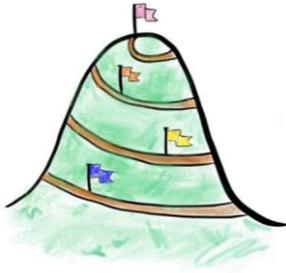


# HOW TO TALK TO AN EMPLOYEE WHO IS UNDER PERFORMING



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Telling someone they are underperforming is a difficult conversation many struggle with, because we don't want to make others upset. These conversations are more productive when entered into with A PLAN!

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A tactful way to start the conversation is to start off by asking them to **assess their own performance**, instead of telling your employee they are underperforming.

What you say next, should be informed by the response you get.

Opening up a **dialogue** is recommended because it:

- Creates clarity around what your employee is actually thinking and gets you both on the same page.
- Demonstrates you want to partner with them, rather than pass judgment.

## STEPS TO FOLLOW

### Ask Before Telling

- Asking questions makes your relationship feel more like a collaboration than a dictatorship.

### Clarify expectations

- Provide a list of clear expectations (e.g., respond to emails within 48hours).

### Connect to the employee's goals

- Find out what they want to experience more of on the job. Their motivation to improve will increase if it's connected to something they want.

### Describe specific behaviours

- Be clear about areas for improvement.
- VAGUE: "You're not responsive."
- SPECIFIC: "I've noticed you missed your last two deadlines without giving me a heads-up."

## SAMPLE SCRIPTS

- "How do you think you are doing?" OR "How do you think things are going?"
- "It's helpful for me to hear that you think you're doing great. Unfortunately, I have a different perception of your performance."
- "Let's explore where we might need to do things differently."

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People are less likely to argue with behavioural feedback based on observable acts.

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## CRAFT A PLAN TOGETHER

- Agree on a plan that has a **TIMELINE** and **COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL** to improve performance.