

ACTPS Performance Framework

Responding to Work Performance Concerns Quickly: A Guide for ACTPS Supervisors and Managers

What to look out for

Performance in the ACTPS is based on the principle of 'no surprises' and a 'constructive approach'.

- 'No surprises' means that supervisors/managers have an obligation to provide feedback as soon as they have any concerns about performance.
- A 'constructive approach' involves acknowledging what is going well and talking about solutions when there is a need for improvement. It also means that the supervisor and staff member share responsibility for making improvements. This approach means that discussions are professional and respectful.

There may be times when a supervisor/manager identifies opportunities for an employee to make minor improvements or perform even better. This would normally be discussed in the course of day-to-day performance discussions. *The Art of Feedback: Giving, Seeking and Receiving Feedback* provides tips on how to give constructive feedback.

Sometimes, in addition to informal feedback, a more structured approach needs to be taken so that the employee is provided with the opportunity and support to get back on track as quickly as possible.

Your HR Team are there to help. Ask their advice if you are unsure.

Getting back on track

It is important to have a discussion about getting back on track as soon as:

- a pattern of performance that doesn't meet expectations starts to emerge
- you become aware of a performance issue that may require ongoing or significant support
- there may be a need to follow enterprise agreement underperformance provisions. Take advice and guidance of your HR team if you think or are unsure if this is the case.

A discussion about getting back on track should include discussion of:

- expectations and the area of performance that requires improvement
- possible causes
- strategies and support for getting back on track (e.g. clarification of expectations, learning and development)
- follow-up and review.



Possible Causes of Poor Performance and Solutions

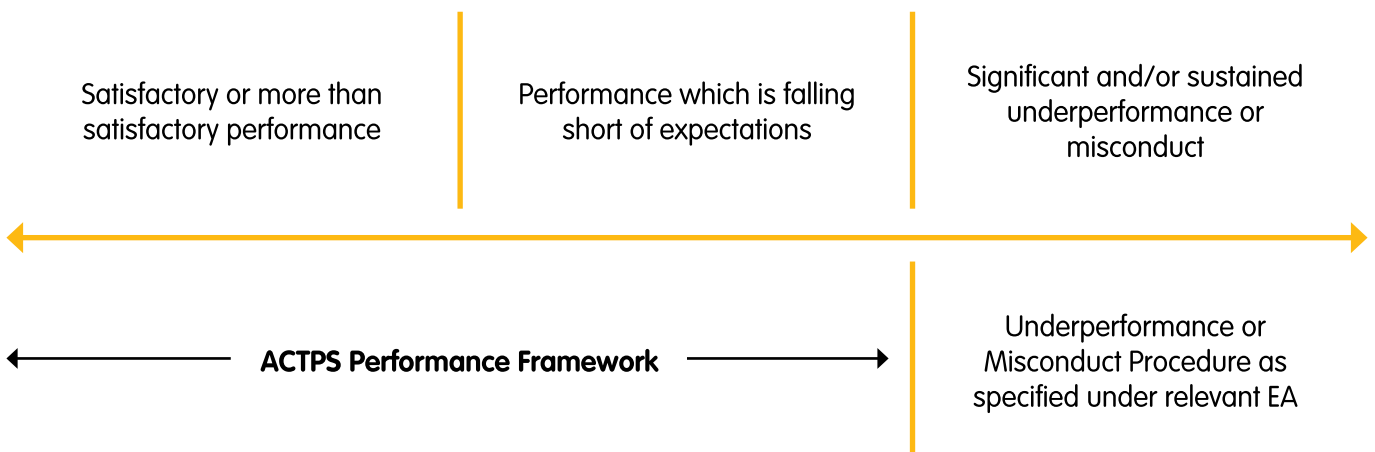
Cause of Poor Performance	Possible Solutions
Employee doesn't know what is expected.	Help the employee clarify and understand expectations and what good performance looks like.
Employee has personal problems, family illness, financial problems etc.	Meet with the employee and establish if there are any problems. Suggest employee should meet with their EAP provider. Explore alternate work arrangements to assist the employee during a difficult period e.g. leave early one afternoon a week to care for a child.
Employee doesn't know how to do what is expected.	Consider appropriate learning and development activities that can be put in place quickly. Options may include mentoring or shadowing. Refer to <i>Planning for Learning and Development</i> .
Employee knows how to do what is expected but is 'out of practice'.	Provide opportunities to practice.
Employee doesn't get feedback about the level and the quality of actual performance.	Establish some means of giving timely feedback. This could be through periodic discussions with you or regular meetings of all staff.
The employee does not like the work or is not motivated by their job.	Consider scope for providing a wider range of tasks. Identify what would motivate the employee.
Something in the work environment interferes with performance.	Determine the source of interference by looking at priorities, time expectations, mix of duties, physical environment, relationships with other workers or availability of resources.

Cause of Poor Performance	Possible Solutions
Your feedback style is impacting negatively on the employee.	Evaluate your feedback style: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is it tailored to the employee's style • is your feedback balanced • are you focusing on improvement • Seek advice from your own manager, HR or the Employee Assistance Program

Coaching is a powerful tool to improve work performance. More information on coaching can be found in *Having good quality Performance and Development discussions: a guide for supervisors and managers*.

How to determine whether formal action is required

1. Be clear on what performance or behaviour is not meeting expectations.
 - If the concern relates to behaviour or conduct *Talking about Behaviours in Performance Discussions: A Guide for Employees and Managers* may assist.
2. Determine your approach using the following diagram as a guide.
 - Seek advice from your HR team if your concerns relate to significant and/or sustained underperformance



Other resources

Giving feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Art of Feedback: Giving, Seeking and Receiving Feedback. • Talking about Behaviours: A guide for ACTPS managers and Staff • How to have a good quality performance discussion: A Guide for Supervisors and Managers. • Getting the best from people at work: A Guide for Supervisors and Managers.
Seeking and receiving feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Art of Giving, Seeking and Receiving Feedback
Difficult discussions/performance concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips for a difficult performance discussion