



people  
make the  
difference

## People Make The Difference whitepaper

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### **Five ways to identify and fix poor performance**

It's natural to want to reward our employees who are doing really well, working hard and going above and beyond our expectations regularly. When it comes to those team members who aren't always performing well, or regularly disappoint us when it comes to their performance, we can be reluctant to reward them in any way. On the one hand, you want reward them when it's appropriate so that you are motivating them to work harder. On the other hand, you want them to earn their reward, like everyone else – not getting rewards for sub-par work.

Performance is the combination of ability and motivation so, when performance is poor, it is usually because there is a problem somewhere along the line with an employee's ability or motivation.

#### **Identifying the problem**

Avoiding gossip or other people's perspectives and speaking directly with the individual in question should always be prioritised. The following questions can be useful in narrowing down what's really going on:

- Are the tasks too difficult or overwhelming?
- Does the individual put in a lot of effort and still produce poor results?
- Is there a lack of knowledge, skill or aptitude hindering performance?
- Has the problem tried to be fixed previously, but with a lack of improvement since?

## **Is it a problem with ability?**

Over time, job descriptions can naturally shift around, either causing employees to thrive or leaving them a little stranded, without the skills or knowledge to make it work. Using the following five steps can help you to enhance their ability and get them back on track.

- *Resupply* : stay resource focused and ask them, what do you need to make it work?
- *Retrain* : skills and knowledge focused, what do they need to learn to move forward in their role?
- *Refit* : are there parts of the job that someone else might be able to do better? Redistributing tasks might take the load off so they can focus on what they're good at.
- *Reassign* : maybe this isn't the role for them but you can see them working in a different department and thriving – help them make that move.
- *Release* : when all else fails and no solution can be found, it might be time to let them go, so they can discover what they're good at elsewhere.

## **Is it a problem with motivation?**

Individuals can have all the skills in the world, but if they can't see the point in their work, their performance will lack a certain amount of zeal. Using the following three steps can help them to care about their work more.

- *Setting goals* – employees will find it difficult to be motivated unless they have something to work towards. Working together to create goals, which combine both your standards and their aspirations, can make all the difference.
- *Providing help* – it's no good setting goals and then leaving individuals to their own devices. From goal setting, to goal completing, providing them with resources, training and support throughout the process is essential.
- *Giving feedback* – provide feedback often, quickly and honestly, rewarding and recognising successes when they come.

Rewarding and recognising your team doesn't always have to be by way of a physical gift. For some, retraining or re-motivating them could be all the reward they need and for others, recognising that there is a discrepancy in their ability or motivation could be the answer to their call for help.

*If you're ready to enhance the performance of your team, People Make the Difference can help you with training workshops, one-on-one coaching and Coach On Call services. To find out more, call us on 0412 333 415 or visit [peplemakethedifference.com.au](http://peplemakethedifference.com.au).*