

Performance appraisals are essential for the effective management and evaluation of staff. Appraisals help develop individuals, improve organizational performance, and feed into business planning. Formal performance appraisals are generally conducted annually for all staff in the organization. Each staff member is appraised by their line manager. Directors are appraised by the CEO, who is appraised by the chairman or company owners, depending on the size and structure of the organization.

Annual performance appraisals enable management and monitoring of standards, agreeing expectations and objectives, and delegation of responsibilities and tasks. Staff performance appraisals also establish individual training needs and enable organizational training needs analysis and planning.

Performance appraisals also typically feed into organizational annual pay and grading reviews, which commonly also coincides with the business planning for the next trading year. They generally review each individual's performance against objectives and standards for the trading year, agreed at the previous appraisal meeting. Performance appraisals are also essential for career and succession planning - for individuals, crucial jobs, and for the organization as a whole.

Annual performance appraisals are crucial for staff motivation, attitude and behaviour development, communicating and aligning individual and organizational aims, and fostering positive relationships between management and staff. Moreover, they provide a formal, recorded, regular review of an individual's performance, and a plan for future development.

Job performance appraisals - in whatever form they take - are therefore vital for managing the performance of people and organizations.

Managers and appraisees commonly dislike appraisals and try to avoid them. To these people the appraisal is daunting and time-consuming. The process is seen as a difficult administrative chore and emotionally challenging. The annual appraisal is maybe the only time since last year that the two people have sat down together for a meaningful one-to-one discussion. No wonder then that appraisals are stressful - which then defeats the whole purpose.

There is increasingly a need for performance appraisals of staff and especially managers, directors and CEO's, to include accountabilities relating to **corporate responsibility**, represented by various converging corporate responsibility concepts including: the 'Triple Bottom Line' ('profit people planet'); corporate social responsibility (CSR); Sustainability; corporate integrity and ethics, fair trade, etc. The organization must decide the extent to which these accountabilities are reflected in job responsibilities, which would then naturally feature accordingly in performance appraisals.

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) very important: _____
- 2) to contribute into something: _____
- 3) happening every year: _____
- 4) to make something possible: _____
- 5) to match so that two things fit together: _____
- 6) to happen at the same time: _____
- 7) documented: _____
- 8) depressing, overwhelming: _____
- 9) being responsible for something: _____
- 10) to make something easier or more doable: _____
- 11) the most important, underlying idea: _____
- 12) to bring together: _____
- 13) having a unified structure, attitude, morality, not deviating: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1) staff | performance |
| 2) organizational | the purpose |
| 3) a line | responsibilities |
| 4) to monitor | manager |
| 5) to delegate | evaluation |
| 6) grading | responsibility |
| 7) to review something | planning |
| 8) succession | reviews |
| 9) to defeat | against standards |
| 10) corporate | standards |

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) bezpośredni przełożony	7) roczny / coroczny
2) ocena pracownika	8) umożliwić coś
3) planowanie objęcia stanowiska	9) delegowanie obowiązków
4) przyczynić się do czegoś	10) nadzór nad przestrzeganiem standardów
5) sedno sprawy	11) czasochłonny
6) należycie udokumentowany	12) odpowiedzialność korporacyjna

Grammar corner...

It has been mentioned on numerous occasions that in Business English you have to be impersonal and indirect, otherwise you may offend someone and lose the deal. In business communication we tend to avoid finger pointing and blame storming, which is why we often say things that seem neutral, yet we imply something different. We do it using passive voice, obviously. But you can also use a psychological trick of saying NO or NOT in front of a positive word, because the brain does not understand it and will focus on the positive message:-)

Compare: It's a BAD idea. OR It's not a very GOOD idea.

Which one seems nicer? To also soften the message, you may add: actually, rather, quite, or slightly, for instance: you performed slightly better last year.

Ex. 4 Transform the sentences to sound less harsh:

- 1) We're unhappy with your performance. => _____
- 2) This is most inconvenient. => I'm afraid _____
- 3) We can't accept your offer. => Unfortunately, we

- 4) We want a bigger discount. => We were hoping

- 5) Your products are very expensive. => Your products seem

- 6) You must give us more time. => Actually, we would appreciate

- 7) Don't forget the terms of the contract! => I'm sure you don't need to be

- 8) It will be unmarketable => I'm afraid it will not

- 9) We're getting nowhere => I'm sorry, but we don't seem

- 10) You said the shipment was on its way => It was understood that

GLOSSARY	
essential	istotny
to feed into something	przyczyniać się do czegoś
annually	rocznie
to enable something	umożliwić coś
to coincide with something	wydarzyć się w zbiegu z
to align	zgrać ze sobą
recorded	udokumentowany
daunting	przygnębiające (np. zadanie)
accountability	odpowiedzialność
to foster something	ułatwiać / propagować
the bottom line	sedno sprawy
to converge	połączyć
integrity	spójność
staff evaluation	ocena pracownika
line manager	bezpośredni przełożony
to monitor	nadzorować / sprawować nadzór
to delegate	zlecić pracownikowi niższemu rangą, delegować
succession	następstwo, objęcie stanowiska po kimś
to defeat the purpose	mijać się z celem
sustainable	zrównoważony (np. rozwój)
accordingly	stosownie (np. do okazji)
grading review	ocena mająca na celu ustalenie pensji
finger pointing	wskazywanie palcem
blame storming	rozpaczliwe szukanie winch
shipment	transport
to appreciate	doceniać, zyskiwać na wartości
terms of the contract	postanowienia umowy
to seem	wydawać się
actually	właściwie (jako przerywnik)
to review against standards	ocenić w oparciu o kryteria

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) crucial / essential
- 2) to feed into something
- 3) annually
- 4) to enable something
- 5) to align sth
- 6) to coincide
- 7) recorded
- 8) daunting
- 9) accountability
- 10)to foster something
- 11)the bottom line
- 12)to converge
- 13)integrity

Ex. 2

- 1) staff evaluation
- 2) organizational performance
- 3) a line manager
- 4) to monitor standards
- 5) to delegate responsibilities
- 6) grading review
- 7) to review something against standards
- 8) succession planning
- 9) to defeat the purpose
- 10)corporate responsibility

Ex. 3

- 1) line manager
- 2) staff evaluation
- 3) succession planning
- 4) to feed into something
- 5) the bottom line
- 6) well recorded
- 7) annual
- 8) to enable something
- 9) delegating responsibilities
- 10) monitoring standards
- 11) time-consuming
- 12) corporate responsibility

Ex. 4

- 1) We're not very happy with your performance.
- 2) I'm afraid this isn't very convenient?
- 3) Unfortunately, we're unable to accept your offer.
- 4) We were hoping for a slightly bigger discount.
- 5) Your products seem rather expensive.
- 6) Actually, we would appreciate a little more time.
- 7) I'm sure you don't need to be reminded about the terms of the contract.
- 8) I'm afraid it will not be very marketable.
- 9) I'm sorry but we don't seem to be getting very far.
- 10) It was understood that the shipment was on its way.