



## n-gen's New Book is Coming!

*Performance Management*

*November 2011*

### **In This Issue**

**Chapter Overview**

**Generational Considerations**

**Five Differences**

**Questions Answered**

### **Training Products**



Sales & Customer Service  
Leadership  
Gen Y  
Team Building  
HR Training

### **A Sneak Peek...**

We are pleased to announce that n-gen's 2nd book will be released in Spring 2012. Aligning to our mission of providing Generational 2.0 solutions, this book offers practical tips by focusing on the "top 10" skills leaders need to effectively manage within a multigenerational workforce. We provide the knowledge, practical advice and techniques required to be a successful leader. In the coming months, via our newsletters and webinars, we will be providing you with a brief synopsis of the key topics from our book.



In this newsletter, we highlight the topic of Performance Management. The results from this month's Generational Advisory Committee (GAC) survey are also incorporated to provide insights into how managers and employees respond to this workplace issue.

### **Chapter Overview**

In order to promote organizational success through high performance we must evaluate the role leaders and employees play in performance management. Fundamentally, all performance management processes are designed to achieve three goals:



1. Establish measureable goals for employees
2. Assess achievement and attainment of the goals
3. Improve performance through coaching, development and rewards

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Congratulations to this month's winner:

**Matthew Kennedy**

At its best, performance management is a partnership between employees and managers to improve future performance. This involves receiving meaningful feedback and collaboratively problem solving, resulting in increased engagement and results. However, for managers, often performance management discussions are viewed as conflict conversations and are avoided. If poor performance is not addressed and managed appropriately, high performing employees experience frustration at having to "pull the weight" of others, and their engagement levels drop. An effective performance management strategy encourages bench strength, engagement and motivation, personal accountability, the identification of top talent, and adds value to the organization.

*"We need to view performance management as an opportunity, despite bad macro-environment times. It is all too easy to put performance management down the list of priorities when the key focus is financial performance".*

- Gen Y GAC Member

## Generational Considerations



Each generation has a different level of comfort with receiving feedback, which means that each cohort will embrace performance management differently. Traditionalists are comfortable with annual performance review discussions, and will ask for more feedback if they feel they need it. They are used to management providing concrete direction on how to improve their performance. Baby Boomers want to be included in the decision making process, and prefer to be allowed to provide feedback on their own performance in bi-annual/annual formal reviews, in order for the focus to remain on their strengths. Gen X employees, however, wish to have performance reviews on a more frequent basis and prefer the discussion to focus on areas of improvement and the creation of personal development plans. Gen Ys are the most eager to receive frequent, informal feedback, but they often do not respond well to negative feedback, since many have not been accustomed to hearing anything but positive praise. Since Gen Ys share information quite freely, managers must be prepared to justify all performance ratings with clear, objective data, as well as open discussions. The manager's generational identity is also important as it may have an effect on certain aspects of the performance management process, including assessing and improving performance.

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## What's Up?



Check out our [calendar](#) for upcoming speaking engagements, webinars, and other events.

## The Four Elements of Performance Management

### #1: Planning

In order for employees to understand where they can add the greatest value, organizational strategies, goals and objectives must be clearly communicated. Employees who understand the behaviours and tasks that drive organizational success will be armed with the knowledge as to how to make smarter decisions. Working with employees to create goals (job goals, project goals, professional development goals or performance improvement goals), and linking these goals to solid metrics creates a psychological contract with employees that will drive high performance.

*Our GAC Baby Boomers are the least likely to say that their manager clearly communicates what is expected of them in their jobs. 82% of Gen Y and 80% of Gen X GAC members think their managers clearly communicate compared with only 43% of Baby Boomers.*

### #2: Managing

Once goals and metrics have been established, it is up to you as a leader to monitor employees' performance and coach them for success. Rather than thinking of performance management as something that is to be completed only during annual reviews, it should instead be thought of as a continuous process of evaluation, feedback and coaching. Fostering an environment where communication is central to your team culture will encourage partnering-based leadership and achievement of performance goals.

*Our Gen Y GAC members are the least satisfied with the frequency of their performance reviews. 80% of Gen Xers and 71% of Baby Boomers feel that they receive performance reviews at an adequate rate, but 55% of Gen Ys do not.*

### #3: Assessing

If feedback and coaching has been continuous, nothing presented at the formal performance review meeting should come as a surprise to an employee. Ideally, this means that the process of formal assessments should be easier, because performance issues would have been addressed just-in-time. Assessments should be collaborative in nature, and should confirm the scope of employees' roles and responsibilities; identify barriers to success; and solicit employee suggestions for improvement. When assessment documentation is created objectively and collaboratively, it motivates employees to continue to learn and develop professionally.

*"The [performance review] process is still largely paper-based and a long and fairly intensive and time consuming process. Perhaps more quarterly discussions could lessen the intensity of work".*

*- Baby Boomer GAC Member*

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## #4: Rewarding

Recognition when employees have achieved their performance goals is an essential element of the performance management process. Rewarding employee performance at both an individual and team level keeps employees motivated for future success, and persuades poor performers to improve. Rewards should align to what is meaningful to individual employees and be a blend of financial and non-financial.

## Your Questions Answered

Our Performance Management chapter will answer your questions about how to engage, motivate and drive results from employees in order to achieve business goals by outlining how to:



1. Identify the correct performance management approach for your organization
2. Work with your employees to develop and achieve high performance goals
3. Improve performance through effective coaching, development and rewards
4. Assess the achievement and attainment of goals
5. Reward and recognize high performers
6. Identify generational preferences and understand the impact to your performance management approach

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