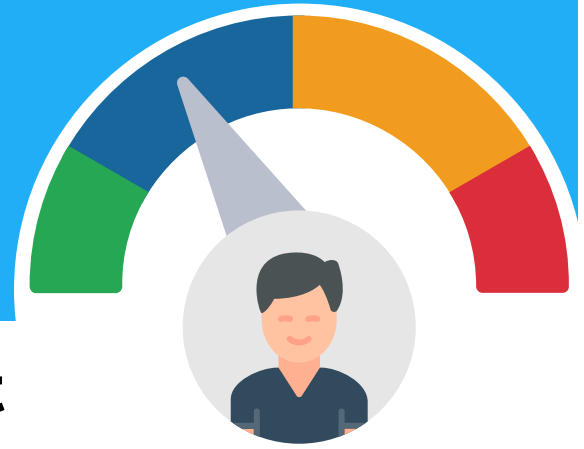


Talent Talk with TalentUnify



Performance Improvement Plan- is it a 4 letter word?

BY AMY JOHNSTON

Underperformance is a big issue regardless of what seat you're in. As a leader, when goals are not met and delivery starts to drop, what is your first move?

While most HR professionals would argue that a PIP (performance improvement plan) is there to support the employee; employees will tell you that it's a death sentence in most cases.

So is PIP a 4 letter word? Sometimes necessary, but should it be the first place we start as leaders when we see a team member start to struggle? I vote no.

When someone on my team has an 'off week' that trickles into an 'off 10-14 days' I know it's time to step in and calibrate. The first thing I tell them is not to panic. "I can see that your numbers/delivery/metrics aren't where they should be; how can I help?"

The first hat I want to wear is that of a Coach. As a leader, I'm there to hold my team accountable, yes. But I'm also there to develop them to be the best they can be and equip them to be successful. Not only does this let them know that I'm in their corner, but it helps to uncover growth opportunities vs just laying down more metrics and goals when they're already behind.

I'm a big fan of the **CDIM** approach:

Current State

Desired State

Impact

Metrics

This is often used in change management and sales methodologies, but it's a great tool for development too!

Highlights

BE A GREAT COACH

ACCOUNTABILITY +
COACHING =
EMPLOYEE GROWTH

TRY THE CDMI
APPROACH

DEVELOPMENT =
SUCCESS

Current State:

Metrics, yes. But also the 'why' behind them. What processes are you taking, where do things start to bottleneck or fall off? How are you managing your time, staying organized and prioritizing your day? Is there anything going on outside of work that's affecting your mindset or focus? This is where we take a deep dive into what ISN'T working.

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Impact:

What impact does the gap between current state and desired state do to the business? What is the impact should this pattern continue? What impact would it have to BE at the desired state both for the employee and the business? This is where you can help your employee understand the 'why' behind performance metrics and allow them to catch the vision of growth for themselves and also for the organization as a whole.

Desired State:

Where do we want to be? What do those metrics look like? What are the processes, tasks and strategies that will get us there? This is where we start to brainstorm together. Don't miss that together part! People support what they help create. Leaders, ask your employees what they think and what ideas they may have to address what isn't working and allow them to help create a plan of action to course correct.



Metrics:

Leaders love them; employees hate them. But this is where we create the roadmap to success. Based on what we have uncovered and new strategies to get us back to where we want to be; metrics are the stepping stones to get us there.

Obviously, performance depends on the individual and they will be held accountable for results. But I've found that focusing on development first, not only motivates employees to get back on track, it also increases engagement and satisfaction drastically! Huge win-win!



So, the next time you have an underperformer, consider coaching (think CDIM) first. It's been a game changer for my own growth as a human and a leader.