

Case Study 2 – How might you respond?

Employee has gotten poor reviews from stakeholders throughout the year. You have had multiple check-ins to discuss the employee's deficiencies and offer support, but the bottom line is that the employee is still not meeting expectations. You point out the performance gaps and ask the employee what he/she/they think might be contributing to these gaps.

Variation 1:

The employee begins to cry and says, "I feel like such a failure. I don't know what else to do. I'm working so hard and giving this everything I've got and I'm still just not good enough. There's just a lot on my plate right now outside of work, and I'm just so overwhelmed."

Variation 2:

The employee gets defensive and scoffs at the poor reviews from stakeholders. The employee says the stakeholders are "too sensitive," "don't know what they are talking about," and "don't have enough experience to criticize his work." He demands to know which stakeholders are providing poor reviews, because he thinks some stakeholders have been out to get him. He also points fingers at his colleagues and says if they would do their job better, "I wouldn't waste so much time fixing their work and could actually focus on perfecting mine."

Variation 3:

The employee looks away, shrugs, and unemotionally says "I don't know."

Case Study 3

Employee has been with the organization for just over a year. Employee was hired right out of college after graduating first in the class. Employee is very reliable; you can give this employee an assignment and trust that the employee will reach out with questions when appropriate but otherwise is fairly autonomous and does not require much support to deliver great results. The employee's work is almost always completed ahead of schedule and is of excellent quality - a level we would expect to see from someone with years of experience.

The employee regularly offers new ideas and ways to make processes more effective. You sense that the employee's proposed changes would be even more effective if the employee thought through how to communicate them more tactfully, giving more thought to how to gain buy in and bring others along. You are unsure exactly what the employee's mid-range and long-term goals are, but you definitely see a bright future for this employee.

Resource Highlight

Performance Reviews: HBR 20 Minute Manager Series

**Audio book available on percipio!*

Chapters covering the basics,
gathering information, evaluating
performance, conducting the
meeting, establishing next steps, and
handling tough topics

