



Section 01:

Managing People & Their Performance

A Good Practice Guide & Toolkit



A foreword by the Chief Executive

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council has a proud heritage and a strong commitment to improving the quality of life for those within our communities. To achieve our vision we set ourselves ambitious targets for the future, pushing ourselves further each day to ensure that those who reside, work and visit Rhondda Cynon Taf receive the services that they need which are of the highest possible quality.

To achieve these targets we need to invest in our most important asset – our people. We need a results driven workforce where each employee knows what is expected of them and how they will be supported to achieve this.

For too long managing performance has been seen by some as a negative or punitive process. Managing people and their performance is a positive cycle of activities designed to let our people grow and learn and must be adopted by everyone within the Council if we are to continue to serve our communities to the very best of our abilities.

We need to ensure that not only is good performance recognised but there are ways of identifying where and how performance can be improved.

Managers need assistance to manage performance and this guide and toolkit provides useful advice, tools and examples on how to do this well.

It encourages open and transparent processes and respectful communication between managers and employees. It values flexibility in managing performance; recognising that each Service area needs to pursue their diverse obligations in different ways.

To move forward we need to be committed, and accountable for managing the performance of our employees and teams and this is why I recommend this Guide to all managers within Rhondda Cynon Taf Council.



Chris Bradshaw
Chief Executive

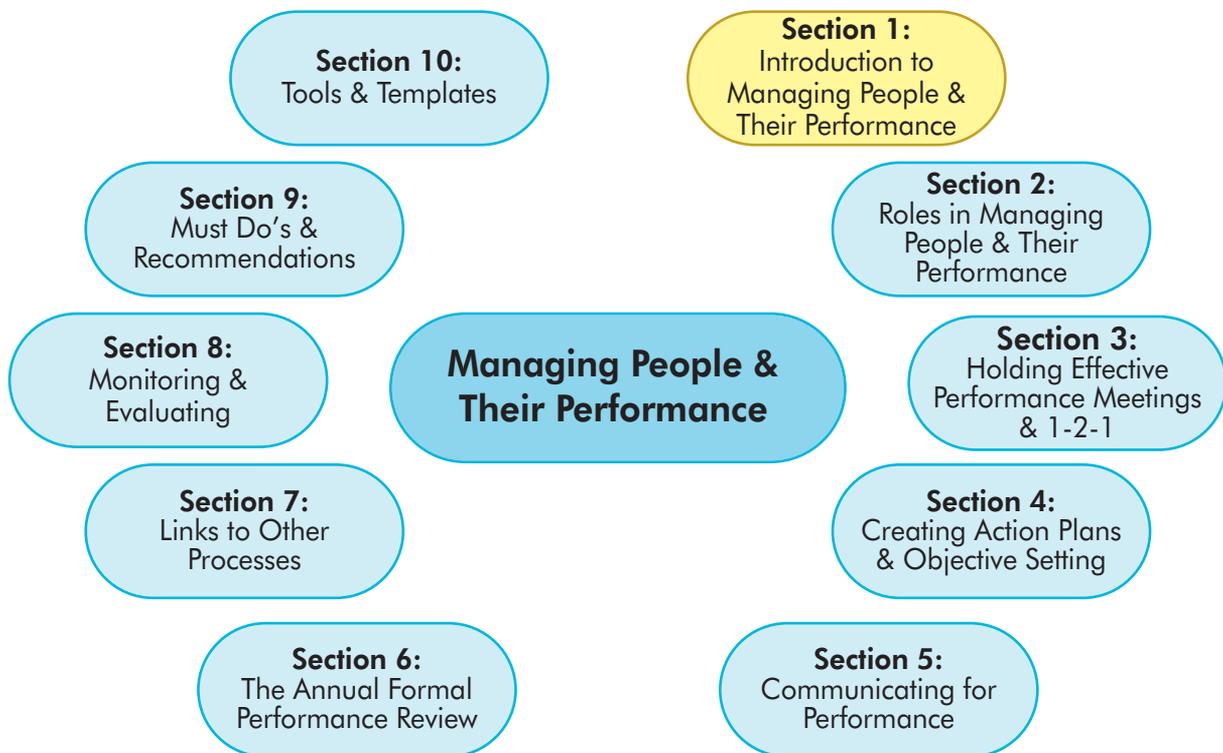
Overview - How to use this Guide

Managing performance is not always easy, as there is no 'one size fits all' approach to managing people and their performance.

The Managing People and their Performance Toolkit focuses on good practice in managing people and their performance. Throughout the 10 sections the toolkit addresses day-to-day people management and more formal people performance management. The toolkit illustrates how managing performance can be incorporated effectively into every day Council practice and provides guidance, tools and techniques to assist you in your role as a people manager.

TIP...

For the purpose of this toolkit, the term 'Manager' is used to identify anyone who has direct responsibility for an employee or group of employees. This includes Supervisors, Team Leaders, and anyone who has responsibility for undertaking supervision sessions with their team, or delegating and monitoring the work of their team.



This Guide is not a rulebook. In your Line Manager role there will be certain functions that are mandatory and other functions that, although not mandatory, are considered good practice. Each section of the toolkit will summarise these areas in the final pages – Must Do's and Recommendations. A summary of these can be found in Section 9.

Successful performance management is not about ticking boxes once a year; instead, it requires an understanding of relevant principles and applying them appropriately in any given situation. This guide is intended to be a practical resource to help you in your Line Manager role, with the full range of performance management activities - providing feedback, planning development, recognising performance and improving performance - for both day-to-day management and for regular performance reviews.

The toolkit aims to assist and guide you in how performance can be effectively managed. It will set out the roles and responsibilities, rights and requirements of those involved whilst also providing tools, techniques, support and guidance to help you along the way.

All levels of performance are addressed in this guide, including how to effectively manage unsatisfactory performance. However, it is not a substitute for Council policies or specialist advice, and managers are encouraged to seek assistance from Human Resources where necessary.

Background

Managing performance is fundamental in supporting the Council to improve the quality of life for local residents as the performance of every individual, whether back-office or front-line, has an impact upon the services being delivered.

There are a range of frameworks, policies and procedures that provide guidance on managing performance that you can refer to, including:

- The Performance Management Framework
- The Competency Framework
- Induction and Probation Procedures
- Capability Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

The focus for Managing People and Their Performance is not on technology or a performance review system - the focus is on the continuous management of individual and team performance, ongoing effective communication and effective target setting and monitoring which will feed into more formal reviews of performance.

Introduction - What is meant by managing performance?

Managing people and their performance is simply a term used to describe a set of activities that assess whether goals or objectives are being met. These activities include defining work, setting goals, providing feedback and encouraging development. Managing people is about shared responsibility and understanding of roles, expectations and standards.

Effective people management means getting the most out of all your employees, helping them perform at their best individually, collectively and in teams and it is fundamental to the organisational success of the Council. Day to day supervision of, communication with, and management of individuals and teams should operate in conjunction with the more formal reviews of performance where performance is assessed, recognised and, where necessary, improved upon.

Monitoring the performance of individuals and teams has always been the role of the Line Manager and is not a new concept. It should not be an annual event, neither should it be an imposed administrative process. Refer to the table at the end of this document that addresses the many excuses not to manage performance, and other myths.

TIP...

Managing people and performance successfully requires dialogue – effective communication with individuals and teams about their performance, whether it is to set targets, praise excellent performance, discuss development needs, revise objectives or share information. It also includes those conversations about under-performance, inappropriate behaviour or poor-attitude, and conversations that are also part of your manager role - levels of sickness absence. It is ongoing, regular, honest, planned 2-way discussions between you and the individuals and teams that you manage.

Every day, we all ask ourselves:

- **What do I need to do?**
- **When shall I work on it?**
- **How do I achieve the required quality?**

These questions can apply to the day's work, or to the planning of the work for the next week, month or year. Your role as a manager is to decide whether an employee's achievements match what was expected. It is also your role to connect the employee's work objectives to organisational objectives (that is, to provide role clarity).

While the formal elements of managing performance, such as annual reviews, are important, the more critical aspects of managing an individual's performance are daily interactions and feedback. Failure to provide feedback means employees are unaware of whether their performance or behaviour is acceptable or valued and this can be a major disincentive to stay with the Council or perform effectively. Furthermore, failure to manage poor performance can have a negative impact upon the morale of the rest of your team.

Annual Performance Reviews

A performance review is usually a structured meeting where an employee's performance over a given time period is assessed and future developmental needs are planned. The review should build on the informal managing performance activities that are being undertaken daily. The main purpose is for both you and the employee to gain an overview, in the form of a retrospective summary of performance and a prospective look towards the employee's ongoing performance and development.

Full details on planning and holding the Annual Performance Review can be found in Section 6 of the toolkit.

Managing the Performance of People and the Performance Management Framework

It is essential that there are direct links between the Council's long term vision and plans for the County Borough, the Council's priorities and business plans, and importantly the action plans, objectives, priorities and development opportunities of individuals who are employed within the Council. Operational business plans illustrate what needs to be delivered and through effectively managing people and performance you will be able to provide the individuals you manage with the support, advice and guidance to enable them to make the delivery happen.

As detailed in the Performance Management Framework, individual performance measures and targets need to be linked to the agreed outcomes set out in relevant business plans. Through managing the performance of the people within your teams you are helping them to improve their skills whilst maximising the value of their contribution to the Council's success – supporting employees to deliver the right quality of services that will help improve the quality of life for the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

What is my role in managing people & their performance?

As a manager, you are critical to the success of the Council. Not only do you assist employees in understanding their role within the organisation, assist them in their development, and monitor their work to ensure it is satisfactory, but you also help create the culture of the Council. This includes ensuring all employees are aware of the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duties, for further information on this please contact the Equality and Diversity Team.

Managing people and their performance is a continuous cycle. It uses the business plans as a starting point and then incorporates:

- Regular meetings, with the individuals within your team, or team as a whole, where you:
 - Discuss performance and behaviour, including concerns about performance and praise for jobs well done
 - Discuss other elements that have a fundamental impact on performance or standard of work, including:
 - * managing attendance including health & wellbeing strategies;
 - * behaviours and attitudes in the workplace towards team members, managers, the work itself, partner organisations or service users;
 - * adherence or otherwise to Council procedures and policies;
 - * putting strategies and action plans in place if problems arise
 - Discuss and agree SMART objectives, both at a team and individual level
 - Review progress against existing objectives and assess their suitability and whether there is any requirement for change
 - Update Action Plans, including addressing development needs and evaluation of any development undertaken
 - Encourage open and honest discussion about concerns, aspirations, career management
 - Communicate Council, Service area and team priorities, updates, areas of interest, legislation, and health and safety information
 - Communicate information about health and wellbeing

- More formal performance review meetings where the individual/team performance against objectives is reviewed and objectives for the coming year are discussed and jointly agreed, updating any existing action plan.

TIP...

The saying that 'people join organisations but leave managers' has been verified by a number of recent studies. It is performance management-related activities that influence how much effort employees put into their work, as well as their attitudes and commitment to an organisation. Good managers produce high-quality, effective workers who are engaged with their work and want to remain in the organisation.

The regular day-to-day meetings with the individuals within your team and the more formal meetings that may be held on an annual, 6 monthly or quarterly basis are not mutually exclusive, they work together to effectively manage performance.

DAY-TO-DAY PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Line Manager utilises regular Team Meeting to discuss the results and outcomes of Annual performance reviews - areas of high competence, areas for development etc and to communicate and reinforce team priorities / targets and linkages to over-arching Council plans.

Line managers hold regular 1-2-1 meetings / supervisory sessions with all individuals within their team to discuss performance, set objectives, share team/Council priorities, establish expectations and explore career development.

MANAGING PEOPLE & THEIR PERFORMANCE

Council's improvement policies and shared vision for Rhondda Cynon Taf

Feedback Meeting takes place. Discuss review of performance and behaviours, progress against objectives. Line Manager & individual/team review and establish SMART objectives. Action Plan updated.

Line managers hold regular team meetings with their team to discuss team performance, set objectives, communicate team/Council priorities, policy / procedural updates, relevant changes to legislation, Council initiatives achievements, news.

The Annual Formal Performance Review

Preparation for Annual Performance Review

Line Managers communicate timings of formal Performance Review. Participants - (Line Manager and individual/team) prepare information for the formal review.

More broadly, in your role as Line Manager you must also take responsibility for the following elements.

Ensuring, as far as possible, person-job 'fit'

Carefully matching people to work they are given. Employees who are good at their work and enjoy it are better performers.

Maintaining a positive relationship between the employee and the Council

Manage perceptions of the Council and senior management by:

- Explaining Council vision and strategy and the actions of decision makers, including the reasons 'why';
- Encouraging innovation;
- Ensuring employees understand the benefits of working in the Council, emphasising its positive features – what we can all achieve together.

Ensuring employees understand their 'fit' within the organisation

Create an understanding of how an employee's work helps the Council to achieve its goals, and help them feel that you and the Council value them.

Encouraging a culture of performance

Promote open 'two-way' communication with employees; be flexible and support employees when something doesn't go to plan for no fault of their own; and encourage innovation.

Helping to build networks amongst talented employees

Allow employees to work together and share areas of expertise, creating job-focused networks that help meet work objectives. New skills and ideas and higher ambitions and goals increase employee engagement.

Demonstrating commitment to employee development

Helping employees to achieve their future career goals is important. Talk about career plans and help develop knowledge and skills in their current position that might be useful for future job opportunities. (There is a template in Section 10 of the toolkit that can help you have these conversations.)

Managing People and their Performance needs Partnership:

- Between the individual, the Line Manager and the Council as a whole
- It is not 'done' to someone – individuals should be encouraged and enabled to take ownership of their performance
- It involves negotiation between those involved to obtain desired outcomes.

TIP...

Managing People and their Performance activities influence how much effort employees put into their work, and also their attitudes and commitment to the Council. Good managers are associated with high-quality, effective employees who are engaged with their work and who are committed to high quality outputs.

When do I manage performance?

The short answer is: every day!

Managing People and Their Performance is ongoing. It is not an annual meeting where you as the Line Manager or as the individual being reviewed, struggle to remember the objectives set 12 months ago and what has happened in the meantime. By looking at performance management as a formal annual event it becomes meaningless and will probably focus on the last 2 months work at best. Looking at it in this way makes it a cumbersome, pointless exercise that is difficult to plan and manage.

Managing People and Their Performance is a continuous cycle of effective people management activities. At the end of the year a formal review will be held to summarise achievements and to set objectives for the coming year based on new and emerging Council, Service area and team objectives and priorities. If Managing People and Their Performance is conducted as an ongoing process, annual formal reviews should not need any additional preparation nor should the meetings contain any surprises.

While it may appear simplistic, the day-to-day communication process about what needs to be done and feedback on how well it is being done is often overlooked. Many managers are not aware that they are not providing sufficient feedback and guidance.

In addition to informal everyday interactions, you will also need to participate in formal performance reviews and the key to effective formal performance reviews is a 'no surprises' approach, which is why day-to-day feedback is so critical.

Whether formal or informal, performance management is based on three important principles:

- 1. Set clear expectations on performance including expectations on behaviour and attendance.**
- 2. Provide fair and accurate informal feedback.**
- 3. Help to solve everyday problems.**

When being done effectively, formal and informal processes are mutually supportive.

How do I manage performance?

When you provide employees with clear expectations, feedback and problem solving opportunities, not only is employee performance enhanced, but there is also a positive influence on the employee's attitude to, and relationship with, you and the Council as a whole.

Set clear performance expectations

Guiding the way people go about their work is based on the belief that doing things correctly will lead to quality outputs. Clearly defining the actions and behaviours needed to perform the duties of a role is often as important as defining the required output. (Advice on Setting Objectives can be found in Section 4 of the toolkit.)

Performance expectations should be SPECIFIC and ACHIEVABLE, and should focus on the OBSERVABLE.

Specific means being precise. For example, it is more useful to say, "I would like you to greet customers with a smile and friendly 'hello'" than to say "I want you to provide good customer service". By being specific about observable behaviour, you will find it easier to effectively communicate with employees about standards and expectations. For example, "I noticed you came in 30 minutes after our team meeting started; was there a reason?" is more effective and beneficial than "You were late again, you should be on time".

Achievable means that the employee can objectively achieve the expected outcomes within the limitations of their abilities, available resources and time-frames.

Observable means it is a behaviour that can be measured. For example, to say that someone was aggressive is vague in meaning and assumes you know what was intended by the behaviour. If you say, "when you shouted..." the employee knows exactly what you are discussing; similarly, when you refrain from inferring intent you avoid getting it wrong, for example, the person may reply "I was not aggressive; I raised my voice because the customer was hearing impaired".

Provide fair and accurate feedback

Objective and fair feedback about performance can be one of the most powerful drivers of employee performance. Fair and accurate feedback is most effective when it occurs soon after the event or work is done, and therefore feedback should be given informally on a daily basis.

In order to be fair and accurate, feedback should also come from someone who knows about the employee's work and their performance. Feedback is most useful when it is specific and relates to observable behaviour. This may include practical advice or guidance about how performance may be improved, or an acknowledgement of what the employee is doing well.

Focus on strengths

Focusing on an employee's strengths is one of the most influential things you can do to enhance performance. It is easy to assume that people know when they are doing something correctly or well, but often this is not the case. Positive feedback motivates and encourages even higher levels of effort and performance and reinforces a culture of continuous improvement. Like all feedback, positive feedback should be timely and:

- Relevant to the individual's style and preferences
- Specific, giving examples of work and behaviour and its impact
- Equal to the employee's effort and achieved outcomes.

TIP...

Comments such as "you handle customers well" are not specific enough. It is far better to be precise. For example, "when you picked up the phone within three rings and answered the customer's question with simple, clear information, you met their needs and left them with a sense of good service".

Providing constructive feedback

Constructive feedback focuses attention on aspects of an employee's performance that require improvement. However, the fact that an employee's performance needs improvement does not mean that feedback need be negative or critical. Use the same approach and criteria as for positive feedback, and:

- Provide the feedback sensitively
- Ask employees for their viewpoint, allowing time for discussion
- Clarify the situation and work towards agreement about it
- Agree on specific behaviour change or work outcomes as the new goal
- Give employees an opportunity to openly discuss their perception of their performance.

Not providing feedback for improving performance may seem kind, but it denies the employee the opportunity to improve. The following sections provide further advice and guidance around providing feedback, communicating effectively and setting up objectives and action plans:

- Section 3: Holding Effective Performance Meetings and 1-2-1s
- Section 4: Creating Action Plans and Objective Setting
- Section 5: Communicating for Performance

If day-to-day communication includes effective feedback, then there should not be apprehension about giving feedback, whether positive or negative, at the annual performance review, and the employee should not experience any unpleasant surprises – they will already be aware of any areas of concern from your regular 1-2-1s. The formal review meetings only confirm knowledge that has already been shared during informal discussions.

Identifying development needs

Through effectively managing performance you should identify an employee's work capabilities, including areas that require development. You should look to consider the following:

- What strengths does the person already have that they can build on to achieve the goals in their individual performance plan?
- What skills and capabilities are needed to successfully achieve work goals?

- Which capabilities will have the greatest impact on performance?
- What additional capabilities may they need to take the next step in their career?
- Are there any career-limiting factors that should be addressed?

The next decision is to decide on the priorities and timeframes for development.

Developing high performance

Development is most effective when it meets an individual's needs as well the employer's requirements. Planning for development considers:

- The elements of an employee's role
- The potential for an employee to work in different roles within the Council
- The capacity to work in new roles or careers.

Developmental planning simultaneously communicates to employees that you are committed to their success, while promoting engagement to the work and commitment to the Council.

TIP...

Are you familiar with people who, over their whole career, remain oblivious of characteristics of their work style that hold them back – and everyone except them knows what needs to be remedied? This is often the result of a lack of constructive feedback. Don't deny your employees the opportunity to improve and progress in their careers by withholding information they need to be able to do so. It is important to identify the reasons for a decline in an employee's performance. There may be underlying-issues you are not aware of that could lead to diminished employee performance. Work in partnership with the employee to develop clear strategies that they can adopt to improve their performance. Make sure they leave with a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their performance and how you will support them to help them do so.

Development, like feedback, is an ongoing process. It can take many forms such as on-the-job training, mentoring and formal training. All development should be evaluated after the event as to how it has impacted upon the person and the delivery of their role. There are templates in Section 10 that will help you evaluate the impact of any development within the workplace. (i.e. what does the person do differently / better following the development?)

Rewards and recognition

Non-tangible rewards, such as recognition, can have an immense impact on employee performance and retention. The most powerful recognition is informal spoken feedback about performance. In addition to acknowledging and encouraging good performance wherever possible, you should also look to recognise and support effort and improvement.

Help to solve everyday problems

Enabling solutions is a key management task. As a manager, you can help your employees by removing barriers; assisting them to get the information, resources or technology they need; breaking down projects; translating long-term goals; clearly communicating expectations and acting as a catalyst to get new initiatives going.

Maximising and Managing Attendance

As a Manager you have a vital role to play in monitoring attendance and performance. It is down to you to ensure that the people you manage meet their objectives and perform effectively.

You are responsible for creating an open and supportive environment at work where employees can talk about any problems, and seek help early. It is your job to help them develop and continue to contribute to overall goals.

It is also your responsibility to take action if a member of your team is not delivering to the required standard – whether that is an issue with performance, attendance or behaviour.

Employees who have clear direction from their manager and receive regular feedback on how they are doing have higher levels of job satisfaction and are more likely to want to remain working at the Council.

TIP...

There are two common types of sickness absence:

- Long-term absence where the employee is away from work for more than 28 days
- Short-term intermittent absences

Long-term absences

As a manager it is your job to stay in touch with employees who are on long-term sick leave to help them return to work as soon as possible. You will also have to ensure they get the right support and assistance they need to stay in work once they return. The Council has policies for dealing with attendance management that you should be ready to implement, these give advice on:

- Staying in touch with an employee on long-term absence
- Referring employees to an occupational health adviser to obtain advice about barriers the employee may be facing at work and how these can be overcome so the person can return to work
- Providing cover for absences

Did you know...

50% of people who are off sick for six months never return to work.

TIP...

Please contact your HR Advisor for further advice on dealing with long-term sickness absence and maximising attendance.

Short-term or intermittent absences

As a Manager you should be monitoring any unplanned, unpredictable short-term absences a member of your team is taking. You will be recording all absences centrally using the Vision system and it is good management practice for you to keep aware of any increases in short-term absences or patterns that might emerge.

If an employee is having a lot of short-term or intermittent sickness absence it is your responsibility to find out why. First check to see if there are any patterns, for example:

- Frequent absences on Mondays and Fridays or either side of other days that the employee does not normally work
- Regular absences on the same day or at the same time
- An increase in the number of absences at a particular time of year.

Consider also whether you have noticed anything else about an employee who is taking a lot of short-term sick leave for example, has their performance deteriorated or their manner changed in anyway? Then talk to the person about their absence levels, as their manager you will be responsible for holding the 'Return to Work' meeting and here you can talk to the individual and find out the reason for the absences and the steps that can be put in place to help avoid them. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Try to discover any underlying reasons for the absences
- Discuss with the employee the impact that their absences might be having on the rest of the team
- Find ways to reduce the amount of time off sick they are taking.

You will need to explain the impact that the absences are having on the rest of the team and the outputs that are delivered. You will also communicate that you want to help them to improve their attendance and be in work and well. You will need to communicate attendance expectations and provide clarity as to what the expectations of the Council are.

Also, where the person is ill, your role is to ensure they are well managed and you can get further advice on managing attendance from your HR Advisor.

All employees need to understand that if their attendance doesn't improve (after reasonable adjustments have been made) proceedings may be started which could ultimately lead to their dismissal.

This is only a snap-shot of managing attendance, for full and detailed advice and support, please contact your HR representative.

Managing Attendance and the Equality Act

In the course of your career as a manager it is likely that you will be managing one of the 3.4 million working people in the UK who has, or acquires a disability. Not everyone with a disability will need to take time off work. Some disabled people have stable conditions, e.g. a hearing or sight impairment. They are not ill and so often have attendance records that are no different from their non-disabled colleagues.

However, there are signs you should look out for that mean someone you manage might have developed an illness which might be, or might become a disability, such as:

- Poor or deteriorating performance
- Low work output
- Persistent lateness
- Mood swings, irritability, aggression or tearfulness
- Signs of discomfort or being in pain
- Persistent tiredness
- A lot of time off sick.

Don't be afraid to talk to the person and ask them if the working environment or working arrangements are making it difficult for them to do their job well. If so, make reasonable adjustments to help overcome the barriers the person is facing. The employee might not know why they are unwell, or they might reveal that they have an illness or disability that has either just been diagnosed or had become worse recently. Remember, they might not use the word disability as many people do not think of themselves or wish to be thought of as disabled. The law requires you to make reasonable adjustments for an employee if you know, or could reasonably be expected to know, someone is having problems doing their job because of a disability.

If you have any concerns regarding absence and your responsibilities under the Equality Act please contact the Equality and Diversity Team, Human Resources, who will offer support and guidance that will assist and protect both the employee and you, as their Manager.

Managing Performance Improvement

Performance varies according to context and over time. Improving performance is a part of managing performance and should not be feared by you or your employees. When constructive feedback is not enough to lift performance, more formal management may be needed.

Finding the reason for unsatisfactory performance

In dealing with unsatisfactory performance, it is vital to first identify its cause. In your role as a Line Manager you should seek the answers to questions such as:

- What is the specific nature of the unsatisfactory performance - is it related to the performance of the technical duties of a role or is it behavioural?
- Has the employee worked at the required standard in the past or not yet reached that level?
- Is there a mismatch between the capabilities of the employee and the requirements of the position?
- Is the performance situation temporary; for example, is it due to some transient reason, work overload, health or personal reasons?

What next?

Both you and the employee need to:

- Be clear about the expected level of performance or behaviour and identify what would meet the performance expectations
- Establish achievable goals and timeframes
- Ensure there are sufficient support mechanisms, resources and feedback
- Keep records and evidence of all conversations, action plans, notes from meetings etc.

Please also refer to Section 5 of the toolkit – Communicating for Performance, for more detailed advice in having difficult conversations.

TIP...

Solving performance problems

As the Council's representative, it is your responsibility to address unsatisfactory performance, whatever its nature or cause. If informal efforts to address unsatisfactory performance have been unsuccessful, you have an obligation to initiate formal processes. All managers are advised to refer to the Council's Capability Policy when experiencing problems with unsatisfactory levels of performance and seek advice and support from Human Resources. It is advised this is done at the very early stages when unsatisfactory performance has been identified to ensure you are proceeding with appropriate levels of support, advice and guidance.

The Benefits of Managing People and Their Performance

The benefits of effectively managing your employees and their performance can include:

- Expectations are set and roles established during the meetings, the individual/team know their role and what is expected of them whilst as the Line Manager, you know what support you are expected to provide
- Effective monitoring of performance and progress – allowing contingency plans to be put into place to deal with difficulties in achieving objectives
- Changes in priorities, demands on the individual/team/Council can be communicated and incorporated into action plans
- Learning and development needs can be addressed in a timely manner during regular meetings
- Examples of effective, positive performance can be identified, recognised and encouraged / shared with others
- Issues of unsatisfactory performance or behaviour can be addressed quickly, diminishing the need to pursue more formal routes, such as Capability or Disciplinary Procedures
- If the need to pursue more formal routes arises, the discussions around under performance, the setting of objectives, actions and support can be evidenced through the minutes/notes of your regular 1-2-1s
- Ongoing contact establishes and builds the relationship and trust between you and your team
- You can develop a complete view of the individuals within your team through regular meetings
- Individuals and teams can be coached and developed at appropriate times to meet their needs
- More informal meetings may allow individuals to raise concerns they may feel uncomfortable with in a formal setting
- You, and therefore the Council as a whole, will be able to monitor the achievement of objectives throughout the year through reviewing action plans, assessing progress against objectives etc.

Why is there a need for this toolkit?

In your role as Line Manager you may face a constant struggle between achieving your own objectives and allocating sufficient time to what may be viewed as less pressing people issues.

Faced with an urgent task to complete it may be tempting to 'put off' a 1-2-1 meeting to review performance, especially if the meeting is to address the issue of under-performance. However, putting off this meeting has far reaching consequences and can impact on the individual, your team, you, the Council as a whole and the Community being served. This toolkit provides support, guidance, tools and techniques to assist you, and provides examples of best practice – thus illustrating the benefits of good performance management, and the consequences of not managing performance.

Also, through effectively managing the performance of the people within your team you can:

- Help maximise their potential
- Increase the staffing capacity of the Council through the development of individuals, and
- Promote career development.

The Role of Internal Audit

Internal Audit has been assigned responsibility for reviewing compliance with the mandatory elements of the toolkit.

This will take the form of specific services being selected for review on a periodic basis and will cover areas such as:

- Checking that day-to-day performance management activities are being undertaken (spot-checking evidence of 1-2-1s / team meetings / notes from 1-2-1s / minutes / agendas etc)
- Checking that Formal Annual Review activities are being undertaken (checking evidence of individual reviews / feedback meetings / quality of Action Plans / existence of team development plans etc)

- Reporting to Corporate Management Team and / or directly to Group Directors on areas where good practice exists and also areas where improvement is required.

It is therefore imperative that appropriate records are maintained by the Line Manager and individuals to demonstrate what People Performance Management arrangements are in place.

The Role of Human Resources

Human Resources will link in with Internal Audit and the Corporate Management Team to help implement good practice “Managing People and their Performance” across the whole of the Council:

- Providing “managing performance” development opportunities for managers across the organisation (including help with 1-2-1s / team meetings / action planning / dealing with excellent performance / addressing poor performance)
- Providing support and guidance where areas of concern arise – e.g. relationship breakdowns between managers and employees / advice and guidance dealing with poor performance, attendance etc
- Assisting and supporting Managers in the design and implementation of Annual Performance Reviews.

The Council's Vision, Purpose and Priorities

The Council's vision is:

"For a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all".

The Council's Purpose and Priorities

The Council's purpose and the reason why it exists is:

"to provide strong community leadership and effective services for the people of Rhondda Cynon Taf to enable them to fulfil their potential and prosper".

The Council is focused on the following three priorities:

- 1. Economy - Building a strong economy;**
- 2. People - Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone;**
- 3. Place - Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work.**

In order to meet our purpose, to make progress in delivering these priorities and respond to the significant financial challenges we face the Council has to operate in a different way. It has set itself the following four principles which apply to all three priorities and everything we do. The Council will:

- **Provide essential services well**
In the coming years there will be less money available and we will have to make sure we spend it where the need is greatest. Our role is to make sure local people get good outcomes from their services. We understand that it is the quality of the service that matters to local people, not who provides it.
- **Help people and communities help themselves**
The Council is at its most effective when it is helping people to live successful lives as independently as possible and when it is helping communities to help themselves. We believe that if you give power to local people you get better results and achieve better value. We want to help communities to do more themselves and give them more control over local services such as schools, libraries and other cultural and community

facilities. We know that RCT's army of volunteers already make a huge difference to thousands of people's everyday lives in their neighbourhoods, towns and villages. We want to work more closely with RCT's voluntary and community sector to stimulate innovation and encourage communities to step forward and take on new roles in providing local services and solutions. In doing so we recognise that some of our most deprived communities will need additional capacity, and we will work with Welsh Government to ensure the various poverty programmes are refocused to maximise their impact for those families and individuals that require the greatest support.

- **Build a Sustainable County Borough**
The Council is responsible for planning and providing much of the infrastructure that keeps the County Borough working and moving. The financial climate, and the challenges it presents, mean that we need to find significant savings. We are committed to doing this in a way that avoids creating problems for future generations. We will have a particular focus on supporting initiatives that stimulate economic growth and create jobs in RCT.
- **Live within our means**
We believe that it is wrong to spend more than we can afford, or to pass on financial problems to the next generation. This means we have to make difficult decisions now and focus on our priorities and manage our budgets. Every pound spent on running the Council is a pound that is not spent on front-line services. There is a cost associated with running any organisation, but we will continue to minimise that cost. We will do everything we can to be as efficient as possible, reduce the Council's running costs and get the best value from our assets.

Over the next four years the Council will respond to challenges and opportunities it faces:

1. By redesigning local services, making them integrated and efficient by joining with other public sector organisations where we can i.e. WG, Health, Police and Third sector and target the areas of greatest need;
2. Through more involved and resilient communities – greater community participation, engagement and involvement through the RCT Together Community Participation Programme and more community involvement;
3. Putting in place Health and Social Care services that are personalised and integrated, with more people supported to live longer in their own homes – working with health, housing and other partners to improve the experience of those using health and social care services, and helping to keep our residents healthy and active;
4. With Rhondda Cynon Taf's schools amongst the best in the country, with all children achieving the best they can;
5. Making sure that children and young people get a great start in life by helping families and keeping children and young people safe;
6. Making sure there is a broad offer of skills and employment programmes in place for all ages;
7. Making Rhondda Cynon Taf's local environment clean and attractive, with well-maintained roads and pavements, flowing traffic, increased recycling and less waste sent to landfill – with further investment in highways and pavements;
8. With Rhondda Cynon Taf's parks and green spaces continuing to be valued by residents – by ensuring they are well maintained and looked after;
9. With Rhondda Cynon Taf being amongst the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion, and residents feeling safe – with effective working between the Council and the Police further reducing crime rates;
10. By residents seeing a responsible approach to regeneration, with new homes being built and job opportunities created – this approach will include investments in town centres and the commercial infrastructure such as Treforest Industrial Estate;
11. By making it easier and quicker for residents to contact and do business, with the majority of Council services, with increased user satisfaction.
12. By providing the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf with the assurance that the Council is doing everything it can to keep Council Tax increases among the lowest in Wales, e.g. reducing our office accommodation, investing in IT so staff are able to work more effectively, increasing energy efficiency and becoming a more efficient Council.

Further information can be found in the Council's Corporate Plan available on **INFORM**.

The 'What' and 'How' of Performance

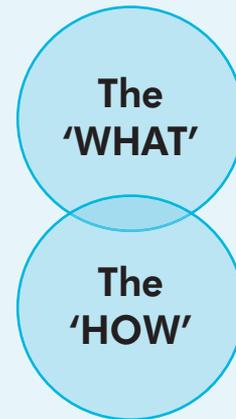
The diagram below illustrates the different dimensions of performance – not only what we do, but how we do it.

The 'WHAT'

- Job description
- Duties
- SMART objectives / targets
- Team or individual

The 'HOW'

- Behaviours (Person Specifications / Competencies)
- Linked to organisation values
- Competency Families
- How does a high achieving individual carry out the 'What'?



When reviewing performance you will need to look at both areas - what is being achieved and how is the individual doing it, and conversely, if objectives are not being achieved, what behaviours need to be developed in order to help the individual / team achieve.

The Council's Competency Framework consists of 9 job families, and within each job family there are categories that contain statements about behaviours, aptitudes and skills. These statements illustrate examples of excellence and you can use these to measure performance, whether to demonstrate areas of excellent behaviour, or highlight areas for development.

For advice and guidance on using the Council's Competency Framework please contact Human Resources.

TIP...

Food for thought

Your role within Managing People and Their Performance is not merely as a Line Manager – you will also be participating in this as the individual.

This toolkit illustrates the level of support and attention you would expect from your own manager when managing your own performance. It is important to ensure that you afford the same level of detail that you expect to the individuals that you manage.

Excuses not to manage performance, and other myths!

Excuse	Reality
My staff don't want to be performance managed.	Most people want and expect feedback. Even corrective feedback is valuable because it gives people a chance to improve their performance and be more successful. Sometimes, giving corrective feedback can be difficult; however, this is an essential part of your managerial responsibilities.
It's risky to talk to employees about something that needs improvement as they may take offence.	You can provide honest feedback in a constructive way. Failing to address an issue in a timely manner is more risky, as it can cause significant problems in the future, especially if formal processes become necessary.
I am busy doing my day job and don't have time to waste on managing performance.	Managing performance is part of your day job. Investing time in building relationships with your staff and helping them to develop is not time wasted - on the contrary, it will improve their performance and hence their work output.
It's easier to ignore under-performers and get someone else to do the work.	It may seem easier at the time, but not in the long term. Ignored under-performance rarely goes away and gets increasingly harder to tackle, plus you have the added problem of the negative impact upon the rest of your team who are seeing their colleague 'get away' with under-performing, whilst getting additional work themselves. If you knowingly ignore under-performance you are failing in your managerial role and may be liable for disciplinary action.
It's easier to ignore under-performers and move them on to someone else to manage.	Again, it may seem easier at the time, but not in the long term. Ignored under-performance rarely goes away and gets increasingly harder to tackle. If you knowingly pass off an underperforming employee you are failing in your managerial role and may be liable for disciplinary action.
I don't have a right to address employees' behaviour at work unless it's about their actual work tasks. They have a right to behave how they like.	In the workplace, conduct and behaviour are conceptually one and the same. All conduct by an employee is relevant to the assessment of whether or not they are performing their role satisfactorily. The Code of Conduct makes it clear that the behaviour of public sector employees may be subject to scrutiny and considered as unsatisfactory performance, even if it occurred outside working hours.

Excuse	Reality
I can get away with an annual performance development session and never having to actually tell employees what they do well or need to improve on.	Managing performance is an ongoing cycle of activities, not an event. Managers are responsible for helping to develop their staff, which includes providing feedback in areas that need improvement.
It is all down to me as the manager, and I can't ask colleagues to assist.	You don't have to do anything on your own. If you need some support or a sounding board then seek additional information and assistance from senior management and Human Resources. These can all be a valuable source of information, advice and guidance.
It's not worth the effort and does not pay off.	It is wrong to assess the effort and resources required to properly manage employees against your perception of the value of doing so. The effective management of performance is a primary managerial responsibility and has significant impact on employee performance and retention.
Managing performance is about managing bad performance.	Managing performance is not only about improving unsatisfactory performance; it is also about rewarding and encouraging good performance and assisting people to excel.
It's okay to bring out feedback you've been storing up for months.	This type of managerial behaviour is unreasonable. Behaviour that has been ignored or not addressed may be legally considered as having been 'condoned', and this means you may not be able to use it for an unsatisfactory performance/ disciplinary process later on.
Only employees' performance needs to be reviewed, not that of managers.	All employees, regardless of their level, are obliged to participate in performance management.
I cannot manage unsatisfactory performance unless I have a formal performance management plan in place.	Performance management does not always require a formal plan. What is required is that employees are advised of how their performance is unsatisfactory and are provided with a reasonable opportunity to address such unsatisfactory performance.
As a manager, what I say goes. Therefore I don't have to give employees' feedback about their performance if I don't want to.	Employees are entitled to expect, and you are obliged to inform them, in detail, as to how they are performing. Also, you cannot formally address alleged unsatisfactory performance without providing information to the employee. Such management is open to allegations of bullying and harassment.

Manager Checklist

Must Do's

Action	Completed
Recognise the importance of managing the performance of people within your team and accept responsibility for this (this includes managing behaviour / attendance / outputs)	
Develop your knowledge and understanding of the fundamental elements involved in effectively managing performance	
Develop your knowledge of the key components of the Managing People and Their Performance toolkit	
Develop your knowledge and understanding of using the Competency Framework effectively	
Ensuring all employees are aware of the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duties (for further information on this please contact the Equality and Diversity Team)	
Share your knowledge of the points above	

Recommended

Action	Completed
Develop your awareness of all policies and procedures that can assist with managing the performance of your team	
Use the Managing People and Their Performance Toolkit as a guide to assist you in managing performance effectively	
For further assistance utilising the toolkit or for help with managing people and their performance please contact Human Resources	