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**How to….. hold an informal meeting about under performance**

When under performance is addressed quickly, it can prevent issues from escalating or requiring formal procedures. Performance feedback is most useful when it is provided soon after the event, so do not wait for scheduled meetings such as a probation review or scheduled performance review meetings if there is a performance issue.

The purpose of informal discussions is to ensure that employees are aware of the gap between their current performance and what is expected of them, and then to create a plan to close that gap.

Managers should:

* Remember that the member of staff may be unaware that there is a problem, so discussion should be approached sensitively and positively.
* Keep records of the discussion and let the member of staff have a copy.
* Confirm the reason for the meeting – that its aim is to be supportive and help the individual reach the standards required.
* Hold a factual discussion of the problem and provide any supporting evidence, avoiding personal opinions and generic statements.
* Ask open questions to explore the reason for the problem, in particular exploring whether there are any circumstances that may be affecting performance.
* Provide the opportunity for the member of staff to share their perspective and respond to concerns.
* Ensure a mutual discussion about realistic solution and targets, including any necessary training and support. Document what is agreed.
* Set dates to follow up and review progress.
* Arrange any necessary training or development.
* Ensure that the employee is aware of the consequences of continued under performance.
* Confirm the discussion to the member of staff and make sure they are clear what will happen next.

Advice is available from HR on managing issues of under-performance.