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**Quotable Quotes**

*"An employee's motivation is a direct result of the sum of interactions with his or her manager." ~ Bob Nelson*

*"Even your most talented employees have room for growth in some area, and you're doing your employee a disservice if the sum of your review is: 'You're great!' No matter how talented the employee, think of ways he could grow towards the position he might want to hold two, five or 10 years down the line." ~ Kathryn Minshew*

*"Employees who believe that management is concerned about them as a whole person - not just an employee - are more productive, more satisfied, more fulfilled. Satisfied employees mean satisfied customers, which leads to profitability." ~ Anne M. Mulcahy*

Dear Jean,

I have been surprised a few times this year when sitting down to write my share for the month, how I seem to be living in the topic as I write about it. So, this month's focus is *Performance Appraisal and Review* and I find I am being surrounded by many who are going through this now in this month or the next. If you are a government employee, you are ending the fiscal year's cycle with your final performance meetings and just about ready to launch into the new fiscal year's performance cycle. What might surprise you is how much the performance appraisal and review activities are dreaded - not just by the staff - it also perceived as an unfavorable activity by many managers. I have done my share of these in the past. It may seem to be a bit easier to provide your feedback for an exemplary performer. And yes, it can also be a bit intimidating to have that conversation with an employee who definitely needs to improve some aspect of work or communication that is negatively affecting their performance. So what help is there - what more can all of us do - whether we are the employee receiving the feedback or the manager giving it? Read on and see if there isn't just one thing you

can change in your current work environment and make this activity more meaningful and more worthwhile.

Wanting for you more enlightening conversations with your fellow employees,  
Jean

## Your Performance Appraisal - Show Up!

Your performance review - when does it start? Actually, the review - the observations - of your performance begin day 1 of the performance cycle, typically continue for a year and then begin again. What an amazing thing when you think about it - you are in a position every year to renew, refresh and start again.

How do you prepare? CAN you prepare? It isn't just about the performance conversation and getting ready for a formal process and an hour speaking with your management maybe two or three times a year. It can be so much more.



Consider the opportunities you have in a year to show up, stand up and speak up. Are you clear about your expectations? Does your manager know what is important to you, what your aspirations are, where you in fact want to show up and how you add value to your team, your department, your organization? Many organizations have individual development plans or performance feedback tools to help guide you through the performance conversation and a plan. Let's face it, without a plan, there is little action and a hit and miss on desired results. If your organization doesn't support the performance cycle with any specific tools and leaves this up to the manager and the individual, then why not create your own.

There is help -- for both the staff and the management when it comes time to kick off the performance appraisal review cycle. The resources for the topic of performance reviews or appraisals are numerous. There are tools to help with the languaging for a documented performance conversation. There are resources to help support the plan and the actions. What more is needed to make this a meaningful and worthwhile effort? Time and a commitment to schedule the time - for the conversations, the plan, the observations and the feedback.

I remember reading and then teaching how to give successful performance feedback in a new manager program. The message was to focus on the performance, not the individual's personality, style, etc. I know first hand how challenging it is to do just that. The message really is that the individual may have to change the performance and they will be successful in doing so only when they understand the expectations and receive consistent feedback to demonstrate clear expectations.

You might ask, what if it IS their personality or style that is getting in the way of their performance? If this is, in fact, the deterrent to successful performance results, then focus on the personal attribute or manner that is preventing the individual or others to achieve the desired results. Individuals will change only if they want to and are ready to. We, as managers and fellow employees, can support the change and foster an environment that allows for the change to occur. We cannot force a change if it is not wanted.

Think about your last performance review? Did you walk away feeling great or feeling defeated? If it was a great review - what made it great? What did your manager do to support your performance ... what was your role in the change that supported a great review? If you left the conversation feeling defeated, were you able to turn the message around - to an action(s) that fueled you and increased your motivation toward a plan of improvement?

Last question: What are you doing to get ready for your upcoming performance appraisal, review and/or the conversation? What is your plan? Are you ready **to** change or **for** a change? What will the message be for your manager, or for your employee?

## Tools and Resources FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[Ready-to-Use Performance Appraisals: Downloadable, Customizable Tools for Better, Faster Reviews](#) by William S. Swan and Leslie E. Wilson (2010). This collection of handy, ready-to-use performance appraisals will save you time and effort, while increasing the clarity and value of your appraisals. These customizable sample evaluations can address almost any situation.

[Effective Phrases for Performance Appraisals: A Guide to Successful Evaluations](#) by James E. Neal, Jr. (12th Edition, 2009). I have used this one - had an older edition when I was a manager. Concise and truly easy to use - great for getting you started.

[Exemplary Performance - Driving Business Results by Benchmarking Your Star Performers](#) by Paula Elliott and Alfred Folsom (2013)

[Developing Exemplary Performance One Person at a Time](#) by Michael Sabbag (2009)

[The Performance Edge: New Strategies to Maximize Your Work Effectiveness and Competitive Advantage](#) by Robert K. Cooper, (1991)

" ... Dr. Robert K. Cooper shows how readers can increase their mental and physical stamina, strengthen their communication skills, release stress quickly, balance their family and career priorities, improve workplace design, and maximize innovation, work quality, and productivity."

## THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS

[7 Steps to Enhance Team Performance](#) by Donna Eigen

[5 Ways to Boost Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace](#) by Barrie Davenport. How? Start by improving your self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, ability to show empathy and the 5th one - check it out....

[Performance Appraisal Tools and Techniques](#) - the objectives, the advantages, the tools and the techniques - a variety of methods.

[Here's an Alternative to the Dreaded Annual Performance Review](#) by Anne Fisher (Dec. 2015) Big 5 asks employees and managers to focus on two questions: What are your five most significant accomplishments since our last meeting? And what are your five biggest goals until next time?

## Reflection

So .. let's prepare for the next performance appraisal - either the one you will receive or the one you will conduct. Spend a few minutes answering the following:

*What are the five most significant accomplishments since your last meeting with your employee/manager? How did you show up for each of these? How did you stand up for yourself, your team, your manager, your organization? When did you speak up? What was your message?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Then turn your internal compass to prepare for the conversation to look forward and consider what change (improvement) you are ready to take on in the next year. Ask yourself: *And what are your five biggest goals until next time?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What is the difference between last year and this year? What do you want the difference to be? What will be the one thing you want to acknowledge in next year's performance conversation?

## Choose To ...

Prepare for the conversation ... consider your past year's accomplishments ... acknowledge the theme(s) ... show up ... stand up ... decide when did you speak up ... move forward ... what will be different ... how you will prepare in this next year for a very different engagement and performance conversation ... to be the person who speaks up for YOU.



## October Joyful Observances

[Bullying Prevention](#) Month  
Employee Ownership Month  
Head Start Awareness Month  
National Bake and Decorate Month  
[National Protect Your Hearing](#) Month

National Work from Home Week (October 2-8)  
[Spinning & Weaving Week](#) (October 3-9)  
Drink Local Wine Week (October 9-15)  
National Friends of Libraries Week (October 16-22)  
[National Massage Therapy Week](#) (October 23-29)

[Mad Hatter Day](#) (October 6)  
National Handbag Day (October 10)  
Be Bald and Be Free Day (October 14)  
[Information Overload Day](#) (October 19)  
National Forgiveness Day (October 29)

## **Administrivia**

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- \* Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- \* New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- \* Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, live their voices, and...
- \* Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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