

Our United Culture

Infusion Series

Living Our Values Through Inclusive Performance Reviews

One goal of performance reviews is to provide a fair and objective assessment of our employees. We can achieve this by using our values lenses of **Integrity and Compassion** alongside **Inclusion and Diversity** best practices.



Integrity

is acting in the highest standard of ethical behavior. This means:

- considering a holistic, unbiased view of the employee's performance
- owning our responsibility as developers of people and enablers of performance

Compassion

is looking through the employee's lens of the work experience. This means:

- walking in their reality
- seeing what factors within and outside of their control that are affecting their performance throughout the year

Inclusion & Diversity







is ensuring that the person feels valued and leveraging our rich mix of differences. This means:

- recognizing our employees for the value they bring and making them feel connected
- including diverse perspectives in the review



To consistently provide fair and objective feedback, we must be aware of potential Biases or [Blind Spots](#) and adopt best practices designed to avoid them.

Common Blind Spots

Blind Spot	How It Shows Up
 Halo and Horns Effect	<i>When a single positive or negative judgment dictates our over-all impression and impacts our review</i>
 Recency Effect	<i>When more recent information is better remembered and becomes the main driver of our feedback/review</i>
 Similarity/ Affinity Effect	<i>When we favor people who are similar to us in terms of values, preferences, experience, culture, etc.</i>
 Idiosyncratic Rater Effect	<i>When we use ourselves as rulers or standards for judging someone's performance</i>
 Negativity Effect	<i>When we allow negative impressions and emotions to disproportionately impact our judgment</i>
 Stereotype Effect	<i>When we use stereotypes to describe behaviors, e.g., a woman considered "too aggressive" when a similarly behaving man is "assertive"</i>

Blind Spot-Busting Best Practices

- Don't just rely on your memory.** It is notoriously unreliable.
 - ☐ Refer to notes you've gathered throughout the year regarding their performance.
- Gather diverse feedback.** How did the employee perform in situations or opportunities you may not have witnessed firsthand?
 - ☐ Ask the employee to nominate peers and clients they have worked with or supported so you can get their feedback through Colleague Reviews.
- Walk in their shoes.** What was the work experience like for them?
 - ☐ Look back and see there have been factors beyond their control that could have influenced their work product or environment, i.e. *organizational changes*.
- Hold yourself accountable.** How did your [leadership shadow](#) influence your employee's performance?
 - ☐ In your rating, account for whether you provided the right amount of opportunities, tools and support that enabled them to do their best work.
- Check your mood.** Where are you on the [Mood Elevator](#)?
 - ☐ Make sure you're not in the lower levels. You can try to do [mindfulness exercises](#) before continuing or consider rescheduling.
- Be constructive and specific.** Feedback is useful when detailed and in context, and also better taken when given in an compassionate way.
 - ☐ Write down examples for your rating, i.e. "Jane effectively answered clients' questions during her sales presentation in June 2019" instead of just "Jane is quick to think on her feet".
 - ☐ Aside from listing areas for improvement, highlight the ways that the employee has added value and made a difference. Express [gratitude](#) and show appreciation for the unique value the employee brings to the team.
- Read through your performance review before submitting.** This review will influence everything that happens next, so take the time to re-read.
 - ☐ [Flip it to test it.](#) Consider whether you would give the same feedback if your employee was of a different gender/ethnicity/age, etc.

Additional Resources

- [Why Compassion is a Better Managerial Tactic Than Toughness](#)
- [When Employees Think The Boss is Unfair, They're More Likely to Disengage and Leave](#)
- [Are You Causing or Managing Underperformance in the Workplace?](#)

Join The Discussion

[How do we reduce bias in performance reviews?](#)