

Nine-Plus-One Common Causes of Performance Problems

- 1. **Have you made performance expectations clear?** Does she know what she is expected to do? If necessary, have you defined how work is to be done? [Note: for most jobs the *what* is far more important than the *how*]
- 2. **Does the employee know that his performance isn't what it should be?** Do you let him know when he isn't meeting job expectations? Do you provide ongoing feedback throughout the year?
- 3. **Have you set performance goals that are challenging but realistic?** Is the workload reasonable? Are you punishing your best performers by giving them most of the challenging work? Do the goals cause the person to stretch her capabilities in the right way?
- 4. **Does he have the skill, knowledge, and ability to do the job? Has he received the necessary training?** Has the job changed such that new skills and knowledge are required? Has the job out-grown him?
- 5. **Have you provided her access to the tools, equipment, resources, people, and information resources she needs to get the job done?** Does she know where to access these resources?
- 6. **Are the working relationships between the employee and his co-workers positive and cooperative?** Or, instead, are there conflicts between him and other workers? Is he potentially the target of unfair treatment, discrimination, or harassment by others? Are people withholding information from him?
- 7. **Does the employee know that she can seek you out to clarify job duties, ask for direction and support, problem solve, or identify ways to improve job performance?** Or, instead, are you just too busy to "touch base," share issues, and discuss concerns?
- 8. **Have you consistently provided clear and positive rewards to him and other workers when performance standards are met or exceeded?** Do you consistently withdraw positive rewards from those who fail to meet expectations? Do you make it clear that performance does matter to you?
- 9. **Does she have a physical, mental, or emotional disability that might limit her ability to do the job?** Does she hold back from certain tasks? Do you see patterns in her work behaviors that suggest limited physical or mental capacities?

PLUS ONE

- Does the employee exhibit any behaviors that suggest that he or she is experiencing a personal problem, lacks desire or motivation, demonstrates inflexibility in working with others, exhibits resistance to change, or has a difficult time accepting orders from others?