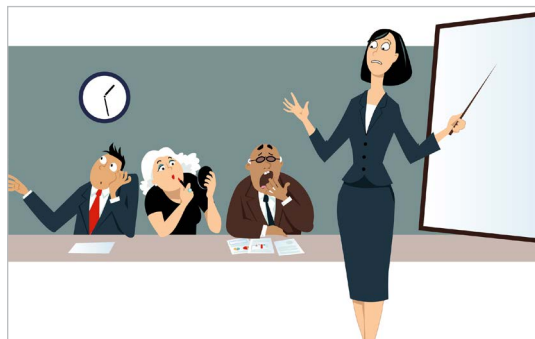


Five Things to Do if Your Team is Underperforming



When a team's productivity is not at the required level, that team is underperforming. Typical examples of workplace underperformance include disruptive or negative behavior and violation of rules, procedures, and policies. Teams may underperform for several reasons, including a lack of skills, inadequate training and development, job dissatisfaction, or any combination of these factors. Underperforming teams are common at all levels, and each instance has a unique aspect. Knowing how to handle these situations can consistently prevent them from inhibiting your team's productivity.

Here are five tips if you have a team that is underperforming.



Identify the Problem

When you have a team that underperforms, you should try to identify the causes. First, you must determine if this is a team or an individual issue. Once you've figured out where the situations lie in your group, try to pinpoint specific areas of underperformance and the possible causes. Some factors contributing to poor performance include insufficient resources, unclear goals and objectives, inadequate training, and more.

To address the situation, describe specific examples of how the team's work has suffered and doesn't meet expectations. Then speak to the team to gain awareness of their perspective on why these issues have arisen and what can be done about them. When addressing your team about what needs to change, try not to place blame on anyone—instead, talk about the behaviors that need adjustment and why they are essential for improvement.

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Reiterate Job Expectations

When your team is underperforming, you must speak with them and reiterate the job expectations. Let them know how their poor performance has led to the lag in progress, and the number of errors made, then give them a chance to explain their point of view. This way, they can better understand why their work is not up to par and what they can do to improve upon it. This is because when people do not know their shortcomings, they are unlikely to attempt to improve upon those areas. Let your team members understand the tasks involved, how you expect them to be performed, and what standards need to be met.

When you're a leader, one of the most important things to have is a document that defines company goals and how you missed them. This will ensure there is no misinterpretation among employees. If you want your team to focus on a specific goal, specify precisely what must be accomplished within the job description. Then, as you evaluate your performance throughout the year, this document will ensure there is no confusion as to whether or not everyone is making progress toward that goal.

Decide on an Action Plan Together

Once you and your team members have analyzed the reasons for underperformance, you can develop a plan of action to work toward a resolution. Be sure to consider others' ideas while making decisions, and encourage them to set goals and develop recommendations. Once you've decided on an action plan, set deadlines and assign tasks.

The plan should incorporate several angles—such as an outline of action that each person is responsible for, a timeframe for achieving performance improvement, including potential consequences of severe issues, and support resources available (team training/mentoring/duties adjustment.). Explain all steps that are involved in completing each task. If there are any expectations about how employees will react or respond to specific situations, be sure to communicate those as well.

Have Regular Follow-up Meetings

If a team member has been chronically lacking in performance, productivity, or morale, it will likely take more than a single sit-down to get them back on track. In these situations, setting up weekly meetings can help you monitor your team member's progress on the action plan and make sure they are making good use of their time and staying on track. You can also use these meetings as an opportunity to reinforce your expectations of them and help them build up their skills and knowledge if necessary. This can help keep things from stagnating and provide your employees with growth opportunities.

Keep in mind that regular follow-ups are equally as crucial for improving team dynamics as for resolving poor performance issues. When you're consistently encouraging continued development and improvement from all team members, you'll be building up morale across the board and creating a culture where people feel they can approach you with any issue without fear.

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Appreciate Progress

Recognizing improvement is an essential part of your job, especially when working with a team that needs to improve. While it's easy to focus on mistakes or problems, it's also important to acknowledge when a person changes their behavior or attitude. For example, "It's great to see you started using the new process we put in place last week," or "I noticed you took the initiative to schedule more meetings to work on a project. Thanks for helping us stay on track."

Your perception of others, whether you're recognizing their strengths or encouraging them to work harder, can significantly affect how they perceive their abilities. When people feel appreciated for their efforts and know that you want to see them succeed, they'll be more motivated to do so. Similarly, when you recognize someone's strength or encourage them to try something new, they'll feel valued as a team member and will be more likely to listen and take your advice seriously.

When a team underperforms, it can be time-consuming to deal with them. Most people with an underperforming team will welcome a collaborative effort that coaches them to do their jobs better. When you understand what causes the underperformance, you can devise an action plan to tackle it. Keeping in touch and monitoring the progress of your underperforming crew is the best way to turn their work into a productive team.

About EG Workforce Solutions

We've been in this business for decades and have developed a deep network of professional connections. Whether they're companies looking for talent, job seekers looking for work, or an up-and-coming store in need of some temporary help, we know the right people to bridge the gap between the hiring and the hired.

But what's more, we get to know people. From employers hiring to candidates looking, we take the time to listen and learn. We hear your likes, talents, and needs. We gain an understanding, and with it, we're able to facilitate lasting relationships between businesses and people.

