Factors That Can Create Bias in Writing Performance Reviews – PRD

Tool

Avoiding Performance Review Bias

Improve the accuracy of your employee’s performance review and ratings by recognizing and avoiding factors that create bias and skew the overall performance review: the halo, pitchfork, and rear view mirror effects and the leniency, strictness, and average tendencies.

**Halo** – this refers to a supervisor forming a generalized positive impression of an employee. S/he might rate the employee highly on all rating criteria even if the employee really doesn't deserve a high rating for all areas.

**Pitchfork** – this occurs when a supervisor forms a generalized negative impression of an employee. S/he might rate the employee low on all rating criteria even if the employee really doesn't deserve a low rating for all areas.

**Rear View Mirror** – this happens when a most recent event or behavior overshadows the performance of an employee versus the supervisor considering the entire performance cycle.

**SOLUTIONS for avoiding the halo, pitchfork, and rear view mirrors effects** – Ensure that all employees write a self-evaluation and listen to and discuss their perspective of their performance. Outline an individual’s entire performance, considering all dimensions from the full year. Take the time to rate each item independently, so that the ratings are not inflated, in addition to including examples that back up the ratings. Keep in mind that the goal is to write and deliver an insightful, fair, and equitable performance review.

**Tendencies** - You can also improve the accuracy of your employee’s performance review and ratings by avoiding certain tendencies.

- **Leniency** – evaluating employees as outstanding and giving inflated ratings rather than true and reflective assessment of performance.
- **Strictness** – having a bias toward rating all employees at the low end of the scale and a tendency to be overly demanding and critical.
- **Average** – evaluating all employees in a department as average, regardless of major differences in performance.