Some teams use a competitive performance management system, publicising results and offering incentives to high performers. This is typical of sales environments such as call centres, but the risk of any competitive system is that high performers can alienate the rest of the team who lose motivation, believing that there is no point in trying.

Another common problem is that managers use performance management methods to influence behaviour, creating targets with too many variables. For example, a sales manager might introduce customer satisfaction metrics to make sure sales staff behave ethically. In reality, it is better to hire the right staff and manage them against simple, clear targets.

Hold regular reviews

Performance reviews must be carried out regularly and more often than annual appraisals which are for employee development. Some managers hold reviews quarterly or even monthly, depending on the nature of the role. By following a consistent format, they are able to correct any potential problems before they impact on the business and avoid the need for formal disciplinary procedures.

Whatever method you use, it is important to remember that you can only assess performance fairly when:

- The employee clearly understands their goals and your expectations
- The employee is given the means to achieve those goals, such as resources and training.
- The employee is given frequent, timely and specific feedback on their performance

When performance falls below an acceptable level, it is important to focus on what you want staff to do, not on identifying the reason why performance has fallen. You will generally find that performance issues disappear when people focus on clearly defined goals and have the support to achieve them.

FiSH!

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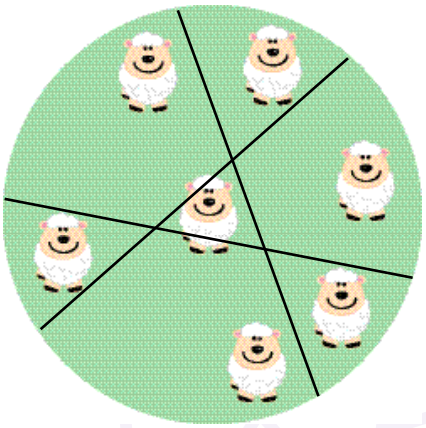
Mind Benders

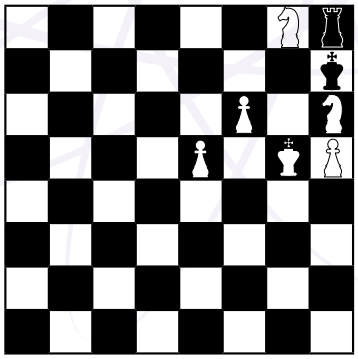
Sheep Fold

Farmer Giles's seven sheep are territorially minded. How should the farmer place three straight fences across the circular field so that each sheep is individually segregated?



Thinking Backwards

White is moving up the board. White can make a mating move at once. What is it?



Sudoku

9	2	6	3	1	4	5	8	7
8	1	3	2	5	7	4	6	9
5	4	7	8	6	9	2	3	1
1	6	5	4	3	8	9	7	2
7	9	4	6	2	1	3	5	8
3	8	2	7	9	5	6	1	4
2	5	1	9	7	3	8	4	6
6	3	8	1	4	2	7	9	5
4	7	9	5	8	6	1	2	3

If You're Puzzled, Get the Answers at:
www.mindresources.net