Performance Management for Dummies

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Delegates will understand what the difference is between poor and effective performance management.

They will understand the various elements that comprise a performance management system, how to create and then use them to build a high performing team.

A Brief Manifesto for Happy Team Relations

I like questions. And good questions deserve answers, plus they often lead to fascinating conversations. So, when a member of a Facebook group I'm active in posted a great question, I was ready to get sucked in.

Here's what she asked:

> **Question for practice owners, managers, directors: what do you want from vets? What makes you want to keep a vet? I expect high turnover is a big one...? I am curious about how we can be better vets so that we increase our value to the practice?"**

And here's what happened next... [Profanity warning].

> **I want you to give a major F*@K about the following:**

- "us" - the team.
- Your clients - if you can do clients then you can do vet med. If you can't then you are in trouble.
- Your patients (obvs).
- You.
- Really, YOU in quite a big way.
- Money and not be embarrassed or ashamed about it. It'll never come first, but it is there and we all need to work on this.
- I want you to be willing to learn and grow.
- I want you to help others learn and grow.
- I want you to be willing to be amazing.
- I want you to leave your ego at the door.
- I want to laugh and cry with you at the shit we have to deal with.
- I want to be able to have a beer with you.

Performance Management for Dummies

- I want you to understand that I care very deeply about helping you get where you want to go and helping you become what you can be.
- I want you to accept that you are not perfect, that none of us is and that's OK. Failure is OK.
- I want you to be happy.

If you can do that, then you'd be a lot better than I was when I started out, and I'd be very, very proud to call you a teammate.

(*And if you can be that, or be willing to work towards it… could you also never leave?*)

Now let me ask you back… what do YOU want/need me to be as a leader?
Because I think that probably matters more…

The vet who asked the question then responded with this:

"David, for me, off the top of my head it is similar to many of the things you said you want from a vet.

Plus, either be a good role model or be there to support and facilitate us vets to achieve the desired outcome.

To understand what it is really like to do the job and care about whether or not I have had my lunch today.

Have good systems in place to make everything run smoothly and efficiently and listen when we give feedback.

I want you to care that I get away on time and that I have had to deal with a really obnoxious client and notice that I dealt with it well.

Call me needy, but I do like acknowledgement when I work hard. I want you to empathize when shit happens and take time to understand the whole story before you criticize.

I think it would be great if somehow bosses and/or colleagues could positively Give feedback regularly on what we appreciate, value and admire in one another.

Sometimes I think it's lack of communication, but generally, I want you to show that I am valued every so often.

I want you to provide an environment and facilities conducive to practicing good medicine.

Performance Management for Dummies

I also want to be inspired by you and be able to respect you.

And I want you to totally trust me and have my back if something goes wrong. Just a few things off the top of my head..."

And when we were done, it felt like maybe, unwittingly, we just had a really honest conversation that helped to clarify what we have to do as team members and leaders to improve relations and be happy working together.

So, my nameless veterinary colleague (you know who you are), anytime you need a job, look me up. ;-)

With the above in mind...

Here's how to manage your people effectively and respectfully.

1. Stop treating them like kids or following what every other business has been doing (badly) for decades. Old style performance with one review per year and the odd shit sandwich in between just blows epic chunks. There is zero debate about this topic.

2. Create written values for your business to live up to.

3. Fashion these values into behavioral statements that make clear what behaviors you expect.

4. Create written objectives for all roles within your practice.

5. Distribute these documents to everyone and explain what they are and how they will form the basis of every work-based conversation you have from now on.

6. Schedule 30 mins every 2 weeks with your direct reports to begin having useful exploratory performance conversations using the feedback model.

7. Adopt a "no big deal" attitude to feedback. It's not negative or positive, it's just steering designed to get your team to meet the behavioral standards and performance objectives.

8. Reward and recognize based on living the values and meeting the behavioral and objectives standards.

9. Live long and prosper.

10. The end.

Notes, Quotes, Reflections & Revisions

These are the things you need to remember