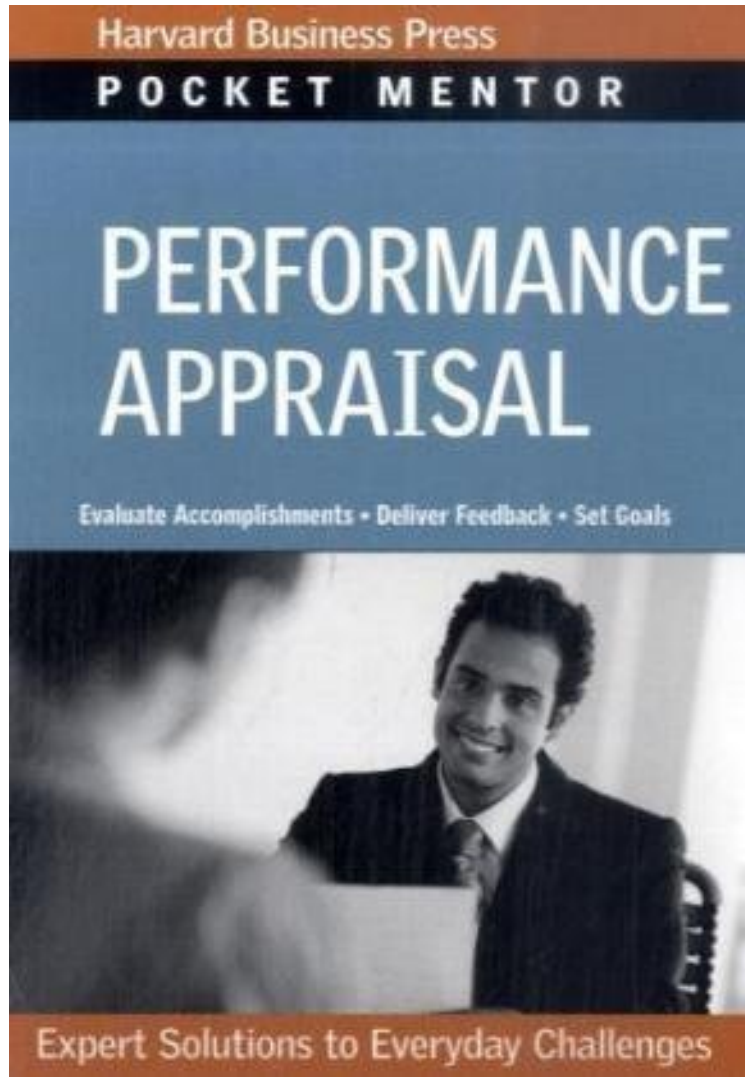


Performance Appraisal: Expert Solutions to Everyday Challenges (Pocket Mentor)

Kathleen Jordan Ph.D.

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before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Performance Appraisal: Expert Solutions to Everyday Challenges (Pocket Mentor):

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Who is appraising whom?By Robert MorrisThis is one of the volumes in the Harvard Business Press "Pocket Mentor" series, each of which offers "immediate solutions to common challenges managers face on the job every day." No matter where you are, "these portable guides enable you to tackle the daily demands of your work with greater speed, savvy, and effectiveness." In this instance, the advice is provided

by Kathleen Jordan and the subject is performance appraisal, "the process you use to evaluate and support your employees' on-the-job performance. It is part of a system of performance management that is based on goals you and your employees set together. It includes the periodic informal reviews you use to see how well your employees are performing relative to their goals and to provide opportunities for early intervention." During exit interviews of highly valued employees who have accepted a job elsewhere, three of their most common complaints are that (1) performance expectations were either vague or inconsistent, (2) there was insufficient feedback (e.g. constructive criticism) from supervisors, and (3) performance appraisals were unfair and/or inaccurate. The advice that Jordan offers in this volume can help to reduce (if not eliminate) these complaints. Better yet, immediate and significant improvement of performance management at all levels and in all areas of the given enterprise will help to reduce (if not eliminate) the loss of highly-valued employees. One of Jordan's several key points is that each employee should be involved in the process, not only as a recipient of an appraisal but also as a collaborator when identifying goals, determining how to achieve them, and setting deadlines for them. Jordan recommends the use of self-appraisals and offers a sample on Page 7. "The important thing is to get the employee's perspective on his or her own job performance. Involving the person in the process is also beneficial for the following reasons: It sets the tone of partnership for all reviews, both formal and informal; it reduces any negative reactions to feedback you give the person; [and] it promotes a trusting relationship between you and your employee." The material is carefully organized within a brief but remarkably comprehensive narrative of only 73 pages, beginning with an overview of what performance appraisal is and why it matters, followed by a close-up examination of a performance appraisal meeting (a "key" component of the program), and a "Tips and Tools" section that includes worksheets, a self-diagnostic, and recommended sources for those who wish to "go more deeply into the topic." My own recommendations include Dean Spitzer's *Transforming Performance Measurement: Rethinking the Way We Measure and Drive Organizational Success*, Dick Grote's *The Performance Appraisal Question and Answer Book: A Survival Guide for Managers*, and William Swan's *Ready-to-Use Performance Appraisals: Downloadable, Customizable Tools for Better, Faster Reviews!* Although by now it has become a cliché, it is nonetheless true that people work for other people, not for companies. When highly-valued employees leave, they "fire" their supervisors and their reasons for doing so probably include dissatisfaction with how performance appraisals are conducted. When Kathleen Jordan suggests that supervisors and their direct reports be collaborators, that does not mean that they should be equal partners. Channels of authority have their proper place in any organization. What she does mean is that performance management should be a "win-win-win" situation for the organization, for supervisors, and for those for whom they are responsible. And it is not a coincidence that, in companies that are ranked each year as the best to work for, how well supervisors conduct performance appraisals is one of the most important criteria for appraising their own performance. Note: My rating is of this volume's quality and value as a booklet.

The Pocket Mentor series offers immediate solutions to the challenges managers face on the job every day. Each book in the series is packed with handy tools, self-tests, and real-life examples to help you identify strengths and weaknesses and hone critical skills. Whether you're at your desk, in a meeting, or on the road, these portable guides enable you to tackle the daily demands of your work with greater speed, savvy, and effectiveness. One of your most sensitive duties as a manager is conducting performance appraisals. How do you objectively evaluate another person's performance? What guidelines are there for talking to your direct reports about both their strengths and their weaknesses? How can you address a weakness to help an employee develop into a stronger member of your team? This book teaches you how to prepare for, conduct, and follow up on performance evaluations in ways that link employee performance to your company's and group's goals. You'll learn how to: -Document employee development right from the start -Set the appropriate tone in a performance review -Address a performance problem -Follow up on next steps with your employee

About the Author Kathleen Jordan, Ph.D., is a leadership coach and organization development consultant who has worked extensively with large organizations in telecommunications, financial services, health care, and government. Her clients include ATT, US West, Mitel Corporation, the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, and the University of Washington Medical Center. She has written articles for such publications as Harvard Management Update, Harvard Business Review, and Design Management Journal. Kathleen is also the collaborating writer, with authors Doug Lennick and Fred Kiel, Ph.D., for *Moral Intelligence: The Key to Leadership Effectiveness and Business Performance* (to be published by Financial Times Prentice Hall, Spring 2005).