

Managing Underperformance

What is Underperformance and Why It Matters

Underperformance is the gap between what an employee delivers in their role and what the company expects or needs from that role. You might notice this in their output, behaviour, or attitude. Underperformance can stem from a lack of skills or capability, or from other factors such as unclear expectations, work overload, poor tools or processes, or even personal circumstances.

It's important to address underperformance early as left unaddressed, it can affect team morale, productivity, and customer experience. Discussing underperformance will likely involve some difficult conversations but taking prompt action gives employees the clarity they need to improve and protects the business from long-term disruption.

From Uncertainty to Action - planning for success

Even experienced managers can find it hard to raise concerns in a way that feels constructive and fair. Our simple 3-step framework helps you to prepare a structured, confident approach - ensuring you give clear, actionable feedback and support improvement before things escalate.

It's also a vital step in protecting your business, reducing risk of misunderstanding, formal grievances, or legal issues.

Step 1. Diagnose the root cause	Step 2. Act early with clarity	Step 3. Agree a way forward
Use the "CUBE" model to identify the issue <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capability - Do they have the necessary skills or training?• Understanding - Do they know what's expected of them?• Behaviour - Is effort, attitude or conduct part of the issue?• Environment - Are tools, systems or team factors contributing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record specific examples that demonstrate underperformance, ensuring you include dates, outcomes and impact.• Stick to facts. Ensure you avoid blame or assumptions.• Arrange a private, focused conversation with employee to discuss your concerns and give them time to prepare for the meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set SMART improvement goals for your employee.• Offer practical support or development where needed.• Schedule a follow up to review progress and stick to it!

Next Step - The Conversation

Once you're properly prepared it's time to have a conversation with your employee. If you're worried about how to approach this our expert team here at **Gooding People & HR** can help. Visit our website or contact Becky on 01373 510020 for a free no obligation discussion.