

## Better performance management

The way you manage people's performance can make a big difference. The Corporate Leadership Council's Performance Management survey<sup>1</sup> found that key manager actions that have a positive impact on performance are:

Action	% improvement
1 Managers' informal feedback is accurate and fair	39%
2 Formal feedback focuses on the positive (ie performance strengths)	36%
3 Managers' feedback is knowledgeable and actually helps people to do their job better	26%
4 Goals for the job have been set out clearly	16%

Manager actions that have a negative impact on performance – the so-called “performance killers”:

Action	% improvement
1 Emphasis on “personality” weaknesses in informal or formal feedback	-3% (informal feedback) -5% (formal review)
2 Emphasis on performance weaknesses	-11% (informal feedback) -27% (formal review)
3 Making frequent changes to projects and assignments	-28%

Overall, the survey reached the following conclusions on what managers can best do to improve people's performance:

1. Knowledgeable, fair and accurate informal feedback is the single most important management action for improving individual performance.
2. Managers who help their people find tangible, immediate solutions to specific work challenges can significantly improve individual performance.
3. Managers who are clear about what is expected and provide the necessary information, resources and technology get better performance.
4. Emphasising performance strengths during performance reviews draws better performance from people.
5. When discussing performance weaknesses, managers who clearly focus on specific suggestions for improvement or development improve performance. Those who just focus on weaknesses in performance without offering suggestions for improvement dramatically decrease performance.
6. Unclear, inconsistent and changing expectations are “performance killers”.

<sup>1</sup> The Corporate Leadership Council's Performance Management survey, 2002  
19000 employees surveyed, 34 companies, 29 countries