

# How To Perform in a Review

When I first started out as a manager, I wasn't sure who was more nervous in a performance review – me or my employee. For some reason, I was oddly nervous that I wouldn't give a good performance in a review and end up in a performance review meme.

Ironic.

As time went on, I became more comfortable and understanding of what my employees were really looking for. Of course, they wanted to hear what they excelled in, but what I found difficult was delivering constructive criticism and ideas for improvement without being overly negative. Being a manager requires a delicate balance of giving praise often and careful constructive criticism when needed.

One study took note of employees' moods throughout the day. Each time, the employees were asked if any events, such as positive or negative interactions with co-workers, had occurred in the past hours. Harvard Business Review writer Robert C. Pozen [reports](#) that the study results showed, "employees reacted to a negative interaction with their boss six times more strongly than they reacted to a positive interaction with their boss." Not only can this affect an employee's well being, but also it's likely that negative interactions will affect their productivity as well.

Therefore, managers need to be aware of what, where, and how they are giving performance reviews and feedback. As this performance review meme shows just below employees can get very defensive with reviews and feedback so you have to be prepared for this and careful what you say as well. But as they say practice makes perfect.



Deliver constructive criticism in private, and try not to deliver unintended criticism. Inadvertent criticism doesn't help you or your employee. Sometimes, there are just situations where you need to deliver negative feedback. Remember that the end goal for this is to improve the employee's performance. You want your message to be clear and understood, not covered in negative tones. Furthermore, you do not want to end up as a performance review meme circulating around the Internet. On the brighter side for everyone, giving negative feedback isn't always the case in performance reviews.

Reviews and feedback need to be timely, often, and specific. When conducting a performance review or giving feedback, be descriptive. For example, say "That presentation you gave was thorough, understandable, and proved your points well. Great job." Avoid broad praise like saying "Good presentation." By using specific and descriptive words, you are letting your employee know what they excel in and that you would like to see more of that. The Balance writer Susan Heathfield [writes](#), "Recognition for effective performance is a powerful motivator. Most people want to obtain more recognition, so recognition fosters more of the appreciated actions."

Also, honesty is the best policy goes a long way in performance reviews. People are aware when you say things just to say things. Be honest with your employees in what they do well and need improvement on.

Pozen writes, "Managers should bestow their employees with praise generously, publicly, and at every opportunity — especially at the culmination of projects." As much as possible, tell your employees just how much you appreciate their hard work.

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