



Newsletter

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How to Conduct Effective Appraisals

Employee appraisals play a crucial role in supporting professional growth, enhancing productivity, and maintaining a positive workplace culture.

However, conducting effective appraisals requires careful planning, communication, and a commitment to employee development. Below are some key steps to help ensure your appraisal process is not only effective but also contributes to the overall success of your team.



- **Step 1. Set Clear Objectives:**
Before diving into the appraisal process, define the purpose and goals. Clearly communicate these objectives to both the appraiser and the appraisee.
- **Step 2. Establish a Positive Environment:**
Create a comfortable setting for the appraisal meeting by encouraging open communication and emphasise that the goal is to support professional growth rather than provide negative feedback.
- **Step 3. Regular Feedback Throughout the Year:**
Effective appraisals are built on a foundation of continuous feedback. Encourage ongoing communication between managers and employees, providing constructive input regularly. This ensures that there are no surprises during the formal appraisal.
- **Step 4. Create a Structured Appraisal Form:**
Design a comprehensive appraisal template. This form serves as a roadmap discussion and ensures that all relevant aspects are addressed. *(Let us know if you would like some effective templates!)*
- **Step 5. Setting Clear Goals:**
Collaboratively set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals for the upcoming appraisal period. Discuss development plans, training opportunities, and resources that can help the employee in achieving these goals.
- **Step 6. Acknowledging Achievements:**
Recognise and celebrate the employee's accomplishments and contributions to the team and company. Positive reinforcement is a powerful motivator and reinforces desired behaviours.
- **Step 7. Address Areas for Improvement Constructively:**
Provide specific examples and offer guidance on how the employee can enhance their skills or overcome challenges. Focus on solutions rather than dwelling solely on problems.
- **Step 8. Encourage Self-Assessment:**
Allow the employee to self-assess their performance. This promotes self-awareness and encourages accountability. It also provides valuable insights into how the employee perceives their own strengths and areas for improvement.

If you would like more information on carrying out effective appraisals, please contact Chelsey@agilehrconsulting.com

Unlocking the Power of EVP: Attracting Top Talent for Small Businesses

In today's competitive job market, attracting top talent is a challenge faced by businesses of all sizes. For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the UK, the task can seem particularly daunting, especially when competing with larger corporations that boast hefty salary packages and extensive benefits.

However, the key to drawing in exceptional candidates lies not only in monetary rewards but also in crafting a compelling Employee Value Proposition (EVP). An EVP encompasses the unique set of benefits, rewards, and opportunities that an employer offers in exchange for the skills, capabilities, and experiences that employees bring to the table

Here are some strategies that SMEs can employ to enhance their EVP and attract top talent:

- 1. Emphasise Purpose and Values:** Many job seekers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, are drawn to companies that align with their personal values and offer a sense of purpose beyond just a pay check. Highlight your company's mission, values, and commitment to social responsibility to resonate with candidates who prioritise making a positive impact.
- 2. Flexible Working Arrangements:** Small businesses may not always match the salary packages of larger corporations, but they can offer flexibility that appeals to a wide range of candidates. Whether it's remote work options, flexible hours, or compressed workweeks, demonstrating a commitment to work-life balance can be a major selling point for prospective employees.
- 3. Opportunities for Growth and Development:** Talented individuals are often eager to advance their careers and expand their skill sets. SMEs can attract top talent by offering clear pathways for career progression, mentorship programs, training opportunities, and challenging projects that allow employees to continuously learn and develop professionally.
- 4. Cultivate a Positive Work Culture:** Company culture plays a significant role in attracting and retaining top talent. Small businesses have the advantage of fostering close-knit, supportive environments where employees feel valued and recognised for their contributions. Highlight your company's inclusive culture, team dynamics, and employee recognition programs to showcase what sets you apart as an employer of choice.
- 5. Personalised Benefits and Perks:** While small businesses may not have the resources to offer extravagant perks, they can tailor benefits packages to meet the unique needs and preferences of their employees. This could include perks such as wellness initiatives, flexible spending accounts, professional development stipends, or even personalised rewards based on individual interests and preferences.

For further information on the above, please contact david@agilehrconsulting.com

Menopause Policy

Employee wellbeing is at the fore of any good people strategy and with the media shining an important light on the menopause in recent years, creating awareness and showing just how physically and mentally debilitating it can be both personally and professionally, we believe having a menopause policy in place is an essential addition to supporting your workforce.

By addressing this the business will have:

- Increased engagement/ output/ higher morale/ loyalty/ retention/
- Reduce risk of breaching the Equality Act 2010 and the Health & Safety Act 1974 through direct or indirect actions that may impact menopausal employees
- Removed barriers to progression for women
- Demonstrate the business is age and gender inclusive – and values the talents of all

Some employees will transition through the menopause smoothly however others will suffer extreme symptoms with a detrimental impact on their lives and work. The stats below are courtesy of The Menopause Charity and the CIPD.

90% of women get menopausal symptoms

There are **79 potential symptoms** a woman may experience due to the fluctuating hormones experienced during the perimenopause and menopause

Symptoms can last for up to **12 years**

Almost **70%** of woman experience menopausal symptoms that **negatively affect them at work** including: stress, feeling less patient, feeling physically uncomfortable, difficulty concentrating, tiredness

Almost half of women surveyed who are in employment and who needed to take a day off due to menopause said they would **not feel comfortable disclosing the reason** to their employer

10% of women leave their jobs due to the menopause

Employer legal obligations

There isn't a legal requirement for companies to have a menopause policy, however in February 2024 the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) issued guidance to clarify the legal obligations for workers experiencing the menopause.

The 2010 Equality Act protects workers from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of 9 protected characteristics, including age, sex and disability.

The EHRC states that if menopause symptoms have a 'long term and substantial impact on a woman's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities' these symptoms could be considered a disability. If this is the case the employer must make reasonable adjustments for the employee. Employers must also be mindful of discriminating against the employee due to the disability.

Employees experiencing menopause symptoms may also be protected from direct & indirect discrimination and harassment & victimisation on the grounds of sex and age.

In addition, Health & Safety legislation means employers must conduct an assessment of their workplace risks.

It may be a good starting place to understand the current experiences of menopausal women in the workplace and how they are supported by managers and to include employees in the development of any support and guidance to provide an inclusive workspace.

- **Policy:** include the menopause either in an existing policy or as a standalone policy. This will provide a framework for your managers and support the expectations of your employees
- **Awareness and Education:** enable managers to support their teams through awareness training. From this they will have the confidence to apply policy/ procedure correctly and also enhance their listening/ supporting skills. Training may include not only menopause, but also EDI, mental health, difficult conversations and absence
- **Impact Awareness:** ensure managers and employees are aware of all the people who may go through the menopause and have symptoms. This can include those who identify as women, trans, non-binary and those with variations in sex development or intersex. Also be mindful that the menopause can affect colleagues or partners of individuals experiencing the menopause
- **Be open to flexible working arrangements:** such as flexible hours, working from home options, workspace adjustments, workload accommodations if the employee is attending medical appointments

- **Be considerate of workplace adjustments:** this can include conducting a risk assessment to identify any particular areas that are detrimental to the individuals going through the menopause. Once adjustments have been agreed and are in place ensure there is a process for review to ensure they are having the required effect. Some adjustments can be as simple as providing an employee experiencing hot flushes with a fan or a desk next to the window to allow that person to feel comfortable at work
- **Provide access to support services:** Employee Assistance Programme (EAPs), counselling
- **Have menopause champions**
- **Help break the embarrassment/silence:** run awareness-raising sessions for anyone interested in better understanding and supporting how the menopause affects women and the impacts. Provide opportunities to engage with employees so they can share their experiences.

We are passionate about supporting those going through the menopause and supporting businesses, if you would like more information or guidance with this, please contact hils@agilehrconsulting.com