

4 STRATEGIES FOR TURNING AROUND POOR STAFF PERFORMANCE

01

Make sure the individual 'engages' on their weaknesses

Does the individual acknowledge there is an issue with their performance?

To arrest poor performance, one must first 'engage' on the weakness and/or limiting issues.

To 'engage', the individual must not be defensive but accept what they're being told i.e. "my performance is below expectations and, based on our conversation, I need to do XYZ to improve".

This **requires discussion and buy-in, not a personal performance assassination** by you as manager.

02

Fulfil your responsibilities to your team members

As a manager, acknowledge your role in assisting the individual to address their performance.

Often these are not singular issues - **your role is to remove any roadblocks** or recognise the connections that will assist the individual in enhancing their performance.

03

Create a 'contract to engage'

Before you and the individual commit to a course of action, ask yourself the following questions to **pressure test the strength and quality of your agreed strategy**:

- Have you both clarified your objectives and outcomes and are your expectations aligned?
- Have you talked about strengths, weaknesses, extraneous factors impacting performance, and risks?
- Have you set a time frame and some measurement points to see improvements?
- Have you agreed some assistance, training or mentoring to aid in returning performance to expectations?
- Do you feel (objectively) that you and the business AND the individual will benefit from the discussion/agreed actions?

04

Be ready to resolve the issue, either way!

If the individual can't commit to the course of action you are suggesting, you as a manager have to listen carefully to their objections and decide where the issue lies:

- **Is it a business or process issue?** Are they being asked to perform tasks they don't have the resources or time to perform?
- **Are there legitimate things you can do to enhance the environment** to allow this individual to act in an optimum way to reach their potential and drive the business forward? Are there other appropriate ways to achieve the same objective?
- **Or does the individual simply refuse to accept they have some shortcomings** they're not prepared to address?

Remember, poor performance is not just about an individual; it's about a team and the business.

How you choose to engage on poor performance and how you deal with it will be watched closely by your broader team.