

# How to get the most out of a 90-day performance review

## How to get the most value out of a 90-day performance review

- Schedule the meeting on day one
- Develop an agenda
- Have a dialogue
- Prepare data and feedback
- Create a development plan



You finally found the right candidate to fill a role within your organization, but the work isn't over. As you know, an employee's initial experiences with a company will significantly impact their future with it. With that in mind, there are specific steps you can implement to provide support and a positive experience — one being the 90-day performance review.

Companies without a strong onboarding process are at risk of losing skilled employees early on. High rates of turnover and disengagement are costly and harm productivity. However, many companies have little structure when it comes to onboarding.

Don't let your new hires fall through the cracks during the onboarding process. You can implement a structure for a 90-day performance review that improves productivity, average tenure, employee relationships, and more. The best part? It's simple to do.

## What is a 90-day performance review?

During a 90-day performance review, the manager reviews the employee's performance during their first 90 days on the job. This includes how they've progressed toward their goals, feedback on their performance, additional support needed, and a plan for development as they move forward in the company.

At the end of the performance review, the employee should feel clear about how they can achieve the greatest level of success in their role, and the manager should feel confident that the employee has the proper support in place or will soon.

## Why 90 days is the perfect time for a check-in

There's a reason why the 90-day performance review is standard managerial practice. It is beneficial for the new hire and the manager, and the company as a whole.

### Here are some specific benefits of a 90-day performance review.

- **Have an open dialogue.** This sets the stage for open communication between the employee and the manager early on. During this time, it should become clear that asking questions, voicing concerns, discussing expectations, and the like is part of the company culture. The conversation will set an example for how communication should continue moving forward.
- **Provide early feedback.** Instead of waiting for a mid-year or annual review, new hires are clear about their performance within the first 90 days. There's power that comes in this clarity from the employee perspective and the manager perspective. It allows employees to correct their actions early before a small hiccup becomes a long-term problem.
- **Determine the best fit.** Sometimes, the first 90 days will determine whether the new hire will be a good fit for the position moving forward. It's better to "hire slow, fire fast," as the saying goes, and 90 days might be enough time to make some determinations. You can decide early on whether it's time to move on or put them on a strict development plan to see if the employee can make improvements.
- **Improve performance.** This is beneficial for the employee, manager, and company alike. This creates clarity around things that are going well, areas the new hire can improve on, and overall open dialogue related to the position, team, supports, and the like. Ultimately, that can lead to better performance from the new hire. This, in turn, yields improved results for the manager and the company as a whole.

## How to get the most value out of a 90-day performance review

The best way to optimize the value you get from a performance review is to have a plan in place, and your plan starts from their first day on the job.

### Schedule the meeting on day one

Put the performance review on your calendar on day one and be transparent about what's to come in 90 days during the performance review meeting.

## **Develop an agenda**

You don't want to fly by the seat of your pants just to check it off your to-do list. Have a clear agenda to cover the conversation's essential points and ensure you both leave feeling like it was a valuable conversation.

## **Have a dialogue**

Speaking of conversation, keep in mind that the performance review is not a time for you to be a talking head. Instead, it should be an open dialogue in which you and the new hire can speak about the role, the company, and their performance up to this point

## **Prepare data and feedback**

Look at the employee's performance, their role in the company, data related to their goals, and both qualitative and quantitative results of their performance so far. Be prepared with specific feedback and the ability to have an open dialogue regarding it.

## **Create a development plan**

At the end of the performance review, you want to develop a new hire plan that will benefit their development with the company. This might include additional training, professional development, tools, support, or anything else that you feel will help them as they move forward in their position into the next 90 days and beyond.

When you approach a 90-day performance review with these points in mind, it's easier for you to achieve the desired results.

## **Questions to ask during a performance review**

Here are some insightful questions you can ask a new hire during their performance review.

### **How would you evaluate your performance so far?**

Their response will tell you how they believe they're performing in this role. You may also get insights into any challenges they're having, letting you address them early.

### **What skills do you want to develop so you can perform better in your role?**

Their response will tell you how you can provide additional support through professional development, additional training, or mentorship if the skills they mention are relevant to their success in the position.

### **What tools do you need to perform better in your role?**

Their response will tell you any useful tools or resources you can make available to support their success.

### **Do you feel comfortable with your team?**

Their response will let you know if there are any collaboration issues amongst team members that need to be addressed. Doing so early in their career with the company can make for a much smoother future. Someone not yet comfortable with their team might benefit from some structured networking opportunities.

### **Is the role/company meeting your expectations?**

Their response will let you know whether the job, company, and overall experience are what they expected to improve job satisfaction. As much as you want your new hire to meet your expectations, it's also essential that

the company meets theirs. If not, find out why.

### **How do you see yourself in the company in the long term?**

Knowing your new hire's long-term career goals will help you provide them with the support they need to hit those goals moving forward.

**Additional resource:** [Help underperforming employees own their performance improvement.](#)