

## Performance Appraisals — Common Mistakes

It is important for organizations to make performance appraisals a positive experience for employees. To accomplish this, leaders should be careful to avoid common appraisal mistakes, such as:

- **Not doing the appraisal at all or giving it little attention** — Not doing it assures that things will not improve. Doing it late sends the message that performance improvement is not important.
- **Letting bias creep into the appraisal or being less than truthful** — Rating everyone average, or being less than truthful to avoid conflict diminishes the value of appraisal.
- **Believing appraisal is an event and not a process** — Without feedback on an ongoing basis, appraisal will do no good at all.
- **Blaming** — Appraisal should not assess blame, but should encourage a two-way exchange in a safe environment with improvement as the goal.
- **Ranking** — Comparing people with one another causes dissent. Rating against standard or agreed-to goals is a better alternative.
- **Thinking appraisals are only about salary** — Appraisals should help drive better performance.
- **Doing appraisals without help from others** — It is always helpful to get input from others so leaders have a complete knowledge of subordinates' work.
- **Assuming there must be negatives in every review** — If performance is outstanding; there is no need to think of something negative to say.
- **Failure to set goals** — Performance appraisal should always include goal setting and a review of performance against goals. This assures accountability and responsibility. Accomplishment should be rewarded not just effort toward accomplishment.