;
- a review of the colleague's long-term potential;
- a discussion about the employer's future plans; and
- a discussion about the colleague's future ambitions and plans.



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The benefits of appraisal

There is no one size fits all when it comes to the appraisal process, but there are factors to take into account when designing and creating a new appraisal system or evaluating an existing one, to help make sure it works hard to develop colleague performance.

An effective performance appraisal process will:

- give rise to a shared understanding of expectations;
- generate feedback;
- give recognition to colleagues; and
- help colleagues to feel that they are contributing towards success.

These outcomes can lead to a multitude of benefits for colleagues and organisations.

The benefits of an effective appraisal process

- Increased morale and colleague engagement.
- Improved performance.
- Support for a high performing culture.
- Increased productivity.
- Promotion of learning.
- Identification of areas for essential and desirable training.
- An understanding of expectations of the business and colleagues.
- Establishing objectives.
- Clarifying roles.
- Informing succession planning.
- Opportunities to align individual contribution with team and business objectives.
- Helping to create a sense of purpose and connection between individuals and the goals of the organisation.
- Listening to colleagues' aspirations.
- Listening to colleagues' ideas about business improvements.
- Providing a formal opportunity for reward and recognition.
- Supporting relationship building between colleagues and line managers.
- Encouraging behaviours that promote success and high performance.
- Identifying any and handling grievances early on, helping to avoid escalation.

Problem areas

While an appraisal can have many potential benefits, it is useful for you to appreciate the negative issues that may sometimes arise.

- If an appraisal is linked to the organisation's pay review process, discussions may become focused on pay instead of performance. Pay reviews are therefore best kept separate from performance appraisal.
- You may be tempted to use the appraisal check-in to raise disciplinary matters. If there is a problem with a colleague's conduct or performance, the matter should be raised with



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the colleague at the time the problem arises, and not stored up for an appraisal meeting/check-in.

- You may be reluctant to deliver criticism on a face-to-face basis, perhaps because of a fear that the colleague might react badly, become defensive or even respond negatively to the whole process of appraisal.
- You may not work closely with the individual and may not therefore have the necessary insight into their performance or strengths and development areas. If this is the case, it will be vital for you to talk to the colleague's immediate supervisor to gain the necessary feedback.
- Personal likes and dislikes can affect the outcome of appraisal meetings, unless you have a sound awareness of these, and are able to put them to one side and view the colleague's abilities objectively.
- A colleague may believe that you hold prejudices against them, perhaps as a result of a personality clash or because of disagreements over the year.
- Some colleagues are intrinsically suspicious of an appraisal process.

Why is it important to develop performance?

The performance of colleagues in your organisation has a direct impact on the performance of your business. When colleagues are stretched, challenged, supported and developed, they thrive at work. Organisations benefit from empowered colleagues who contribute ideas, innovate and find solutions to problems, applying creativity and new ways of thinking to come to better solutions, faster.

Organisations that invest in developing colleagues report that this is one of the biggest factors that contributes to high levels of colleague engagement. According to Gallup, companies with elevated levels of engagement can tap into people's discretionary effort and report 22% higher productivity. A colleague's performance is determined not just by their capability to do the role, but by their willingness to perform, not just to the standard that is expected of them, but to the best of their potential. Recruiting people with the skills, capability or potential to perform the role is one half of the equation. It is the degree to which someone feels engaged that determines their will and the level of discretionary effort they put in.

How to tell if people are performing

If your organisation is meeting its financial targets, this does not necessarily mean that people are performing to the best of their ability. People analytics can help you to understand where there are strong performers and weaker performers in the organisation.

You can collect data to reveal if colleagues are achieving their personal goals, teams are achieving their team goals, and colleague engagement scores are high. If people are engaged and are achieving their stretching goals that are aligned with business goals, there is a strong chance that they are performing their role to a high standard.

Data also allows you to observe the difference in behaviours between top performers and less strong performers. Strong performers tend to demonstrate company values and behaviours in their everyday interactions, role modelling excellence and fostering a positive working environment.



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Job descriptions

Effective performance starts with an effective job description, as it will give people clarity over what tasks they need to perform and what responsibilities they have.

Organisations require people and roles to be flexible, adaptable and agile to respond to the ever-changing demands and needs of their customers and industry. Therefore, the need to keep roles and responsibilities at the forefront of your people agenda is key.

However, in many workplaces, people are given a job description at the start of their journey with the organisation and this is not spoken about again during the colleague's employment.

Line managers have day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that job descriptions are fit for purpose and that their teams are clear about what is expected from them in their roles. This means having regular and documented conversations with their team about the responsibilities of their role, and making sure that job descriptions are relevant to the organisation and the team's responsibilities.

Start with SMART

SMART objectives are nothing new, but they are a great basis for creating effective goals.

There are a few different interpretations of the SMART model, which has evolved over time. Here is an example of one interpretation and some questions that line managers and colleagues can ask themselves to make sure each goal is appropriate.

Is the objective SMART?

Specific: Make the goals as specific as possible to avoid uncertainty. Is the goal clear and does it contain metrics or numbers?

Measurable: Make the goal measurable. How will you know it has been successful?

Achievable: Is it within the individual's power and role to be able to achieve the objective?

Realistic: Do not be unrealistic when setting goals as this causes unnecessary stress and pressure. Is the goal stretching but not too stretching?

Timebound: Agreeing timescales gives clarity on when the goal should be completed by. Is there a clear deadline or due date?

Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators (KPIs) help to measure progress towards objectives. In objective setting, they are usually the metrics contained within the objective.

Examples of KPIs could be to track:

- financials, for example sales (eg increase sales to £1 million), profitability (eg achieve a 50% profit margin) or conversions;
- compliance, for example the number of accidents or incidents, or audit scores; or
- people, for example retention above x%.



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What v How

Objectives should be a mixture of "what" and "how". "What" refers to the outcomes, tasks and technical aspects of the objective. "How" describes the behaviours for how the objective may be achieved.

Defining objectives in relation to these two aspects can help people to understand their objectives, giving them a better chance of achieving them. More focus is generally given to the "what" as opposed to the "how", as this is easier to articulate and measure. However, failing to focus on the behaviours and skills to achieve the "what" means that you are not setting your people up for success.

When it comes to performance expectations, this should include not just what we expect of our colleagues but also how we expect our colleagues to act and behave. The "how" refers to organisational values, reflecting "the way we do things around here" and what is important to the organisation. This can help to guide the "right" types of behaviours and discourage the "wrong" types of behaviours at work.

If you have not already defined desired behaviours that align with organisational values, this is a good place to start. This will help colleagues to know what good looks like.

Once you have a set of positive behaviours, you should embed them in everything you do and promote them where possible, because they will help colleagues to achieve success at work.

When it comes to rewarding performance, recognise the "how" and the "what" equally. For example, if someone achieved their sales target, but in the process they alienated colleagues and created a disadvantage to others, while they may have met one aspect of their objective, they should not be rewarded because their behaviour did not align with organisational values.

Individual v team objectives

There are strong opinions about whether objectives set on an individual basis have a positive effect, or whether they create silos and a competitive culture. Some believe that team objectives that are crafted and achieved through collaboration yield more success. There is no one size fits all; what works best will depend on the organisation and its people.

Pros and cons of setting individual goals

Pros	Cons
It is clear how each person can personally contribute towards team and company success	They can lead to a silo mentality and a competitive culture
Individuals can take small steps towards success	Teams make bigger strides when working together to achieve larger goals



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Pros and cons of setting individual goals

Pros	Cons
It is easier to identify who is not performing than it is with team objectives	Maintaining relevant goals and reviewing them can take up a lot of time and slow down overall progress

Adapting objectives

Many people say that one of the reasons they do not engage with the objective-setting and performance review process is that the goals set at the beginning of the year do not reflect what they are doing and need to be doing at the end of the year.

Just as important as the need to review job descriptions on a regular basis, is the need to review and adjust objectives. Every organisation goes through change at some point in the year, and in the current business environment, where many organisations are having to respond to change on an almost constant basis, objectives need to change too. It could even be argued that goal setting in a rapidly changing economic climate is particularly important to make sure people are focusing on the right things and align with business requirements.

Therefore, it is essential that line managers and colleagues review objectives on a regular basis, making adjustments to them where relevant.

For some organisations, it works best to have quarterly check-ins against targets, to make sure that objectives are still relevant and to take stock of the progress towards achieving goals, but the regularity of these check-in conversations should depend on the needs of the organisation and the relevant team. This process should result in adjustments to targets where needed so that they remain achievable and relevant against business objectives. It may be that you will need to change only one goal, or the circumstances may merit replacing or adapting all the objectives.

These formal and structured reviews should be complemented by more regular and less formal discussions about goals and progress.

Where a goal is adapted, it is important for the manager to recognise the work the colleague has done on the previous version of the goal.

Regular discussions around the extent to which goals are still relevant helps to drive and reinforce individual accountability for achieving goals and keeps the discussions relevant and current.

Accountability

Key factors in goal accountability

- Ensure people understand their goals
- Involve people in creating their goals



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- Set expectations around progress updates
- Discuss goals regularly
- Be transparent around objectives
- Celebrate and share success

There are various ways in which you can help to improve accountability when it comes to setting and achieving objectives:

- **Ensure goals are clear:** During objective setting, line managers should be satisfied that individuals understand what their objectives are and how they can achieve them. A simple way to achieve this is by asking colleagues to create their own objectives, following which the line manager will work with the colleague to shape the objective. Line managers should make clear that individual objectives must tie in with wider department and organisational objectives or focuses. Where colleagues write their own objectives, this will demonstrate whether they are clear about what they mean and what the wider objectives of the team and organisation mean. Following the SMART goal-setting technique should help to ensure colleagues capture the "what" and the "how".
- **Make it inclusive:** If line managers set objectives for their colleagues, they will be less likely to buy into their goals, support them and feel committed to them than if they were involved in the goal-setting process. People are also less likely to achieve their objectives. A collaborative process will increase levels of ownership and result in higher levels of achievement. Setting objectives should be a two-way process, where the line manager and colleague (or the team, where it is a team goal) both contribute to agree the best objectives.
- **Clarify expectations on progress updates:** Timescales may be tailored to each person or there may be a consistent approach, depending upon what works for the organisation (see above).
- **Discuss goals during regular performance discussions:** In addition to the more formal progress updates on goals, when line managers talk to colleagues about work, such as during feedback conversations or discussions about day-to-day responsibilities, they should refer to the colleague's goals and their progress towards them. This will help to ensure everyone's day-to-day work is focused on the organisation's priorities, helping to make decisions around areas of focus and helping managers to offer the most appropriate support. Frequent discussions around goals also means that they can be adapted to suit changing business needs. During these discussions, managers should ask people if anything is blocking their ability to achieve their goals. If a goal needs to be changed as a result of a blocker, this should be done at the relevant time.
- **Celebrate and share success:** Organisations should celebrate when individuals and teams achieve their goals. Success should be shared; team and organisational communications can encourage other people to see what impact successful achievement has had on the organisation.



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Regular feedback

One of the biggest changes in the management of performance in recent years has been the move away from "saving up" feedback for an annual review to continuous feedback "in the moment". Continuous performance management should help to close the gap between the organisation's vision and the individual's performance in relation to their goals.

However, for most organisations, regular feedback alone will not be enough to bring about all the positive outcomes that a formal performance review process can bring; an annual performance appraisal will be needed to sit alongside a feedback culture.

Preparing for an appraisal meeting

If appraisals are to be successful in motivating colleagues and enhancing job performance, it will be essential for you to plan and conduct effective appraisal meetings.

Preparation for an appraisal meeting is one of the most important stages of the appraisal process.

Recording performance

You must have the necessary facts about the colleague's performance before you at the time of the appraisal meeting.

Doing so will provide specific, factual examples of job performance for you to discuss with the colleague during the appraisal meeting. Without such evidence, the meeting may turn into a haphazard chat based on generalisations. This will be neither meaningful nor constructive.

Having specific examples will be particularly important if you need to discuss aspects of a colleague's performance that are not wholly satisfactory. This will act as a starting point for discussion on why performance was not satisfactory in the particular area and what can be done to achieve an improvement in the future. Without concrete examples, the colleague may not accept your claim that their performance was unsatisfactory and may become defensive.

Checklist for appraisal meeting preparation

If you fail to prepare properly for an appraisal meeting, the colleague being meetinged will quickly sense and resent this.

Dos and don'ts

- **Do** review the job description and the previous year's appraisal record to check the job duties and responsibilities, and what was said at the previous year's appraisal.
- **Do** talk to other line managers or supervisors - and peers where appropriate - with whom the colleague has been working during the year to obtain factual feedback on performance.
- **Do** think through what aspects of the colleague's performance are to be discussed and identify specific examples of both good and not-so-good performance.
- **Do** be prepared to back up any criticism with facts and examples.



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- **Do** consider what points the colleague may wish to raise and think through how any delicate areas can best be handled.
- **Do** agree the date, time and place for the meeting in advance, taking into account the colleague's preferences. Part-time colleagues should be appraised at times that fall within their normal working hours.
- **Don't** underestimate the time necessary for the meeting. There is no ideal length of time for an appraisal meeting, but it is advisable to schedule more time than you think you will need to avoid having to cut a discussion short.
- **Don't** forget to brief each colleague well in advance about the purpose and scope of the appraisal meeting.
- **Don't** be tempted to complete the appraisal documentation until after the meeting, although you should review the appraisal document and make some provisional notes.
- **Don't** allow interruptions during the meeting, and make sure that there are no distractions from mobile phones and other electronic devices.
- **Don't** overlook the importance of taking into account the personality and temperament of each colleague. Any likely reactions should be identified beforehand, and an appropriate response planned. Different styles of meeting may be needed to cater for individual needs. A relatively insecure colleague may, for example, need a lot of reassurance.

Advance briefing

Colleagues should be properly briefed before their appraisal meeting on what the meeting is for, how it will be conducted and what they should expect to gain from it.

Self-appraisal

Colleagues can be asked to think about the following areas in advance of their appraisal meeting. They don't need to share that with you but it's a helpful prompt to start to stretch the mind to help facilitate a productive conversation.

- In which areas of your job do you consider that you have performed successfully?
- What do you think the main reasons for your successes are?
- In which areas of your job do you feel that you have been less successful than you might have been, and what do you think the main reasons for this are?
- What do you believe your main strengths, skills and talents are?
- To what extent do you think your abilities are being fully utilised in your current job?
- What do you consider your weaknesses or shortcomings in relation to your current job are, and how do you think these could be overcome?
- What problems or constraints, if any, may have prevented you from doing your job to the best of your ability during the past 12 months?
- What ideas do you have for solving any problems identified?
- What goals and objectives do you think would be appropriate for you for the coming 12 months?
- What training, coaching or other development do you feel would enhance your job performance or benefit you in your employment with the organisation?
- What action would you like me to take to help you perform your job more effectively in the future?



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- What action do you think you could take to do your job more effectively in the future?
- What are your plans and ambitions for the short, medium and long term?

Appraisal meeting structure

Any system of appraisal will centre round the appraisal meeting. You should carry out the review objectively, focusing on the job being performed and not on the colleague's personality.

The colleague should gain a clear understanding of how well they have carried out the job over the past year, a full awareness of where they stand at present, and an insight into what training, development and career opportunities might be available or planned for the coming year.

Preliminaries
Take time at the start of the meeting to relax the colleague and establish rapport.
Explain the purpose and scope of the meeting and what the intended outcomes are.
Remind the colleague of the overall objective of appraisal, ie that it is intended to assist the colleague to maximise their job performance, both for the colleague's benefit and for that of the organisation as a whole.
Clarify the main duties of the colleague's job and their areas of responsibility.
Recap on the objectives and targets that were set for the year.
Performance review
Before providing feedback, encourage the colleague to put forward their views about performance.
Discuss aspects of good performance first.
Give sincere praise for good performance. Use examples, and place particular emphasis on any tasks that required special effort.



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Discuss how far agreed targets have been met.

Discuss any instances of poor or below-average performance, and the likely causes. Use specific examples and ensure that the discussion is frank and considers the problem areas in detail.

Explore any constraints that may have prevented performance to maximum capacity, and their causes.

Discussion of the future

Discuss and agree any training and development that would benefit the colleague in the coming year.

Discuss and agree any action that the colleague needs to take to improve performance.

Discuss and agree objectives and targets for the future, and how these will be assessed.

Give the colleague the opportunity to discuss their career aspirations and aims by asking the colleague where they would like to see themselves in the short, medium and long term. Take care not to raise false hopes or make promises that perhaps cannot be kept.

Share with the colleague any plans that the employer has which may affect the colleague's work and their aims.

Refrain from making an assumption that an older colleague may retire in the near future.

Treating older colleagues differently from younger colleagues in appraisal could amount to age discrimination, which could, unless justified, be unlawful. For example, if you disregard inadequate performance on the part of a 65-year-old colleague on the assumption that they will be retiring soon but deliver heavy criticism to a 25-year-old colleague whose performance is similarly inadequate, the difference in treatment may amount to age discrimination.



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If the colleague indicates during an appraisal meeting that they are considering retiring in the near future, you should take care not to discriminate against them, but you could begin to make plans for the future if the colleague does decide to retire.

Dos and don'ts

- **Do** continue to treat the colleague in the same way as you would treat other colleagues, for example in the provision of training opportunities.
- **Do** adjust the colleague's performance expectations proportionately if they indicate that they would like to work reduced hours in the run-up to retirement, and if the employer can accommodate this.
- **Do** discuss with the colleague how they could pass on their knowledge and skills to other staff in the run-up to retirement.
- **Do** discuss succession issues with the colleague, for example how the colleague might be involved in training a replacement for the job.
- **Do** reassure the colleague that they can change their mind about retirement if they wish.
- **Don't** say or do anything that might amount to age discrimination against the colleague.
- **Don't** assume that, if the colleague indicates that they plan to retire at a particular time, they will do so. Until the colleague actually hands in their notice, communication of an intention to retire is not binding on the colleague. You could remind the colleague of the requirement to give notice under the employment contract and the length of the notice period.

Close of meeting

- **Summarise what has been discussed.**
- **Summarise the action points that have been agreed.**
- **End the meeting on a positive note.**



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Performance assessment

The factors that are chosen for the purpose of assessing colleagues' performance should be properly defined and capable of objective - and, where possible, quantifiable - evaluation.

Possible factors on which performance may be assessed:-

Job knowledge - including the colleague's understanding of the job (including technical skill where appropriate), its responsibilities and the procedures associated with it.

Quantity of work output - including, for example, promptness in completing tasks that are allocated and reliability in meeting deadlines.

Quality of work - including, for example, accuracy, the degree of supervision required and the extent to which objectives have been effectively met.

Planning and organisational skills - the colleague's ability to plan and prioritise their work effectively, coordinate different elements of the work and, where appropriate, delegate.

Ability to learn and develop - the speed with which new duties and/or skills are learnt and the colleague's perceived willingness to learn new things.

Paperwork - accuracy and timely completion of reports and other relevant paperwork.

Communication skills - the colleague's effectiveness in written (including e-mail) and verbal communication with colleagues, superiors, subordinates and/or customers.

Working relationships - perceived effectiveness in working as a member of a team and the quality of relationships with colleagues and/or customers.

Motivation - the colleague's level of enthusiasm for their work and willingness to take different tasks on board and/or make extra effort, when asked.

Initiative - ability and willingness to come up with constructive ideas, offer suggestions and take responsibility.

Supervisory ability (where relevant) - ability to manage, motivate and lead staff effectively.



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Setting objectives

If a colleague is to be able to perform to the best of their ability, you should ensure that clear and specific objectives are identified and agreed. There are three overlapping areas for objectives:

- **Job objectives:** Targets defining specific tasks to be completed or projects that the colleague agrees to achieve. Job objectives would be relevant no matter who was performing the job in question.
- **Career objectives:** The setting of projects that will assist the colleague's future career development.
- **Skills-related objectives:** Areas in which the colleague agrees to take specific action to develop their skills, for example the goal of becoming proficient to a defined standard in the operation of a new computer system. Such objectives will be specific to each individual.

Having clearly defined objectives will give the colleague a sense of direction and be likely to create commitment and enhance motivation.

Objectives should:

- clearly define what is to be done;
- clearly define the end result that is expected;
- be expressed in precise terms;
- where possible, be measurable;
- be agreed with the colleague;
- be set at a level that the colleague believes to be realistic and achievable;
- challenge the colleague; and
- have a realistic time deadline placed on them.

Giving constructive feedback effectively

Good feedback, including the giving of constructive feedback, is essential to a colleague's development and is a fundamental element of effective appraisal meetings. You should ensure that you provide your colleagues with regular feedback throughout the year, not just at the time of the appraisal meeting.

The key rules for making feedback constructive are to concentrate on the person's actions or behaviour, not their personality, and to concentrate on the future and not the past. The aim should be to correct, not to punish.

In giving constructive feedback you should:

- give feedback promptly after the event to which it relates;
- ensure that the feedback is clear and specific;



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- avoid generalisations;
- use specific examples;
- remember to ask for the colleague's input and be prepared to listen without prejudging;
- deliver feedback objectively and unemotionally, ensuring that no annoyance or disapproval is implied;
- make sure that the colleague understands what they have done wrong, why it is wrong, and how they should do it next time;
- explain the effects of the colleague's actions or behaviour on colleagues, the department and/or the organisation as a whole;
- encourage the colleague to take full responsibility for their actions;
- make it clear that they want to work with the colleague to seek solutions to any problem areas;
- let the colleague know if, in your opinion, the colleague is capable of improvement;
- since receiving constructive feedback is difficult for some people, there is a high chance that misunderstandings may arise, check after giving constructive feedback that it has been fully understood;
- end the conversation with a positive statement, for example one about your confidence in the colleague's overall competence to perform the job.

Examples of what to say and what not to say

Don't say	Do say
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are very careless.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are regular mistakes in your work that we need to discuss. Here are some examples.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You're lazy and your work is always submitted late.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have missed the agreed deadline on the last three occasions. We need to talk about how to prevent this happening in future.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You do a good job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your paperwork is always 100% accurate and on time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You make too many mistakes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I want to discuss what we can do to reduce the level of mistakes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your supervisory skills are not up to scratch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are your views on your ability to supervise your staff effectively?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I was really annoyed when that happened.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When that happened, the outcome was, as you know, that we lost the contract.



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Examples of what to say and what not to say

Don't say	Do say
<ul style="list-style-type: none">You should have taken more responsibility for that.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Do you agree that you were the person responsible for that?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">You need to sort this problem out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I want to discuss how I can support you in sorting this problem out.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">You're simply not up to the job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I believe that you are capable of improvement and would like to discuss what further training might be helpful.

Completion of appraisal documentation

Appraisal documentation should always be completed during or after the appraisal meeting. If the document is completed before the meeting, the colleague may well wonder what the point of holding the meeting was.

The purpose of the documentation will be to record the results of the appraisal meeting. This will encompass the joint views of you as the line manager and the colleague about the colleague's performance, training needs and future career development. Action points that were agreed at the meeting should be clearly recorded. The form should not contain comments about matters that were not discussed at the meeting.

The colleague should be asked to sign the form after completion, to confirm that it is an accurate record of what was discussed. Your manager should then review the forms, as an overview and consistency check.

Keeping records

In line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), these records should be held confidentially and kept for no longer than necessary. Ideally, the HR department will keep the records. In some cases, data collected may include special categories of data (e.g. information about an colleague's health), in which case more stringent rules apply. You should seek further advice about your duties under the UK GDPR from the HR department.