Case Study of Performance Appraisal

PowerCom has been in operation since 2007 and became a subsidiary of Telecom Namibia Group in October 2013. Since its acquisition, the principle nature of business changed from a mobile telecommunications operator to an ICT infrastructure and equipment provider. Our mission and vision to become the market leader in Passive Infrastructure by providing a unified one stop solution for telecommunications towers and other ICT infrastructures in the market within five years. Our Promise to Be innovative leaders that are people/customer centric, Encourage innovative ideas among our employees & instill a spirit of entrepreneurship to generate a strong business return, Drive maximum productive use of infrastructure and capacity, Adopt disruptive technology spawning a new era of digital business transformation to better satisfy customer needs.

Interested in why organizations do employee performance evaluation? It's both an evaluative process and a communication tool. Done traditionally, employee performance evaluation is universally disliked by supervisors and employees.

Performance management, on the other hand, provides the advantages organizations seek in doing performance evaluation. But, performance management, participated in effectively and with the appropriate mindset, accomplishes the same goals, and more.

Performance management also supplies additional advantages to both the manager and the employee.

The employee performance evaluation process, including goal setting, performance measurement, regular performance feedback, self-evaluation, employee recognition, and documentation of employee progress, ensures this success.

The process — done with care and understanding — helps employees see how their jobs and expected contributions fit within the bigger picture of their organization.

The more effective evaluation processes accomplish these goals and have additional benefits.
Documented performance evaluations are communication tools that ensure the supervisor and her reporting staff members are clear about the requirements of each employee’s job.

The evaluation also communicates the desired outcomes or outputs needed from each employee’s job and defines how they will be measured.

Managers often go wrong with performance appraisals in so many ways, that it’s difficult to identify all of them. Some of the problems have to do with the overall system of performance appraisal and other problems are the result of the one-on-one meeting that is held for the appraisal interaction.

Here are four of the big problems managers and employees experience with performance appraisals. If you are clear on the problems, you have an opportunity to fix the problems.

**Performance Appraisals Are Annual**

Start with the fact that performance appraisals are usually annual. Employees need feedback and goal planning much more frequently than annually.

Employees need weekly, even daily, performance feedback. This feedback keeps them focused on their most important goals. It also provides them with developmental coaching to help them increase their ability to contribute. The feedback also recognizes them for their contributions.

Employees need and respond best to clear expectations from their manager. Feedback and goal setting annually just doesn’t cut it in the modern work environment. In this environment, goals are constantly changing. Work is under constant evaluation for relevance, importance, and contribution.

Customer needs change with such frequency that only the nimble respond in a timely manner. This is what performance feedback needs to do—respond nimbly and with serious responsiveness in a timely manner.

**Performance Appraisal as a Lecture**
Managers, who don't know any better, make performance appraisals into a one-way lecture about how the employee did well this year and how the employee can improve. In one example, employees reported to HR that they thought that the performance development planning meeting was supposed to be a conversation.

Their manager was using 55 of the 60 minutes to lecture his reporting staff members about their performance—both good and bad. The employees' feedback was relegated to less than five minutes. This is not the point of a performance appraisal discussion.

Additionally, once a manager tells an employee about problems with their work or a failure in their performance, employees tend to not hear anything else the manager has to say that is positive about their performance. So, the feedback sandwich in which managers praise an employee, then give the employee negative feedback that is followed, once again, by positive feedback is an ineffective approach to providing needed feedback.

So, it’s a combination problem. The best performance appraisals are a two-way discussion and focus on the employee assessing his or her own performance and setting his or her own goals for improvement.

**Performance Appraisal and Employee Development**

Performance appraisals rarely focus on developing the employee’s skills and abilities. They do not provide commitments of time and resources from the organization about how they will encourage employees to develop their skills in areas of interest to the employee.

The purpose of performance evaluation is to provide developmental feedback that will help the employee continue to grow in their skills and ability to contribute to the organization.

It is the manager's opportunity to hold a clear exchange about what the organization expects and most wants and needs from the employee. What a lost opportunity if a manager uses the meeting in any other way.
**Performance Appraisals and Pay**

In a fourth way that performance appraisals often go astray, employers connect performance appraisals with the amount of pay raise an employee will receive. When the appraisal is a deciding factor in employee raises, it loses its ability to help employees learn and grow.

You will train employees to hide and cover up problems. They will set their manager up to be blindsided by problems or an issue in the future. They will bring only positives to the appraisal meeting if they are a normal employee.

Don’t ever expect an honest discussion about improving an employee's performance if the outcome of the discussion will affect the employee’s income.

Doesn’t this make perfect sense? You know it does, so why go there? It should be one component of your salary setting system.

Let your employees know that you will base raises on a wide range of factors—and tell them what the factors are in your company annually. Employees have short memories, and you need to remind them every year about how you will make your decisions about merit increases.

If your company has a company-wide approach—and many companies do these days—even better. You will have support and backup as all employees will receive the same message. Your job will be to reinforce the message during the performance appraisal meeting.

Connecting the appraisal to an employee's opportunity for a salary increase negates the most important component of the process—the goal of helping the employee grow and develop as a result of the feedback and discussion at the performance appraisal meeting.

If you can influence these four big problems in performance appraisal, you will go a long way toward having a useful, developmental system in which the employee's voice plays a prominent role. Is this the right way to approach performance appraisal.