

10 Things to Look for in a Performance Appraisal System

1 Fully Customizable Reviews

Whether you are evaluating your company's core values with rating scales or narrative responses, your review software should reflect your company culture and language. Make sure your software can be easily updated with your specific questions, ratings, and descriptions without needing to rely on the software's customer support to do it for you.

2 Individualized Goal Tracking

Your performance management system should help your employees succeed by setting expectations, encouraging updates, and maintaining accountability. The software interface should allow for the addition of time frames, percent complete, task lists, and email reminders. Some systems also support Strategic Goals, which allow admins to set company-wide priorities that allow you to connect individual efforts with the organization's strategy.

3 Performance Notes

Ongoing conversations are an increasingly vital part of performance reviews. Look for a system that helps your managers and employees conduct documented conversations throughout the year. Email reminders will make sure accomplishments, concerns, and trainings are recorded as they occur. Notes ensure more accurate and efficient reviews.



4 Powerful, Flexible Admin Tools

Your needs now may not match your needs tomorrow; you'll want software that can bend and grow with you. Ensure your performance management system has a robust, flexible feature set that allows you to personalize your system. Check the software's scheduling tool, reminders, data reporting, bulk editing, and security settings.

5 Collecting Others' Feedback

Not everyone uses 360 feedback, but the tool can provide rich, well-rounded information from peers and other managers. Decide if and how you plan to use this tool. Does the system support anonymous feedback? Is there a limit to the number of respondents? Can you customize the questions you request? Can you ask for feedback from stakeholders outside your organization? Can employees see the feedback?

10 THINGS TO LOOK FOR

6 Consider User Interface

Rebel against ugly, confusing software. Make sure the environment is pleasant and intuitive. Modern employees are looking for clean, usable software. Ask for a free trial to explore the look and feel of the software. Your employees and managers will thank you.

7 Personalized Implementation and Trainings

You'll want your software to be customized to match your culture, which means you'll probably want some expert advice too. Make sure admin, manager, and employee trainings are tailored to fit your needs. Also, look for a provider who will think through your needs and will deliver training in the same environment your employees will be operating. An invaluable bonus would be if the provider records your custom employee and manager trainings to help with onboarding and promotions later.

8 Customer Support and Resources

There will come a time when you'll need a little support. Make sure your provider offers options to email or talk to a live person. Also ensure support is included; nobody likes hidden fees! Maybe you are the do-it-yourself kind; in that case look for comprehensive support documentation, which might include articles, video tutorials, webinars and whitepapers.



9 Security

Online software and data storage has come leaps and bounds in the past few years. Cloud hosted services offer convenience and security with automatic security and feature updates. Ensure your performance management software employs state-of-the-art hosting services and uses industry standard best practices for protecting your data.

10 Reporting

Doing reviews online has major benefits, not the least of which is your data is now centralized and ready for analysis. Make sure you have access to your own data. Your software should be able to filter data and help identify trends in real-time. You should also be able to share your results with easy-to-read charts and graphs.

