

Shifting mindsets around performance conversations

How can we shift mindsets and evolve the culture of performance conversations?

Get clear about the aims

To help everyone thrive at work. They're not just about performance, but about our motivation, our wellbeing and our potential too.



Create new platforms

As well as articulating the aims, give people the chance to share their views, perspectives and experiences. Create platforms that involve everyone in great discussions about your performance culture.

Tap into strengths

When people play to their strengths, they are more confident, energised and productive. Ensure performance conversations encourage people to identify and use their unique strengths, and that objective-setting considers strengths.

Harness the power of questions

Asking the right questions is a key way to shift mindsets, helping people raise to a new level of thinking. Managers can be ready to ask a range of questions in 121s, meetings and huddles.

Performance conversations can be seen as a 'tick box' exercise and some people feel awkward or stressed about having them.

The mindset can spread across the teams and feel impossible to shift.

Get clear about the aims

The majority of people want to enjoy their work, provide the best quality to customers, fulfil their personal potential and support their colleagues to thrive.

These are precisely the aims of a 'performance motivation' approach to performance culture. Once we can get everyone aligned and clear about these aims, negative mindsets will become much easier to shift.

How can we do this?

Create a purpose statement for performance conversations or a vision statement for performance culture. Use a variety of channels to articulate this statement and open up discussions. Shine a light on success stories, finding and sharing anecdotes around the positive impact of recent performance.



Some example purpose statements for performance and conversations...



Support each other to flourish and thrive

Help us discover our unique strengths and use them for the benefits of our patients and colleagues

Strengthen our wellbeing and performance

Nurture our growth and development

Ensure we don't settle for being any less than our best, individually and together



Create new platforms

A healthy performance culture is everyone's right and everyone's responsibility. If we're going to take that responsibility seriously, our voice needs to be heard.

We can help by creating safe, positive platforms that involve people in conversations about the performance culture within teams and departments. Generating and sharing ideas across organisations also helps build a growth mindset and greater resilience.

A few ideas...

At large-scale team/department events, schedule time for groups to discuss what people need to perform at their best and generate ideas for strengthening performance culture, then hear from each group to see what themes and patterns emerge.



For teams who have huddles at the start of a shift, conversation starter questions could be incorporated around micro-actions they could all take to support each other performance.



Have 'team performance appraisals' that encourage the team to focus positively on strengths and successes and generate ideas for removing barriers to our peak performance.

Supporting tools

These types of platforms can be created internally without too much work, but if you're looking for a starting point, we've created self-facilitating tools that help guide conversations.

[Take a look at our shop!](#)



Tap into strengths

Our strengths are more than what we are good at. They are also our natural way of thinking, feeling and behaving that make us happy and energise us when we use them. They light us up.

Our strengths usually start to form in childhood and endure throughout our lives. For example, a child might try jigsaw puzzles when young and find they are fun and they get praise from their parents about their successes.



How to do this

- Encourage people to choose words that describe their top strengths (using descriptors such as the examples on the next page to help)
- Give each other praise and feedback about the way we're using our strengths
- Make sure objectives align with our strengths
- Think of ways to work around our weaknesses or other causes of underperformance by using our strengths

A positive performance conversation culture is significant to higher motivation, improved wellbeing and stronger relationships

Examples of strengths

energetic

brave

curious

detailed

calm

focused

fair

playful

practical

sincere

flexible

kind

Harness the power of questions

Try out some of these mindset-shifting questions in performance conversations and share with colleagues.

Raising awareness questions

These help people discover more about themselves, others or the situation...



- What's your favourite part of your role?
- Who's great at keeping our team motivated?
- How clear is our team vision?
- When do we collaborate at our best?
- When under pressure, which strategies do you rely on to cope?
- How do we want to grow and develop in the future?
- What barriers are there to you feeling you can perform at your best?

Going beyond questions

Helping you get a fresh perspective and come up with innovative solutions

If you had to sum up the purpose of your role in one sentence, what would that be?

If you could change three things about the way we work here, what would be be?

If this challenge we are currently facing was overcome, what opportunities will open up for us?

If we can't remove this barrier to performance, how could we at least soften it?

Which task do you find most draining in your role?

How could you approach that task totally differently?

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