

IDEA TODAY[®]

APRIL 1994 • \$4

MARKETING/MANAGEMENT

BY DIANE Y. CHAPMAN

GROWING WITH PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS *Whether you're a manager or an employee, annual reviews can bring new life to your work.*

Performance appraisal. It's a hot buzzword for the fitness industry in the '90s. Like sex, everybody is doing it, right? Wrong. A few of us are, and of that small number, even fewer are actually being successful (with performance appraisals, not sex!). Performance appraisals are something many managers (supervisors, business owners) all too often avoid. The truth is, many managers are not comfortable communicating with employees about skills, functions and developmental needs.

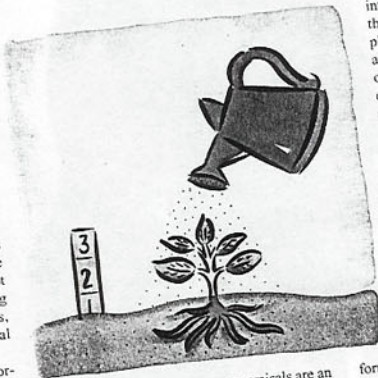
Productive, positive performance appraisals are critical to the success of any business that employs people—and critical also to the career growth and progress of any business's employees.

Although the performance appraisal is only one part of an ongoing process of communication and planning that should happen between employee and boss, it will alleviate many misunderstandings and challenges before they occur. If you are the employee, the performance appraisal can give you a sense of self-esteem and confidence about the role you play in the overall success of a business and a sense of contribution to—and ownership of—that success.

Let's take a look first at the issues managers commonly face and then at the challenges that arise for employees.

Manager's Myths

Learning what a performance appraisal is *not* will change forever the way you view your success in the workplace. Let's dispel a few myths:



Myth: Performance appraisals are an unnecessary nuisance that take too much of a manager's time.

Truth: Few of us have ever really considered the many sensible reasons for conducting performance reviews. Three of the best are that reviews lead to:

- valuable insights into optimum performance

- enhanced communication and self-esteem
- better productivity

Charlotte Badke, IDEA New York state representative, teaches performance review basics in her teaching skills workshops. According to Badke, "Performance reviews are an excellent way to empower both the fitness employee and fitness manager."

Facilitating a performance review gives you *valuable insights into the nature of an employee's responsibilities*, the steps

involved in executing them and the ways they can be accomplished most effectively. You are not necessarily the expert at other people's tasks. Talk to your employees. You will be amazed at what you can learn.

Conducting fair and timely appraisals leads to communication that can foster *better ideas, opportunities and results* for both your organization and your employees. Performance appraisals help increase employee self-confidence because staff members know exactly what is expected of them and how they are doing.

Productivity is increased when employees receive timely corrective feedback on their performance. Recognition of appropriate and excellent work habits positively reinforces employees. Performance appraisals are an excellent time to open up two-way communication and clarify goals for both the employee and the organization.

Myth: Performance reviews are to be used as a "whipping post" for employees. They are an opportunity for a power play.

Truth: An effective manager or supervisor should give both praise for achievement and corrective criticism continually, not just during a performance review. The review itself should not hold any surprises for an employee if the manager/supervisor is doing his or her job of regularly discussing issues that need to be addressed. A performance review is a milestone, helping to set goals and standards for the

IN BRIEF

Effective performance appraisals can provide growth opportunities for both employee and employer.

his or her job of regularly discussing issues that need to be addressed. A performance review is a milestone, helping to set goals and standards for the

PROBLEMS
SOLVES

Look Like To You?