

PERSON-CENTRED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



What is person-centred performance management?

'Person-centred performance management' uses familiar human resource management terminology, but with a slightly different meaning than we might be used to. Person-centred performance management:

- Is a person-centred approach
- Agrees and clearly articulates performance goals and targets
- Reviews performance in all the capability areas required by the role
- Focuses on developing the capabilities required to meet performance expectations at the job level
- Supports an environment of job performance, goal achievement and wellbeing
- Is not a legal or industrial relations process designed to exit people for poor performance

Person-centred performance management is most effective when understood as a core process of person-centred people management in an organisation delivering person-centred services. For the remainder of this document, person-centred performance management is simply referred to as 'performance management'.

Performance management does these important things:

- Builds on existing person-centred information gathered with a staff member through processes such as recruitment, supervision and team planning
- Focuses on developing the capabilities required to meet performance expectations at the staff member's job level

A disability service is best positioned to deliver high-quality person-centred services when the people management is carried out in a person-centred and values-based way. This includes the processes of job

design, grading, position description development, recruitment and selection, induction, supervision and performance appraisal, and performance management.

Why is it important?

Effective performance management is important for service quality, safeguarding, cost effectiveness and organisational culture. Performance management discussions provide a way to discuss, agree, articulate and measure performance against agreed goals and targets. These discussions also focus on developing capabilities to achieve performance expectations.

Performance management is relevant for all employees in all positions throughout their employment with the organisation. This includes staff members during their probation period as well as longer-term employees.

Even without other person-centred processes, performance management can support person-centred service delivery by concentrating on desired performance outcomes and the capability required to meet those outcomes. However, when it builds on effective person-centred supervision and performance appraisal meetings, it can become a significant lever for positively transforming organisational culture.

How is it different from supervision and performance appraisals?

A person-centred approach to supervision and performance appraisal sets the foundation and climate for performance management meetings. Supervision discussions establish and maintain a positive working relationship and workplace climate between the supervisor, staff member and wider team.

For more information about person-centred supervision and performance appraisal see the supervision and performance appraisal information sheet in this series.

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How does it work?

Performance management is carried out through regular review meetings between an employee and their line manager. The line manager should aim to act as a coach and supporter in these regular conversations, using their discretion as to the appropriate style and approach.

During the meetings, together they:

- Review the required capabilities for the staff member's job level
- Agree on performance expectations
- Agree on the development requirements to meet performance expectations
- Agree on and assign actions

For further detail on any of the following information, refer to the person-centred people management tools from the link below.

Top tips for performance management

- Use the Workforce Capability Framework
- Ensure conversations are consistent with the staff member's job level
- Have a planned approach to the discussion so that the staff member's performance in all the capability areas required by the role can be discussed
- Follow your organisation's template or format and associated policy or procedure
- Only undertake a formal performance review as the direct supervisor with line management responsibility for the staff member concerned
- Schedule the review meeting well in advance - ideally three, six, or 12-monthly
- Both people should prepare for the review by, for example, bringing any required information, and/or reviewing previous meeting records
- Always use concrete examples, and ensure the facts are clear and, ideally, agreed on
- Deal positively with any anxiety or worry

- Tailor your approach with attention to factors such as location, timing, prepared drafts, dot points, whiteboards
- Approach the meeting with a degree of flexibility; several discussions can be more useful than one
- Be clear on the goal of the meeting but flexible on the approach
- Do not resort to using email to keep performance on track - work performance issues need to be discussed, and the level of translation and understanding on the part of the staff member needs to be assessed and supported in discussion
- Email is fine for confirmation of meeting points or for record-keeping after the discussion

First meeting – Set expectations and find facts

- Listen
- Create a positive environment
- Keep the conversation positive and productive
- Balance specific feedback on poor performance with specific feedback about things that have gone well
- Use the staff member's one-page profile
- Ask questions such as, "Do you have what's important to you at work?" and, "Am I supporting you in the right way?"
- Reflect on results and performance

Second meeting - Finalise the review and assign performance ratings

- Discuss the review outcome
- Agree on development needs - think of the development plan as a resource documenting agreed ways of closing a staff member's skill gap and enhancing existing skills and strengths
- Review and develop performance measures for the next review period
- Review the existing Position Description to see if any adjustments are required

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- Encourage the staff member to use the Workforce Capability Framework and the Disability Career Planner to support their own career planning

Next

- Undertake follow-up or documentation required
- Prepare for the next review period

What if someone is not performing to expectations?

The chance of a job fit mismatch between the staff member and their job is less likely if person-centred, values-based people management practices are used. This includes the approach taken to job design, position description development, recruitment, induction, supervision and performance appraisal, and performance management.

When a person begins employment, ongoing supervision and performance appraisal conversations set the tone for a positive and productive person-centred work environment and model person-centred service delivery. Once again, the risk of poor performance lessens to the degree that a positive work environment influences positive work performance.

Performance management meetings support clear exploration, agreement and articulation of performance expectations and the capabilities required to perform well. They are held at pre-determined intervals throughout the year. How often depends on the person's role, the performance goals and targets and capability development needs.

If someone is underperforming, this framework provides a holistic way of discussing, addressing and planning for performance success by focusing on required capabilities to fill the position requirements.

In this way, the chances of an employee collaboratively identifying and problem-solving performance issues are greatly enhanced.

Should deeper issues of performance concern arise, the employee identifies they are not suited for the role, or performance is consistently not meeting expectations, then human resource advice and support should be sought, perhaps including an appropriate workplace relations process.

If you want to know more:

www.carecareers.com.au/person-centred-people-management-resources

NDS, in partnership with Helen Sanderson and Associates (global leader in person-centred practices), has developed a range of person-centred people management resources. These include tools, tips, techniques and templates to support disability providers to implement this approach.

www.carecareers.com.au/page/workforce-capability-framework-resources

The disability sector Workforce Capability Framework is a helpful for understanding the capability level required for various roles. This framework can also be used as the basis for job design, position description development and job grading.

helensandersonassociates.co.uk

Stirk, S. and Sanderson, H. (2012) 'Creating person-centred organisations: Strategies and tools for managing change in health, social care and the voluntary sector'. Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London, UK.

Sanderson, H and Lepkowsky, M.B. (2014) 'Person-centred teams: A practical guide to delivering personalization through effective team-work'. Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London, UK.

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