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## About This Document

<b>owner</b>	HR
<b>access &amp; use</b>	Restricted to Managers & HR
<b>what it is</b>	<p>A guide that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Outlines the step-by-step process for managing a performance improvement plan</li> <li>◆ Provides point-and-click access to the documents needed for each step, along with instructions and examples</li> </ul>
<b>who uses it</b>	HR and Managers with direct reports
<p><b>Note:</b> This document includes sensitive information. It should not be shared with staff members who do not have responsibility for direct reports. Use caution and discretion when using or printing.</p>	

## Overview

At CUSTOMIZER: Insert informal company name, we monitor and evaluate performance at various stages of employment:

- ◆ New employees or regular status employees in new positions go through a probationary period
- ◆ Regular status employees participate in an annual performance review
- ◆ Employees who are not meeting performance expectations undergo a performance improvement plan with their manager, and
- ◆ Employees who still don't meet performance expectations after the performance improvement plan are subject to involuntary termination.

One of the most difficult tasks of a manager is dealing with an employee whose performance is not meeting expectations. However, letting poor performance go unchecked has negative consequences that ripple right through the Company. Not only are the people who work with the individual affected, but it sends a message to other employees that we aren't serious about maintaining consistent, high performance standards.

This guide provides step-by-step guidance on how to address performance issues with your employees, from the initial conversation to a decision to terminate employment based on an unsuccessful Performance Improvement Plan. It also directs you to forms, scripts, and other resources available to support the process.




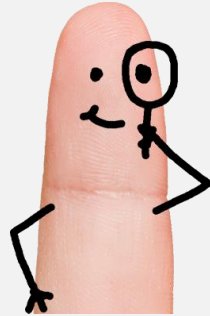
If you require support or guidance relating to Performance Improvement Plans, please contact CUSTOMIZER: Insert the title of the contact (not their name). Example: HR Manager.

## Supporting Documents

There are a number of templates and guides available to support you through the Performance Improvement Plan process. The rest of this Guide describes when to use each one, but they're all listed below for quick reference.

Click on an icon in the table below to open that document.

- ◆ Click  to open the template or guide



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- If the job description is non-existent or out-of-date, work with the employee to revise or create it.
- If the job description is still accurate, review it with the employee for the purpose of ensuring you both have the same expectations for the position.

## Step 2. (Optional) Complete a Job Activity Log

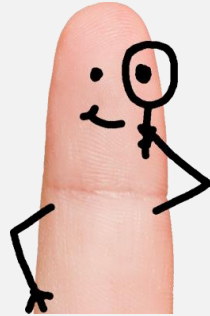
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You may want to ask your employee to record their daily activities over a period of time using the [Job Activity Log](#) if:

- ◆ Their performance is not meeting your expectations
- ◆ The position job description is old or non-existent
- ◆ You and your employee have a difference of opinion on what the position responsibilities are
- ◆ Your employee feels the position has too many responsibilities for one person to do

### MANAGER

1. Inform CUSTOMIZER: Insert the title of the contact (not their name). Example: HR Manager of your intentions and discuss the reasons why you want to log the job activities.
2. If you decide to proceed, customize a copy of the *Job Activity Log* for the position. Refer to the accompanying Instructions for guidance.
3. Meet with the employee to discuss the *Job Activity Log* for their position, and request them to complete it over a period of time. During the meeting:
  - Review a copy of the *Job Activity Log* spreadsheet and discuss how it will be completed.
  - Discuss the length of time they will log activities. For some positions you may be able to get a good sense of job activity with a couple of weeks, while others will take longer. Set the expectation that you will check in and review progress periodically—weekly or bi-weekly, as appropriate.
  - Make sure they understand the purpose of the activity, and how it will help you both set appropriate expectations for the position.
4. Give the employee an electronic version of the *Job Activity Log* spreadsheet and its accompanying Instructions document, and ask them to begin logging daily work tasks immediately.
5. Check in with the employee regularly. Either review the spreadsheet together, or ask them to send you a copy.



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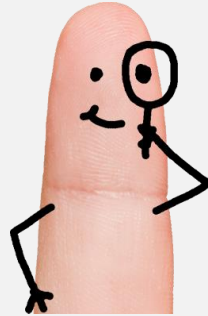
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2. Schedule a time to meet with the employee and discuss the problem. Set aside at least an hour and make sure you have a private space available.
3. Conduct the meeting:
  - a. Clearly define the performance or behavior that is not meeting required standards, and provide specific examples.
  - b. Clarify the expectations and the time frame in which improvement is expected.
  - c. Inform the employee that if improvement isn't made in the time frame given, you'll be initiating a Performance Improvement Plan. Be specific and give examples of what "improvement" will look like to you.
  - d. Ask that the employee commit to correcting the performance problem and explain the consequences if the problem is not resolved.
  - e. Develop a plan with the employee to support their improvement. For example, this may include coaching, training, or a professional development course.
  - f. Set a date for a follow-up conversation.
  - g. Depending on how the discussion goes, you may choose to issue a verbal warning.
    - If the employee is receptive and shows immediate concern to rectify the situation, you may choose to wait for a second conversation, if necessary, to issue a verbal warning.
    - If the employee is defiant and refuses to accept any responsibility for improving the situation, you may decide that a verbal warning is necessary in the first meeting.
    - In either circumstance, the employee needs to understand that the conversation and problems identified are serious, and a Performance Improvement Plan will be initiated if immediate changes are not seen.
4. Immediately following the meeting:
  - Make notes about the preliminary discussion/warning meeting, and file them with any other documentation related to the employee's performance.
  - Keep your notes professional, relevant, and objective. They may be requested as discovery material if an employee ever challenges a decision to terminate employment in court.
  - Notify CUSTOMIZER: Insert the title of the contact (not their name). Example: HR Manager that the meeting occurred and summarize the outcome.
5. Assess ongoing progress, consult with CUSTOMIZER: Insert the title of the contact (not their name). Example: HR Manager and determine the next step to take.
  - If the employee has made effort and improvements are obvious, continue to monitor the situation until performance meets expectations.



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5. Once the **Initial Meeting** section of the *Performance Improvement Plan Form* is finalized, print 4 copies for the first meeting.

## Step 5. Conduct Initial Meeting

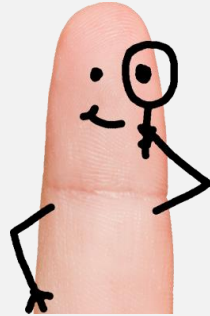
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All meetings regarding the Performance Improvement Plan must include the manager, employee, and CUSTOMIZER: Insert the title of the HR representative, or if not available, include instructions that another manager needs to be present to witness the conversation .

### ➤ MANAGER ➤ HR

1. Schedule a meeting with the three participants. Set aside at least an hour and make sure you book a private space. Give consideration to the time of day the meeting is held. The employee may be upset afterward and want to leave.
2. Conduct the meeting:
  - a. If this meeting follows a verbal warning, and performance did not improve to the level necessary to meet expectations, discuss the prior commitments that were not met.
  - b. Review and discuss the Performance Improvement Plan form in detail with the employee, to ensure the content is fully understood.
    - For each area that requires performance improvement (there may be more than one), go through each example. Contrast current performance with the performance expected.
    - Discuss any corrective actions required, and support and resources the Company is willing to provide.
    - Be clear about the timeframe for the overall Performance Improvement Plan, the incremental goals and deadlines in the Action Plan, and the consequences if the goals are not met.
  - c. Communicate the date for the first follow-up meeting.
  - d. At the end of the meeting, provide the employee with **two** copies of the Performance Improvement Plan form and ask them to:
    - Initial each page in the lower-right corner, and sign as indicated with a witness present (both copies).
    - Return one signed copy to you within the timeframe stipulated on the form.
    - Keep the second copy for their records.
3. After the meeting:





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**Note:** If the decision has been made to terminate employment, prepare to deliver this message at the meeting. Refer to the **Involuntary Termination** section below for more information.

4. Assuming employment is not being terminated:
  - a. Summarize the progress made since the last meeting and acknowledge the employee's effort.
  - b. Review and discuss the updated form, including any changes to the Action Plan.
  - c. Communicate the next steps to the employee and set a date for the next follow-up meeting.
  - d. Provide the employee with **two** copies of the updated Performance Improvement Plan form and ask them to:
    - Initial each page in the lower-right corner, and sign as indicated with a witness present (both copies).
    - Return one signed copy to you within the timeframe stipulated on the form.
    - Keep the second copy for their records.
5. After the meeting:
  - a. Make notes about the discussion and file them with any other documentation related to the employee's performance.
  - b. Scan the form with the employee's signature and email it to the CUSTOMIZER: Insert the title of the contact (not their name). Example: HR Manager.

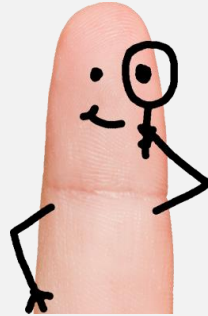
## Involuntary Termination

If the employee has not demonstrated adequate improvement throughout the Performance Improvement Plan, and has therefore not fulfilled the terms committed to in the Performance Improvement Plan form, two options remain:

- ◆ Find an alternative employment opportunity within the company that better fits the employee's skills and level of competence
- ◆ Terminate employment.

Before initiating termination of employment, it's critical that managers consult with HR to ensure:

- ◆ The required performance expectations were fully understood by the employee, and have not been met.
- ◆ Adequate resources and support were available to the employee during the performance improvement review period.



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