

SilverStone Group

CONSULTING SERVICES

Human Capital

Rypple.com

A New Wave of Performance Management

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Tight budgets have forced many business owners to find new ways to improve productivity without sacrificing profitability. When faced with the challenges of a down economy, it is important to capitalize on your most precious resource: your employees. Fortunately, utilizing frequent performance feedback can help maximize employee capabilities in a relatively inexpensive, efficient and easy fashion.

Why feedback? And when?

Providing employees with feedback only once a year, generally when the manager and employee meet for a formal review, is now considered to be an outdated and inefficient practice. Performance feedback is best utilized as a continuous stream of communication within any organization and is most useful when it is specific and given immediately following a performance task. This has become even more critical as a younger workforce enters the workplace, craving constant feedback and performance review.

Let's find a new way

To meet this demand, a convenient new web service has been developed called Rypple.com. This innovative site allows employers to provide feedback to employees while eliminating the hassle of coordinating a formal performance review. Rypple.com offers substantial time-saving potential for managers who are constantly asked for performance feedback and are struggling to keep up with the demand.

The upside

Rypple.com allows employees to create a network of trusted colleagues and managers whose opinions they value. Questions can be sent to this customized inner circle, along with a request for feedback. An employee may submit a question such as "What did you think of the marketing proposal I presented in our meeting today?" The employee's network is then able to respond anonymously online. One of the many unique features of this program is that employees have the option of allowing their network to measure performance against a scale, enabling the employee to track performance over time. Not only does this provide access to valuable comments and observations, but it also caters to the younger generation's preference for immediate feedback.

Rypple.com is just one of several online performance management tools that allows employers to put the responsibility of obtaining feedback on the employee who desires it. These instruments provide an alternative approach to improve employee performance while requiring little preparation from co-workers and managers. However, as is true with any performance management system, managers

must remain aware of the perception and utilization of the system by organizational members.

Oops...there's a downside, too

Anonymous feedback, made effortless through online communications, can also have unintended negative consequences. Employees may not trust the anonymity or confidentiality of the system and become reluctant to share accurate feedback. Therefore, employees may not view the feedback sources as reputable or truthful. Because negative outcomes can cripple the success of any performance management system, it is crucial that organizations understand the strengths and weaknesses of the system and the impact – good or bad – it can have on employees.

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Deciding what's right

With all of the great technology available to organizations to assist in performance management, it is important to consider what is best for employees and the business. Online performance management systems have the potential to supply invaluable feedback to employees, while at the same time provide continuously updated job descriptions, performance appraisals and succession plans for organizations. When updating, supplementing or creating a performance management system, the values and the goals of the organization should be assessed. Websites like Rypple.com are relatively inexpensive methods for boosting employee performance, but with the implementation of any new system, it is important to gauge the needs of the organization.

When making recommendations on performance management systems, SilverStone Group believes in customizing to the specific needs of the organization; what works for one company will not necessarily work for another. Nevertheless, it is evident that an annual performance review will not effectively impact employee performance in a time when bottom-line results are crucial for success. Establishing avenues for performance feedback by using tools like Rypple.com has the potential to enhance your organization's current performance management system and boost employee engagement and productivity in a timely and cost-efficient manner.