

Better schools Better teachers Better results

A handbook for improved performance
management in your school



Vic Zbar
Graham Marshall
Paul Power

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The authors are indebted to Franklin Hartle and his colleagues for some material derived from their work.

Introduction

The research is unambiguous that high quality learning depends on high quality teaching. Hattie (2003), for example, has demonstrated that aside from what students themselves bring to school, teachers and teaching account for the greatest level of variance of any other factor operating in a school. More specifically, his analysis shows that:

- students account for around 50% of the variance in achievement, which is not particularly amenable to policies and strategies a school can control;
- home accounts for only 5–10% because the major effects of home are already included in the attributes of the students;
- schools account for about 5–10%, which means in any real sense, they barely make a difference to achievement at all. As Hattie puts it, ‘the discussion on the attributes of schools — the finances, the school size, the class size, the buildings are important as they must be there in some form for a school to exist, but that is about it’;
- principals are already taken account of in the variance attributed to schools and, though Hattie does not make this point, we would suggest they also come into their own when it comes to influencing the teachers and teaching variable;
- peer effects account for a further 5–10% of the variance, which suggests we can make too much of the significance of the nature of the peer group (at times, perhaps, even using it as an excuse for poor outcomes); and
- teachers, and what they know, do and care about, account for the remaining 30% of the variance.

The focus should be, therefore, on what clearly is the greatest source of variance that can make a difference to student learning outcomes — the teacher and the way they perform.

Effective performance management (PM) has a critical role to play in this regard by providing objective and constructive feedback on performance which

is used to identify areas of strength on which to build, and shortcomings which need to be redressed through targeted training and other developmental support.

Performance management in this context is not an end in itself, but rather an essential element of a broader strategy of building and maintaining a strong and vibrant professional culture in a school that supports high quality teacher practice.

Good performance management systems require effective leadership during their introduction, and to ensure they continue to work well within the school. However, they are essentially professional and collegial in nature and are directed to school improvement in general and improved teaching in particular.

Examples of good performance management and professional development in schools around Australia certainly exist, but the record is patchy at best, and there are many schools with no systematic approach to improvement in place. Rectifying this is an ambitious agenda and is far from an easy task.

This is the reason for writing this book. While much has been written about performance management, and especially teacher appraisal, it is worth looking more closely at the *how* of performance management. *How* it can be developed into a process that promotes improvement and adds real value. *How* it can be implemented in ways that gain the commitment of all staff. And *how* it can evolve into a genuine transformational culture in the school.

Central to achieving this is ensuring the process is not rushed. Many performance management systems have been sacrificed on the altar of expediency, with the result that the potential benefits for teachers and schools have been lost. Experience in the United Kingdom suggests it takes two to four years to fully implement a performance management process which includes a significant investment in training for all staff. In particular, substantial work is needed to overcome the problems associated with some inspection and appraisal systems used in the past in Australia, which teachers saw as overly bureaucratic, time consuming and, at times, threatening, with their focus on ‘weeding out incompetents’ within the teaching profession. Such perceptions are not easily overcome without proper communication, training and support, and perhaps most importantly, establishing the link between whatever process is introduced and teacher development and effectiveness in the classroom.

A well-planned, collaborative performance management system can, by contrast, deliver significant benefits to both teachers and schools. This requires, however, that all staff, and especially team leaders in the school, are engaged in the preparation for the performance management system to be adopted.

Modern performance management systems can succeed where old appraisal schemes failed if they:

- focus on teaching and classroom practice in non-threatening ways;
- reinforce collaborative behaviour in the school;
- enable the sharing of good practice and professional dialogue within the school;
and
- help build a sense of common purpose and direction for the school.

This is undertaken within the context of individual and collective improvement in teaching and learning.

These systems need to be forward-looking and seek to change the way schools define and measure 'performance' and the way it is managed. Rather than reflecting an old 'deficit' model, powerful, change-oriented performance management systems must encourage and reward skills and behaviours that enable teachers and schools to be successful in a modern knowledge society, and to ensure that all students can achieve to the maximum of their potential.

This is not to deny that instances of underperformance will exist in a number of schools which performance management will help bring to light. Where this persists over time, and does not improve with the provision of targeted support, the various jurisdictions in Australia have processes in place which are separate to the performance management processes outlined in this book, to enable unsatisfactory performance to be addressed, and should be pursued.

The fundamental point, however, is that effective performance management is focused on the improvement of individuals and teams, and can help create schools as learning organisations where personal development is embedded in their culture and improvement is continuously sought.

A case in point

As suggested earlier, examples of good performance management in Australia are not numerous, but research conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (2003) did highlight a number of excellent performance management practices. In general, these were based on the use of multiple sources of data and the provision of constructive feedback to teachers to inform their personal development plans.

One large senior secondary college in a provincial Australian city, for example, has a comprehensive performance management process in place which effectively models the approach outlined in this book. It essentially involves:

- collection and analysis of a range of performance data — for example, data on student achievement, student retention and student opinion — to determine the degree of value that individual teachers add to student learning in their classes. The use of multiple sources of data enables the school to take a rounded view of performance and avoids reliance on any one, potentially inaccurate, data set. An important feature of the school's collection of data is the inclusion of student feedback on units and teachers using such survey items as 'I like this unit', 'This class provides a sound learning environment', and so on.
- a structured process to reflect on the data collected and its implications. This comprises teacher reflection on the data in advance of any review meeting to ensure constructive discussion on their individual strengths and development needs, consideration of the outcomes of team-based learning projects in which the teacher is engaged, and the collection of evidence of the teacher's performance against the standards of professional practice that apply.
- a formal performance review aimed at constructing a customised personal development plan.

What particularly is important about this and other cases of good performance management practice in schools, is that a teacher survey conducted as part of this same research found a clear and positive relationship between performance management and staff feelings about their school. More specifically, the survey of 226 teachers in ten schools found that where staff rated their school more highly in relation to effective performance management, they also rated it highly in response to the statement, 'I would recommend this school to friends as a great place to work', with the converse also proving the case.

The benefits of good performance management can also readily be seen in the case of an urban primary school with almost 400 students enrolled¹, which documented the shift it experienced as a result of embedding performance and development processes in the school. Aside from the expected shift from no formal

¹ This material is drawn from a presentation by the school at a Performance and Development Culture Expo conducted in Melbourne in May 2006 and recorded in a report prepared by Vic Zbar.

staff performance management program to all staff having a formal program in place, the school also reported shifts:

- from curriculum-focused to child-focused teaching using Individual Learning Plans;
- from data analysis that was the preserve of the leadership team to data being collected and owned by all teachers, regularly analysed together at staff meetings, and being used to inform teaching and learning programs for students and staff alike;
- from professional development focused on individual teacher needs to professional learning aligned to the aims and objectives of the school and with a clear focus on student learning outcomes informed by data and research; and
- from organisationally-focused teams to learning and accountability-oriented teams with leadership distributed through the school.

Practical guidance and support

We have, in this context, designed this book to be a series of practical guides for principals, team leaders and teachers in schools. There is relatively little theory involved, but much that is practical. More specifically, we set out a picture of a performance management process that is appropriate for a future-oriented teaching profession which emphasises the importance of self-management, continuing professional development and lifelong self-directed improvement and change.

For those schools where there already are system level requirements about performance management, this book will provide a means of examining the way you implement these requirements to gain greater benefit from what you already have in place. The material that follows should be seen as complementing your existing guidelines.

For other schools which have developed their own mechanisms for managing performance, this book will enable you to reflect on your existing purposes and processes to see whether you might be able to do better.

For those schools without existing performance management processes, this book is designed to assist you to establish an effective system that avoids the pitfalls associated with this area.

And for all schools genuinely wanting to develop their performance management process towards 'leading edge' practice around the world, this book will prove a helpful resource.

The structure of the book

There are still many schools without a formal process for managing performance, yet without such a process in place, how do you ensure quality, know what your priorities are and, at its most basic level, know what your job involves?

Even where schools do have a formal process, does that process provide satisfactory answers to these questions? Does the process provide you with good and constructive feedback about how you are going and how you might improve what you are doing?

The successful introduction or improvement of performance management lies in the acceptance by staff that it is a core process designed to support better ways of doing their everyday work. In other words, that it is a commonsense and valuable way of getting things done in the school.

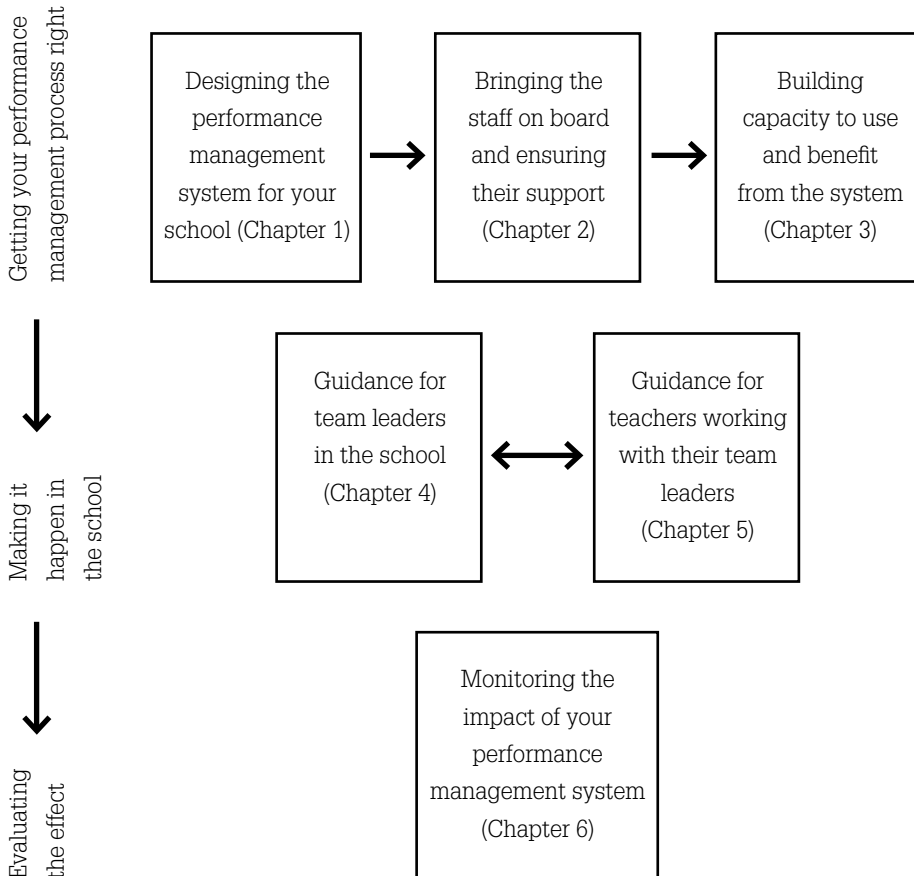
When implementing performance management, it can be very easy to let the procedures, forms and timetable take over, and to lose sight of why the process is being implemented. In our experience, the most effective performance management process is one which supports the way you work and manage, and not one that simply gets in the way. A process, in other words, that leads to improved performance and motivation rather than one that simply establishes a whole new burden of bureaucracy.

With this in mind we have, as suggested earlier, designed this guide to be practical, and included a number of user-friendly checklists and exercises along the way.

- Chapters 1, 2 and 3 outline the key issues which need to be addressed when implementing an approach to performance management that has individual development and school improvement as its goals.
- Chapters 4 and 5 operationalise these issues into a series of steps that team leaders and teachers can take.
- Chapter 6 outlines ways in which the performance management system itself can be monitored, evaluated and improved over time.

Our suggestion for using this book

Our suggestion for using this book in this context is summed up in the following diagram.



Chapters 1, 2 and 3

It all starts with getting your process right. Whether it be designing a new performance management system from scratch, or reviewing an existing system, this inevitably will involve ensuring that it:

The structure of the book

- is designed in accordance with the overall vision and goals of the school and responds to the actual context you face;
- has the support of your staff; and
- will contribute to improved capacity in the school and better performance as a result.

This is the focus of Chapters 1 to 3 which primarily are directed at those who are responsible for developing and overseeing performance management in your school.

Chapters 4 and 5

Making it happen then results from the interaction between team leaders and teachers in the school as they work through the process together to set agreed objectives, monitor performance against these, and provide the necessary feedback and support. Chapters 4 and 5 of the book will help them with this task.

Chapter 6

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation then provides the basis for ensuring the system works in the interests of the school—and most particularly its students and their learning—and where needed can be improved. Such responsibility usually falls to leaders in the school who can draw advice from Chapter 6.

Designing the performance management system for your school

Chapter 1, as well as Chapters 2 and 3, are aimed at those of you involved in designing and implementing the performance management (PM) process in your school. They will help you to:

- understand the principles and benefits of performance management; and
- design and implement a process that meets the unique and particular needs of your school.

What is performance management?

There is not necessarily a standard, agreed definition of ‘performance management’, but some worth thinking about include:

- A process that links teachers, support staff and their respective roles to the success of students and the school.
- A process for establishing a shared understanding of what has to be achieved and how; then the school leadership works with staff, and staff work with each other, in ways that will enable it to be achieved.

- A process for ensuring that staff have mechanisms for giving and receiving feedback on their work, that assists them to improve what they do, and provides them with the best possible support so as to be more effective and work to the best of their ability.

For some, the reason for ‘doing’ performance management is that it is an external requirement they have been told to do, but this can easily result in a narrow and sometimes negative view about its purposes and usefulness. Ask instead, perhaps, what words you would use to describe performance management, and discuss it with your colleagues to determine the commonalities and differences that exist.

Some of the words you may find cited in this context are:

<i>Appraisal</i>	<i>Clarification</i>	<i>Stressful</i>
<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Feedback</i>	<i>Divisive</i>
<i>Onerous</i>	<i>Recognition</i>	<i>Teamwork</i>
<i>Bureaucratic</i>	<i>Development</i>	<i>Rating</i>
<i>Planning</i>	<i>Rewards</i>	<i>Progress</i>

As you work through the identification and implementation of an approach to performance management that improves the work and outcomes of teachers in your school, try to emphasise effective processes, motivation and improvement, since that is what it ought to be about. In other words, the approach should enable you to get more for your efforts and allow you to generalise about what has worked in other classrooms, within and beyond your own school.

Getting staff motivated by both the idea and subsequent experience of effective performance management is a key challenge as implementation proceeds; but the involvement which follows can become a source of strength in the day-to-day business of the school.

Building such motivation requires answering the all-important and understandable question:

What’s in it for me?

This in turn requires that, whatever the nature of the specific process introduced, performance management in the school must deliver:

- greater clarity and consistency of roles, objectives and behaviours in the school;
- more active management of performance by everyone in the school;
- increased responsibility for the quality of one's own work and the work of your team;
- more focused training and development;
- better and smarter ways of working;
- recognition of good performance; and
- identification and addressing of poor performance.

Underpinning beliefs

A range of experience implementing performance management in schools and other organisations suggests it is most likely to be successful when it is underpinned by the beliefs that:

- staff are committed to doing the best job they possibly can to maximise student learning and contribute to the overall success of the school;
- the person who ought to assume most responsibility for the quality of work is the person actually doing that work;
- the success of the school depends on its ability to unlock the potential for growth and development in the staff;
- people work more effectively when they are clear about what they are expected to do and why, and then get feedback on and recognition for what they have contributed through their job; and
- the school, through the principal, is responsible for building the capacity of staff to do their job more effectively and providing necessary support.

The performance management process will, in this context, fulfil its potential if it is developed in ways that get to the heart of what motivates staff and ensures they have the tools and capacity to succeed. Ideally it will:

- provide maximum opportunity for staff to manage their own performance;
- be linked to continuing professional development; and
- be 'fit for purpose' in that it is appropriate, or represents how you want the school to operate in terms of its core values and beliefs.

Effective school leadership is essential for this to occur — not only at the level of the principal, but including department and other team leaders on the staff. These team leaders must provide direction if the three preceding requirements are to be met.

More specifically, the team leader's role is to challenge and support their team to improve performance all the time, and to ensure an approach to performance management that is applied regularly and consistently with reference to high-quality standards for all teachers and students in the school.

Effective performance management is therefore about reinforcing and spreading good practice that already exists, while changing attitudes and behaviours where necessary in order to contribute to:

- improved self-esteem, because contributions and achievements are recognised;
- improved staff capacity, because continuous learning and development is supported and required;
- better quality teaching, because clear objectives are set which require proven effective practice to be pursued and better, ongoing feedback to be provided; and
- better outcomes, because roles and priorities are clarified and high professional standards set for all staff.

With these beliefs in mind, making performance management work in your school will involve:

- a clear and unrelenting focus on student learning as the aim, and building a climate which emphasises continuous improvement and learning by all in the school;
- the use of flexible, ongoing planning, review and feedback that promotes self-management, collaboration and collegiality, and professional development as an accepted part of one's work;
- creation of an environment where all staff seek regular constructive feedback from others;
- a willingness to distribute leadership throughout the school so that those most able to affect student learning outcomes are empowered and supported to do so;
- recognition of good performance and rewarding it when required; and
- a reduction of any over-reliance on forms and bureaucratic procedures for managing performance in favour of clear goals and targets which are cooperatively set and then subject to rigorous analysis, feedback and review.

Making it work in your school: Getting started

In our experience there are three key elements to the successful design and implementation of performance management in schools — design, perception and capacity. They reflect the fact that designing the process is, in many ways, the easy bit, and successful implementation will occur only if perceptions of staff are addressed and individual capacities built. It is the attention paid to perception and capacity that ultimately will make the difference to what happens in your school.

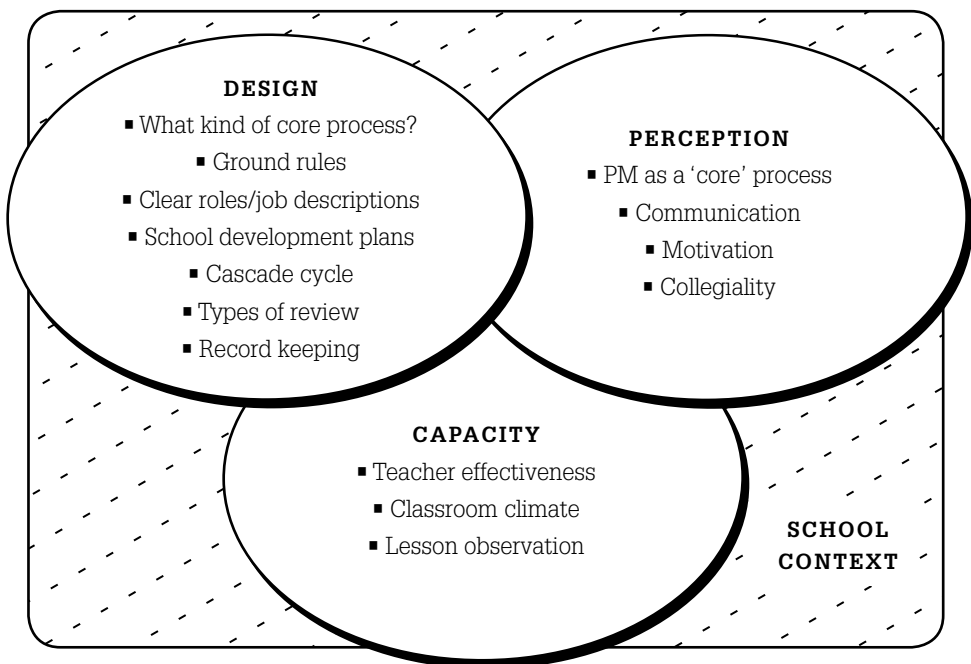


Figure 1.1 The three key elements of implementing performance management

This chapter, and the following two chapters of the book, will provide guidance on developing your approach to all three elements in Figure 1.1. Chapter 1 looks at design issues, Chapter 2 at staff perception, and Chapter 3 analyses capacity of teachers.

In addition, you may find the following 'action list' (Figure 1.2) helpful both in reviewing your progress and evaluating its impact over time once implementation is complete. Make sure to amend the list as you go according to the particular process implemented by your school and the specific steps involved.

Figure 1.2 Action list

Action required	To be completed by	Resources/details/ notes	Actual date completed
<p>Context</p> <p>1 Detailed consideration of key contextual factors such as relevant jurisdictional policies and school community expectations, and their implications for the performance management process to be adopted.</p> <p>Design</p> <p>2 Staff consulted on the flexible aspects of policy</p> <p>3 Policy agreed with school council/board</p> <p>4 System designed (flow diagram)</p> <p>5 Timetable agreed</p> <p>6 Pro formas selected/designed</p> <p>7 Process for monitoring and evaluating the PM system in place</p> <p>Perceptions</p> <p>8 Staff aware of the purpose of PM, main stages and their own role</p> <p>9 Staff survey forms completed</p> <p>10 Staff working in coherent school teams</p> <p>Capacity</p> <p>11 Team leaders appointed</p> <p>12 All staff provided with skills and knowledge to engage in the system</p> <p>13 Team leaders trained in skills required to review performance and write review statements</p> <p>Implementation</p> <p>14 Stage 1 reviews take place, objectives set</p> <p>15 Objectives and individual plans completed</p> <p>16 Copies to principal</p> <p>17 Lesson observations completed</p> <p>18 Copies to principal</p> <p>19 Final reviews completed</p> <p>20 Copies to principal</p> <p>21 System evaluated</p> <p>22 System improved as a result of evaluation</p> <p>23 Report on the process and overall outcomes for appropriate audience(s), as determined by the school</p>			

The school context

There are, in Australia, a mix of government, Catholic and other non-government schools. Some of these schools are primary schools, others are secondary schools and still others have enrolments which span these traditional boundaries. The government schools operate within a number of state and territory jurisdictions which each have their own policies and regulations relevant to performance management and associated processes. In addition to these requirements, each school has a local community which has defined expectations which need to be met.

The point is that each school operates in its own, unique context which must be taken into account when you develop the particular performance management process that will work best for your school.

Bearing this in mind, a number of universal lessons have been learned which are outlined in this book, and there are agreements, such as the commitment to nationally aligned professional standards in Australia outlined in Table 1.2 on p. 21, which can be used regardless of the particular context of the school. It is a matter of keeping your context in mind, and adapting the advice in this book as needed to reflect the real circumstances you face.

Key design issues to address

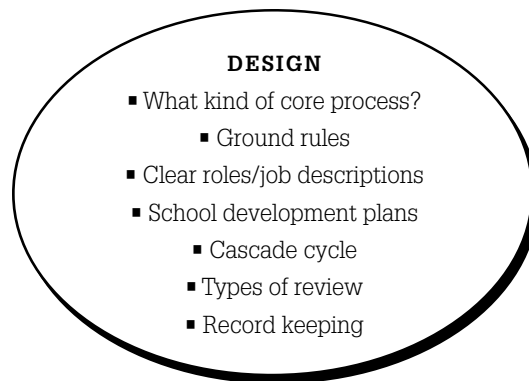


Figure 1.3 Design issues to address

The core process

The basic recommended core performance management cycle is a simple one involving planning, coaching, reviewing and rewarding (if this is part of the system that applies in your school), and ensuring a continual focus on development and improvement. It is underpinned by dialogue at all stages to ensure ownership and commitment from all those involved. The nature of this dialogue — the way questions are asked and answered, the openness to listen to others, the willingness to be honest and constructive in addressing more difficult issues — is, it should be noted, critical to the success of the performance management process in your school.

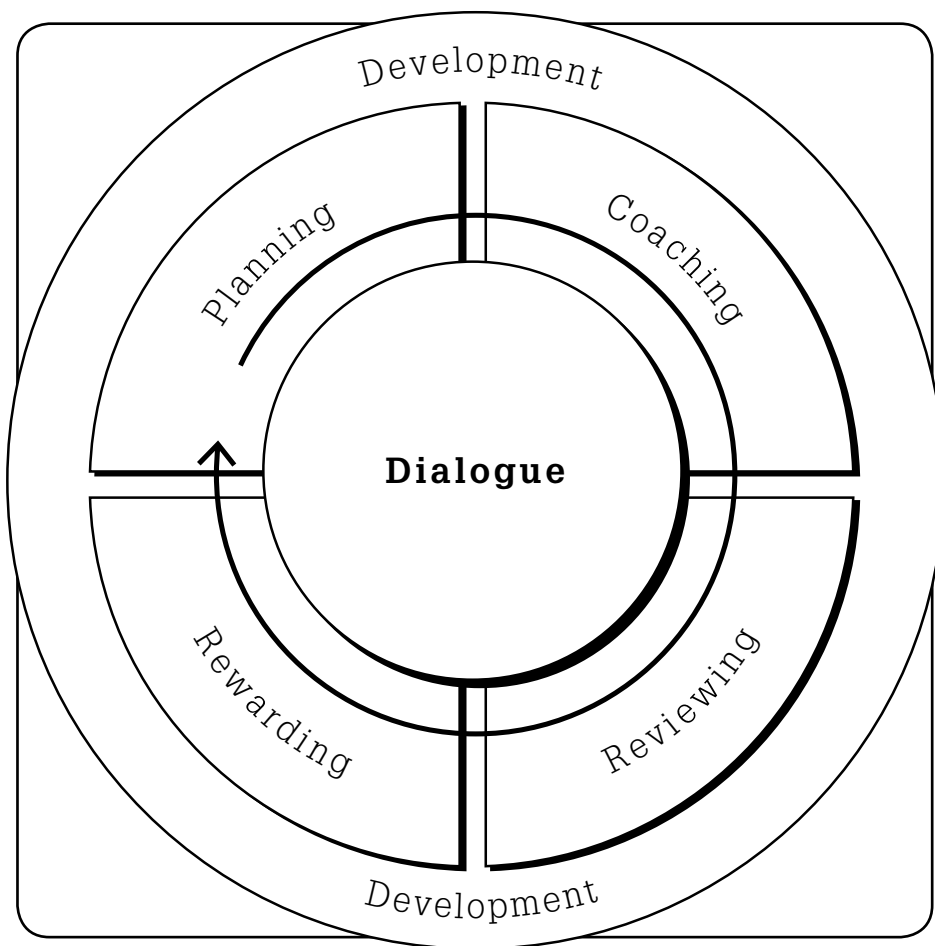


Figure 1.4 The core performance management cycle

Not surprisingly, it mirrors what we know effective teaching is all about — that is, plan the lesson to meet the learning objectives you have set; manage the lesson while taking stock at various times along the way, giving and receiving feedback to and from students, and making adjustments as required; and reviewing at the end to assess the effectiveness of the lesson and help plan for the next.

Adapting this core process to fit your school requires that you first have a clear idea of where you are now and where you wish to head in terms of performance management in your school.

The diagnostic tool in Figure 1.5 provides an outline of the foundations and direction for the design and implementation of the process you choose to adopt. It will enable you to judge the kind of performance management process/es most appropriate to your particular circumstances, and the level of capacity needed to manage them.

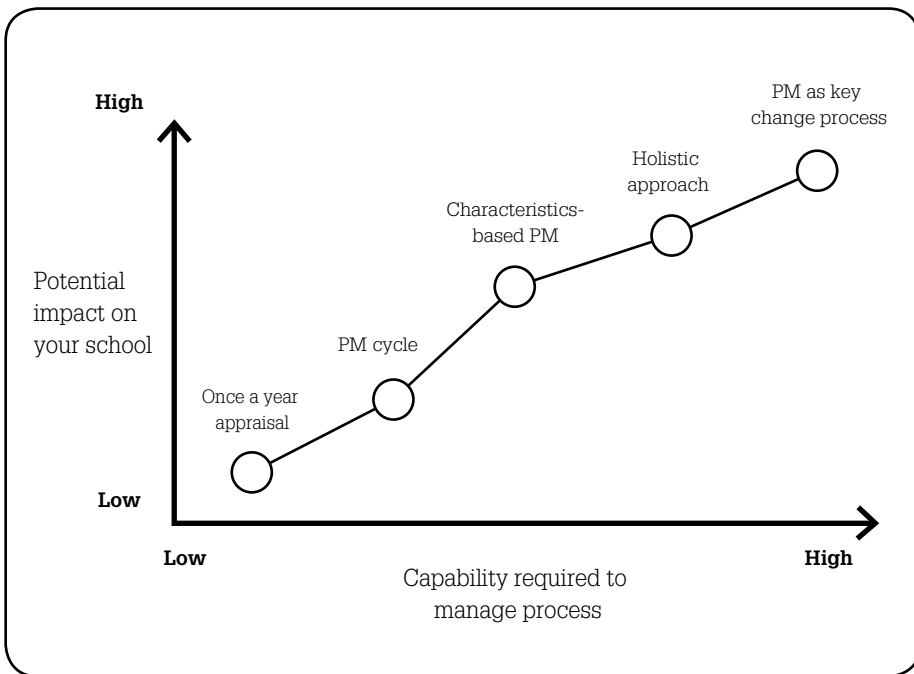


Figure 1.5 Where are you now?

Where would you place your school now on this continuum?

Questions you might ask to determine your response include:

- Are you implementing or using an annual appraisal system where performance is reviewed only once — usually at the end of the year?
- Are you implementing or using a basic performance management cycle like the one shown in the core process diagram in Figure 1.4 (that is, involving planning, monitoring and review)?
- Are you using a set of agreed professional characteristics, such as teaching standards, as an integral part of your system?
- Is your approach holistic in the sense that it links with other relevant processes at the school or jurisdictional level (for example, processes for ongoing professional development, or for progression as a teacher)?
- Are you using the performance management process to initiate, implement and/or support culture change in the school?

Achieving the level of integration and impact implicit in the highest level on the continuum inevitably depends, of course, on high levels of management and leadership capacity, particularly for those in a team leadership role. This is, therefore, taken up in more detail in Chapter 3 of this book.

Where do you want your school to be and what do you need do to close the gap?

The simple questionnaire provided in Figure 1.6 might help you to determine your response. The questionnaire can be completed individually by team leaders and teachers in the school, and results compared to inform a discussion of the commonalities and differences in the ratings that were made.

This step, apart from anything else, helps build commitment to performance management in the school and contributes to the development of an agreed approach.

Interpreting the results

Having decided who to consult and asking each of these individuals to complete the questionnaire, add up the scores for attitudes, skills and processes and produce a total score, given the maximum possible is 72.

If you score below 36, you have a large number of issues that need to be addressed. The scores for individual items can give you some help in identifying the major priorities.

A score of 36 to 54 suggests there are some issues of concern which need to be addressed.

Designing the performance management system for your school

Figure 1.6 A simple diagnostic questionnaire

Score Index: 1 = strongly disagree 4 = strongly agree
--

	Score			
	1	2	3	4
Attitudes				
1 We have clear reasons for having Performance Management.				
2 Our team leaders are strongly committed to PM.				
3 Team leaders understand and work well with PM.				
4 This school has a clear sense of direction and purpose.				
5 Staff in this school are in no doubt that performance is what matters.				
6 We have a clear idea of what support PM requires and who should provide it.				
Skills				
1 Individuals are clear about what is expected of them in their jobs.				
2 My team leader and I agree what are our priorities.				
3 We are used to setting goals for ourselves.				
4 Team leaders motivate staff to develop and achieve their goals.				
5 Timely and effective feedback/support is given and received.				
6 We have a development program to improve performance management skills.				
Process				
1 The school development planning process provides a clear focus for our activities.				
2 School priorities are well communicated through the school.				
3 Monitoring standards of performance is a regular management activity.				
4 The current PM process helps to improve performance.				
5 Performance judgments are fair and consistent.				
6 The current link between performance and other rewards/recognition is fair.				
Total Score				

If you score 55 or above, you have a very solid platform for introducing performance management in the school or developing your process further. You probably only need to take action if you have one or more items which score just 1 or 2.

While the questionnaire is a very effective tool to inform discussion about the processes you do or do not have in place, and for identifying differences between departments in the school, it is not a full diagnostic instrument and should not be seen as a full audit of the performance management processes you employ. Rather, it provides the basis for further discussion about how best to proceed, and a means of engaging your staff.

Establishing some ground rules

Regardless of the detail of the approach you adopt, experience suggests there are some critical ground rules that need to be observed if your performance management process is to prove a success. Central to these is that the process should 'live and breathe' the values which govern how you operate and relate to each other within the school community. Beyond this, it is essential that:

- confidentiality rules;
- resources are provided to sustain the process. In particular, time is allowed for setting objectives, lesson observation and review meetings;
- there are clear and agreed protocols for lesson observations;
- team leaders are trained both now and into the future;
- there is a clear focus on student achievement and the use of data to determine it;
- the link to any recognition and/or rewards is clear;
- a mechanism is in place to reconcile differences in performance judgments and resolve any grievances that may arise;
- there is clarity of roles within the performance management process (for example, team leader, job holder); and
- all leaders within the school, including the principal, treat it as a significant strategy, linked to other strategies, for improving teaching and learning in the school.

The basic performance management cycle can be developed in this context to incorporate the role profile and other information that sets the individual's

performance in the context of the overall objectives of the school and, where relevant, the team in which they work.

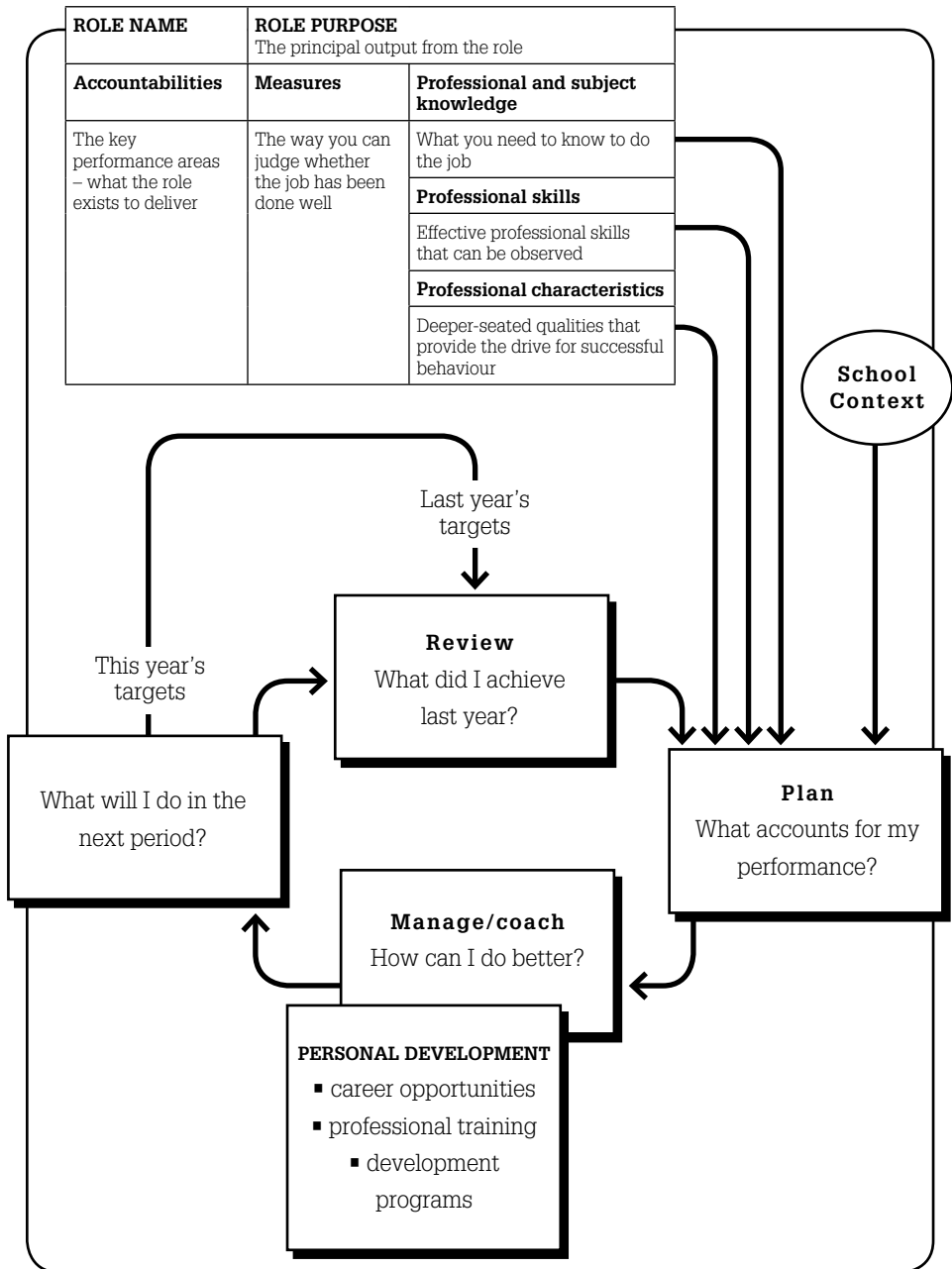


Figure 1.7 Developing the performance management cycle

Clarity of roles and job descriptions

The starting point for any management of performance must be clarity about roles and what is expected from each person in their job. This means identifying the key accountabilities for each role, along with the professional knowledge, skills and characteristics needed to deliver these and a clear sense of how success will be measured. The Role Profile instrument in Figure 1.8 will help schools to complete this task.

Figure 1.8 Role profile

Role Profile	
Key accountabilities for the role	
A simple way of clarifying one's accountabilities is to complete the blanks in the following template so you develop what amounts to a single sentence statement of what the job does and why it is required.	
Position title	
	<i>is accountable for</i>
(doing)	
(what)	
(purpose served)	
For example:	
Position title	The Early Years Literacy Teacher
	<i>is accountable for</i>
(doing)	teaching
(what)	all students in Prep to Year 2 to read and write to expected levels (which can be specified according to the particular targets of the school and/or jurisdiction)
(purpose served)	so they have a solid foundation on which all future schooling can build.

Professional knowledge and skills

List the key professional knowledge and skills required to deliver this accountability:

-
-
-
-
-

Professional characteristics

List any professional characteristics required for this purpose (Note that Chapter 3 of this book provides more detail on professional characteristics you may want to consider before completing this part of the form.):

-
-
-
-
-

Measurement of success

Specify the key measures to be used for assessing performance and determining success, ensuring the inclusion of specific student achievement data:

-
-
-
-
-

Discussion between the team leader and teacher(s) about the responses to each component of this pro forma can also contribute to ensuring a common understanding on what is needed from individual roles to meet the overall objectives of the school.

Alignment of plans and objectives

A key aspect of effective performance management is the alignment of individual objectives with those of faculties/departments and the school as a whole. This requires that plans for individuals in the school are in tune with the overall school improvement or development plan and, in particular, the goals and targets for improved student learning which it can be expected to contain.

Whole school plans, however, are likely to focus on aspects of school activity rather than any one staff member's plan, and it is important to ensure that objectives for the individual focus on what matters most — that is, improved learning in the school.

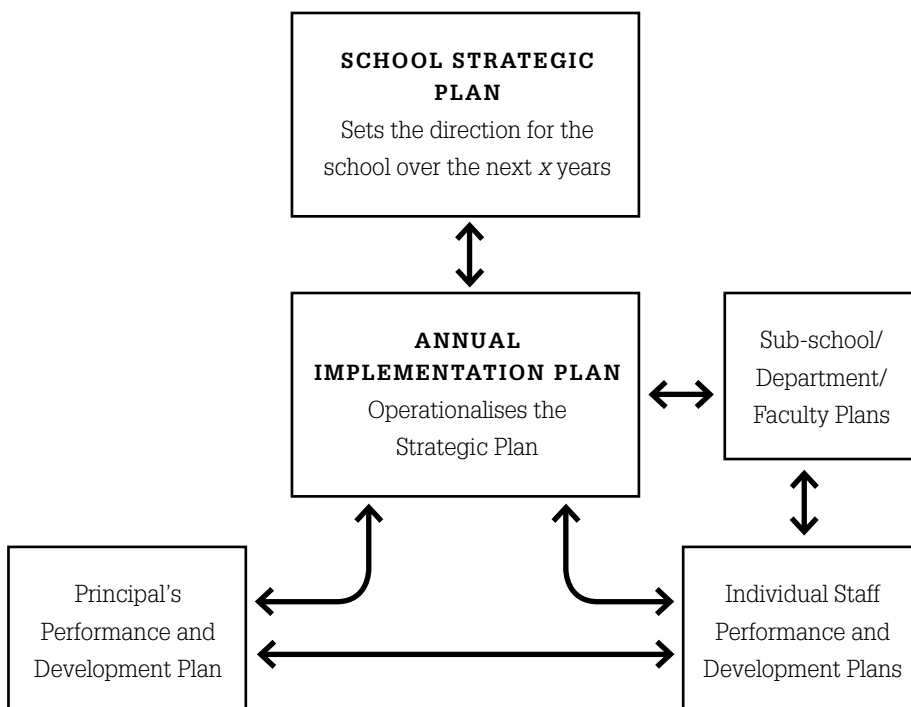


Figure 1.9 Aligning school–team–individual objectives

To this end, it is often a good idea to clarify the three to five key priorities of the school, preferably contained on a single sheet of A4 paper to avoid making them too detailed and complex, so staff can use them when preparing their own draft objectives as part of a process of self-review.

This in turn implies a stepped or cascading approach to your performance management cycle that involves:

- 1 The principal agreeing his/her objectives with the school council/board and/or jurisdictional authority as appropriate — with clear reference to the School Strategic and Annual Implementation Plans.
- 2 The principal conducting leadership group reviews and agreeing objectives for each member of the leadership team.
- 3 The leadership group then conducting team leader (middle manager) reviews and agreeing objectives.
- 4 Team leaders conducting teacher reviews and agreeing objectives.

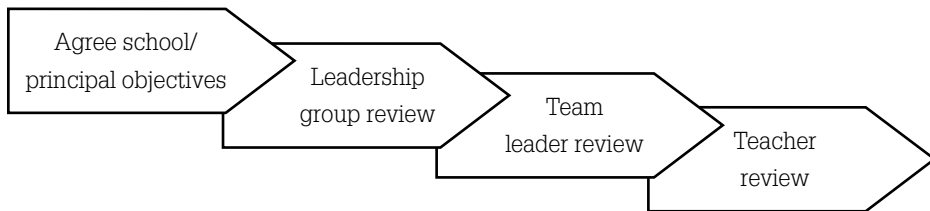


Figure 1.10 A stepped cascade cycle

Timing of the cycle

You will need to determine how often to go through this cycle, keeping in mind any relevant external requirements or guidelines that apply. Will it be:

- annually?
- twice a year?
- quarterly?

There is no rule about frequency and you should do whatever best suits your school and is manageable given the other demands you face. Remember that, while

people are getting used to the new approach, a new performance management process may feel like an extra burden, since it will involve completing forms and preparing for discussions, so make sure you allow time for it to be done to good effect. Ultimately, in an effective performance and development culture, the performance management dialogue will become a constant part of informal conversations, so that the formal review process becomes much simpler and more transparent.

Since student learning and progress is the prime focus of everything undertaken by the school, including performance management, it is likely your choice of timing will align to cycles of student results. The advantages of this are that:

- relevant student assessment data are available;
- the school priorities and objectives for the year will certainly be known; and
- teachers will have settled class groups and enough information on students to set appropriate targets for them.

Objectives can, in this context, be set for a longer time frame than one year, but team leaders should ensure that ‘milestones’ are set indicating the progress expected at shorter time intervals along the way.

Establishing student learning as the focus

If improved student learning is the core purpose of introducing performance management processes in your school, then you will need to ensure that progress can be measured over time. This necessitates beginning the process by first establishing exactly where each student in the class is at in learning terms. In other words, you will need to identify the *base line* of student learning in the relevant learning domain against which progress can be assessed. This requires the use of threshold assessment/s of some sort, whether they be state or territory-wide tests already in place, school-based assessments that are used across classes, commercially-produced performance assessments, or a combination of the three.

The key aim is to ensure that staff monitor the progress of their students against agreed targets for improvement, and use the resulting data to analyse and review student performance, set student objectives for the next learning period, and continually strive to improve the outcomes that are achieved.

The sort of process you might adopt comprises the following three stages:

Table 1.1 Three stages in the use of a pro forma

<p>Step 1 (Early Feb)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Context</i> ▪ <i>Prior attainment</i> ▪ <i>Expected attainment</i> 	<p>Analysed and completed by the teacher together with their team leader. This is important not only to ensure the targets for the class are in line with overall team and/or school targets, but also to avoid any tendency that may exist to either over- or underestimate the expected attainment for a class.</p>
<p>Step 2 (Feb/March)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Set student progress objective</i> 	<p>Teachers set a draft objective to guide their subsequent review, with reference to prior and expected attainment, as well as the whole school improvement or development plan. This is discussed with the team leader and a final target agreed.</p>
<p>Step 3 (Nov/Dec)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Final attainment</i> ▪ <i>Evaluation</i> 	<p>Evaluation of student progress against the target set, through a process of discussion between the teacher and their team leader, taking account of any factors beyond the teacher's control such as student movement in and out of the class. It should be noted that it is the evaluation arising from the discussion, rather than the final attainment, that is used as the basis for the review of teacher performance.</p>

The key advantages of this process are that:

- student learning is the key focus of performance management in the school;
- individual teachers have responsibility for monitoring and improving their students' progress;
- the student progress objective is selected with reference to the school improvement or development plan and in the context of all classes taught;
- the final review process can take account of the progress of all students and not just those in the class or cohort selected for a student progress objective; and
- other student data (attendance, attitudes to school, etc.) which contribute to student learning also can be monitored.

Different types of review

A report by the Boston Consulting Group (2003) suggests the components of effective performance management can be summarised in the following diagram¹:

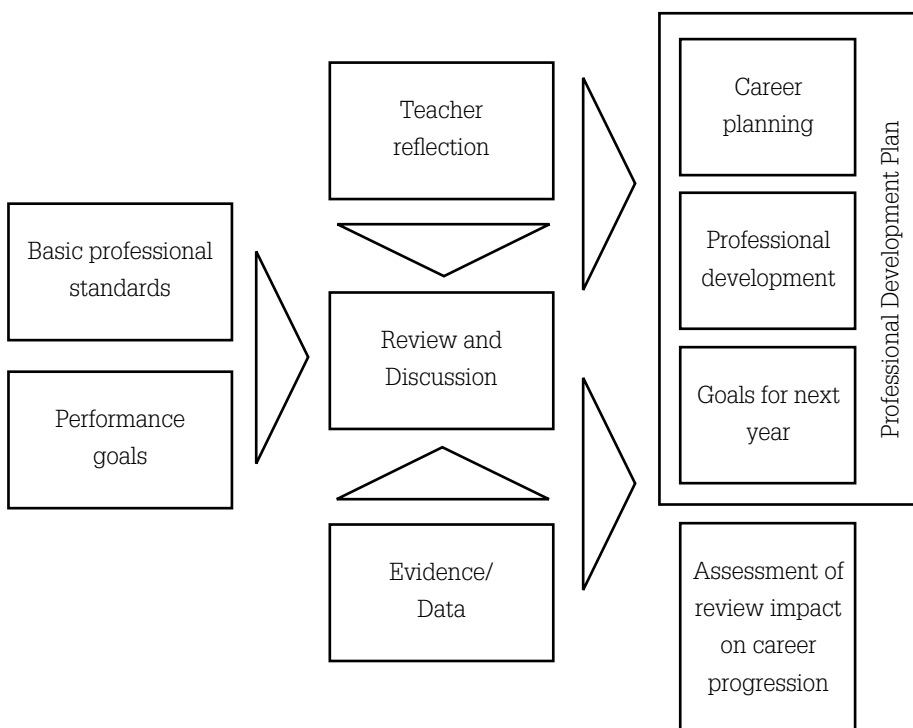


Figure 1.11 Components of effective performance management processes

There are, in this context, a range of review types that schools can consider, three of which are briefly outlined below and then complemented by the detailed material in the remainder of this book.

Self-review based on threshold standards

A number of Australian jurisdictions have draft or even finalised sets of professional standards for teachers, as do some professional associations within their relevant disciplinary domains.

¹ This Boston Consulting Group diagram was adapted from Shadish (1998), Boyd (1989), and Kleinhenz & Ingvarson (2002).

In July 2003, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs in Australia, otherwise known as MCEETYA, endorsed *A National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching*, to which all Australian state and territory education ministers have stated their own standards will become aligned.

This National Framework — comprising the four elements of Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, Professional Values and Professional Relationships — can be used at the end of a review cycle as a frame of reference against which team leaders can make a professional judgment about the overall performance of a teacher. It is particularly useful as a tool for self-reflection, prior to a discussion with the team leader, with a particular focus on the identification of strengths on which to build and weaknesses which need to be addressed.

Table 1.2 provides more detail on the four elements of the framework which will be considered again in more depth in Chapter 5 of this book.

Table 1.2 A National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching

Element	Descriptors
1 Professional knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers know and understand the fundamental ideas, principles and structure of the disciplines they teach ▪ Teachers know and understand the links to other content areas and are able to integrate learning across and between content areas ▪ Teachers know how to effectively teach that content, and understand the prompts and barriers to learning likely to be encountered by students ▪ Teachers have a detailed understanding of how young people learn and their role in facilitating that learning ▪ Teachers know and understand and can articulate a range of philosophies of learning ▪ Teachers critically evaluate the range of teaching and learning theories and know how to apply them where appropriate ▪ Teachers know and understand and take account of the diverse social, cultural and special learning needs background of their students and the influences these have on teaching and learning ▪ Teachers structure learning to take account of these differences.

Table 1.2 (Continued)

2 Professional practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Teachers communicate effectively with their students and establish clear goals for learning▪ Teachers possess a repertoire of inquiry techniques and teaching strategies, and use a range of tools, activities and resources to engage their students in learning▪ Teachers select and organise the content in logical and structured ways to meet learning goals▪ Teachers are adept at managing the range of behaviours and situations that occur in the classroom and establishing a climate where learning is valued and fostered▪ Teachers create safe and supportive learning environments and recognise and are attentive to their child protection and welfare roles▪ Teachers plan for learning and utilise a range of formative and summative assessment techniques to report on learning and to inform their planning▪ Teachers understand the need to evaluate their teaching and the importance of providing both formal and informal feedback to students as a stimulus to learning.
3 Professional values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Teachers are committed to their own development and continually analyse, evaluate and enhance their professional practice▪ Teachers understand that the contexts in which they work are continually evolving and changing and they need to adapt and respond to these changes▪ Teachers work closely with parents and carers to acknowledge that the education of students is a shared purpose▪ Teachers uphold high professional ethics with regard to their own conduct and that of others, and respect their students and value their diversity▪ Teachers act professionally at all times in dealing with their students, peers, members of the profession and members of the community.
4 Professional relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Teachers engage with diverse student populations representing equally diverse communities▪ Teachers meet these challenges by forming professional relationships at all levels of the community. It is within this context that teachers design and manage learning experiences for individuals and groups of students that value opportunities to actively engage with other members of their profession and their wider school communities

- Teachers work productively with colleagues and other professionals to enhance the learning of their students, and understand and value the importance of close links between the school, home and community in the social and intellectual development of their students
 - Teachers understand and foster the critical relationship between them and the students. This is a relationship that is underpinned by trust, respect and confidence.
-

360 degree or multi-rater review

Self-review is very powerful given that genuine and meaningful improvement only really comes about when teachers decide for themselves that they need to improve an aspect of their teaching and hence learn something new.

That said, a self-review by definition primarily is conducted from a first-person perspective and may not constitute a full and true picture of the situation. We all have our blind spots and those places we view only through rose-coloured glasses.

Staff in this context may choose to use the standards framework provided to elicit feedback from a range of perspectives (that is, students, colleagues, etc.) to gain a more rounded view of their performance as a whole. This initially could be made an optional extra within the performance management system you design, so that people can see the benefits and, in time, it becomes an essential component of the approach.

With 360 degree feedback the individual is surrounded by feedback about their performance that is likely to be more balanced and less susceptible to bias because it is derived from a variety of sources and not just oneself. Typically, the ratings from others are based on a structured questionnaire so that they are responding to more objective aspects of performance and are less dependent on personal judgment, bias or stereotyping.

Team objectives

An approach used in some schools involves the use of team objectives, particularly for the leadership group. Such an approach is predicated on the belief that everyone in the group should have the same student progress objective and they should all be judged on whether or not they meet it.

While identical objectives certainly can be agreed, it probably is helpful to discuss and agree as a team who will have ‘prime’ responsibility for the delivery of each, with other team members then having either a ‘shared’, ‘contributory’ or only ‘remote’ responsibility in each case. Agreeing on team objectives in this way also has the advantage of clarifying those objectives with little or no driving force, as well as those where everyone is ‘having a go’ resulting in duplication of effort.

Table 1.3 suggests how this might apply for one particular team:

Table 1.3 Team planning matrix

	Sam	Jo	Sarah	Nguyen	Jane
Strategy	P	R	S	S	C
Leadership	R	S	P	S	C
Operations	S	P			S
Development			S	P	S
etc.					

P = Prime responsibility S = Shared C = Contributory R = Remote

To ensure clarity, effective distribution of responsibility and the avoidance of unnecessary overlap, it is suggested that only one person should have ‘prime’ responsibility for each objective.

Individual improvement plans can then describe what each team member will need to do to help meet the common objective.

Performance management pro formas

Although pro formas should not drive the performance management process, they are an invaluable and necessary way of tracking and recording information as it unfolds. They exist only as a means to an end, so if they lack a clear and definite purpose, or fail to add value to the approach you adopt, then they should be dispensed with as a complete waste of time.

Pro formas that may prove useful in the implementation of your performance management approach, and which are provided for consideration in Chapters 4 and 5 of this book, include:

Table 1.4 Pro formas included in this book

1 Self-review	This allows teachers to record strengths on which to build and weaknesses requiring development following a review against a professional framework such as the national standards in Table 1.2. Teachers then can formulate draft objectives to meet their own particular needs as they work to improve student learning in the school.	Figure 5.5
2 Recording objectives and an improvement plan	This assists team leaders and teachers to reach agreement on the objectives, strategies and targets, and measures that underpin effective performance management processes in schools.	Figure 4.5
3 Professional development planning/ tracking/ evaluation	A multi-purpose planning pro forma that can be used to determine learning and development required and then serve as a log that teachers keep in their professional development portfolio.	Figures 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11
4 Monitoring student progress	In effect, an extension of teachers' 'mark books' that emphasises teachers' accountability for the progress made by their students.	Figure 5.3
5 Lesson observation/ feedback	A form to give structure to lesson observations which is based on the 80:20 rule of 80% confirmation of good practice and 20% focus on how things could be better next time.	Figure 4.9

The pro formas provided are, it should be noted, generic rather than specific to all circumstances, and hence should be evaluated and adapted as needed to meet the particular and unique needs of your school.

Bringing staff on board and ensuring their support

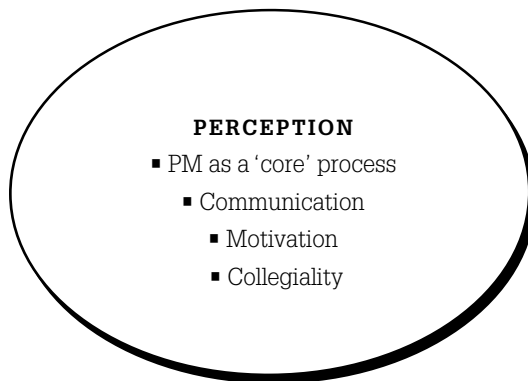


Figure 2.1 Perception

Performance management as a 'core' process

If, as experience suggests, performance management is a core process for improvement in all organisations including schools, then one of the key first steps you will have to take in its implementation is to convince staff of the benefits it can bring. In other words, you will need to answer the quite reasonable question, 'What's in it for me as well as the school?'

You may even be able to have greater impact still by inviting staff to identify potential benefits themselves, which in turn strengthens their commitment to the outcome you collectively develop.

A meeting with staff, in the early developmental stages of the performance management process, is essential and should cover such issues as:

- ‘What’s In It For Me?’ (commonly referred to as the WIFM factor);
- the skills possessed by team leaders and the skills they will need to acquire, as well as the support they can provide;
- staff fears/concerns/issues;
- the school values we are trying to promote and the things we really care about as a result;
- other programs in place both within and beyond the school on which we can build (for example, systemic professional development programs which support a greater focus on performance and how to improve it); and
- what we want performance management to be like in our school.

Ideally this will create a context for you to link discussions on performance management to other school priorities built into the school improvement/development plan (for example, approaches to improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school). This thereby positions performance management as a core process for integrating initiatives rather than something which stands alone, with only limited impact on the life of the school.

If performance management is promoted as providing an opportunity for teachers to manage and improve their own performance, supported by leaders in the school, then it is more likely to gain support. That does mean, however, ensuring the process adopted is consistent with this aim and reflects it in all of its operational elements. At the very least you will need to ensure staff are provided with:

- the training and support they require;
- a professional standards framework against which they can review their own performance;
- a whole school system of recording student progress data, together with training to enable teachers to access and use it;
- the support of trained team leaders who are capable of coaching and monitoring the work of staff;

- encouragement to set draft objectives reflecting the outcomes of their own self-assessment to inform the first meeting with their team leader;
- regular feedback on their performance and recognition of their achievements; and
- opportunities for professional learning which is relevant to their own particular career and development needs.

Communication is key

Communication clearly is key to getting staff commitment and buy-in to performance management and hence ensuring its success.

Regular and effective communication involves both:

- *information*, to provide clarity about what is intended and why, to raise awareness and develop understanding of the performance management process; and
- *involvement*, to generate acceptance, build commitment and collectively design the best possible process.

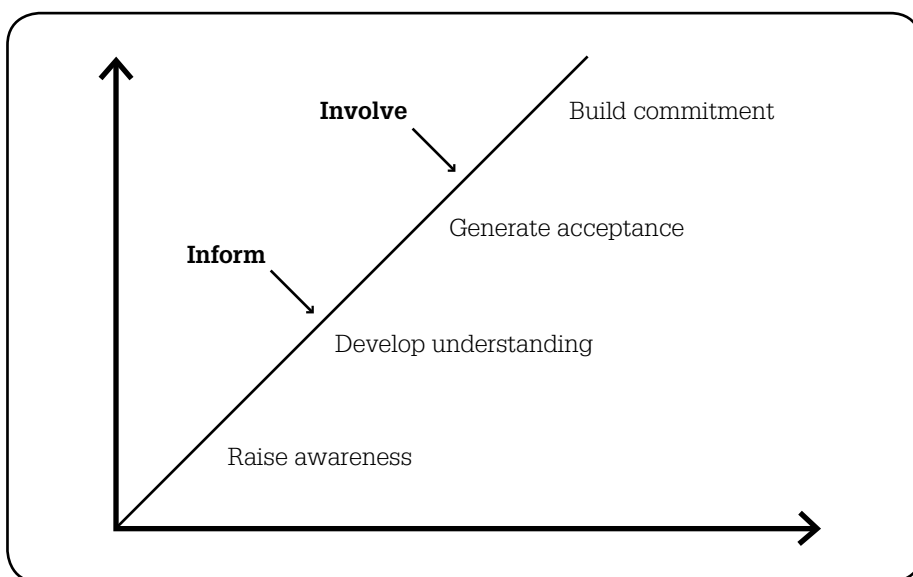


Figure 2.2 The two stages of communication

The fundamental purpose of communication in an organisation is to enable and energise employees to carry out its strategic intent.

The best communications in this context are:

- fit for purpose;
- timely and regular;
- clear in that they avoid jargon and are simple and short;
- consistent both in terms of the message conveyed and the fact that what you say is what you do;
- coherent;
- sincere, genuine, honest and open; and
- perhaps most importantly, two-way.

A communications checklist to use

The following simple checklist for effective communication addresses the key questions of who? what? how? when? and why?

Table 2.1 Communications checklist

1 Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Who do you want/need to communicate with?▪ What are their current issues? Keep in mind that messages/information designed to answer real issues and concerns have more relevance and impact.▪ Remember, too, to listen to those who may not agree. As Fullan (2001) advised in relation to understanding change, there is a need to redefine resistance as a potential positive force. Naysayers sometimes do have a point, and engaging them is a crucial part of the politics of implementation. That is not to suggest you listen endlessly to those who disagree, but rather you look for ways to address their concerns.
2 What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What are your key messages? These may be different for different groups. Try not to communicate more than three or four messages at a time, and keep it as simple as you can — but not at the expense of giving a full and honest picture of what is proposed.▪ Bear in mind that it's not what you want to tell them that matters, but rather what they actually hear.

Table 2.1 (Continued)

3 How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Consider the normal ways you communicate with staff and how effective they tend to be. Do you need to do something different to create an impact? Certainly staff briefings and presentations, even with questions and answers, can often feel light on in terms of involvement and somewhat 'one way'. If you can manage it, a facilitated discussion may prove to have more effect.▪ Remember that the more sensitive the issue the more anxiety it is likely to provoke, and hence the more important it is to have face-to-face communication with staff. You may even consider some one-on-one discussions with those who express the greatest concern.
4 When?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ You need to consider when people are going to be most receptive, and take account of the other demands on their time. However, when concerns do arise, they need to be dealt with straight away.
5 Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Critical to the success of any communication is its statement of purpose. People have a need to understand why the communication is necessary within the context of the school's mission and direction.

Getting the atmosphere right

Performance management involves challenging staff in a safe and supportive environment. Part of the aim is getting staff to set challenging objectives that will spur them to improve the impact and outcomes of their work. This may also mean doing things differently as well as better. And it means taking risks.

If staff are to be encouraged and supported to take risks, they need a 'safety net' whereby it is okay to make mistakes; provided, that is, that they learn from the experience, with help and support from the team leader, and do not repeat the same mistake twice.

Establishing the right atmosphere for 'having a go' involves giving credit for progress, even when it may fall short of the objective set, if a serious attempt has been made to change practice and improve performance.

In general, people will feel less threatened and defensive when they:

- have participated in setting the expectations for their work;
- have received support, including training, to apply proven best practice in their day-to-day roles;

- are given the space and opportunity to work things out for themselves;
- have a sense of safety, are relaxed and have trust and confidence in the person providing feedback on their work; and
- have a sense they are appreciated as human beings and professionals who are able to think, decide and act in appropriate ways.

Motivation from within

Motivation sits right at the heart of good performance management and getting the best out of each and every teacher in the school.

Both research and our own experience show that an individual's performance results both from their ability and the motivation they bring to their work. Despite this, there is many a performance management process that concentrates solely on capacity through the development of professional learning plans, but neglects motivation and what drives us to do a better job. When it is addressed, it often is restricted to specific incentives which, although important, forget the motivation that comes from within.

The meaning of motivation

The concept of motivation recognises there are forces within individuals that drive them to achieve goals that fulfil their personal needs and expectations.

Among the best-known theories of motivation is that of Abraham Maslow (1943) which is based on a hierarchy of needs that human beings all seek to satisfy. The grouping of human needs he identified are:

- physiological needs (the lowest in the hierarchy);
- safety needs;
- security needs;
- esteem needs; and
- self-actualisation needs (the highest).

Human behaviour, according to Maslow, is dominated by our unsatisfied needs and, as 'perpetually wanting' animals, when a (lower) need is satisfied, we then aspire for the next higher one.

Understanding this is a prerequisite to effective staff motivation in the workplace, and helps move us beyond traditional ‘carrot and stick’ approaches to performance management which ultimately have been shown not to work. In particular, it directs us more towards what motivates people from within, what people often are seeking in answer to ‘What’s In it For Me?’, rather than relying on external factors that fail to have an impact if they cease to be applied.

This is not to suggest that rewards and punishments have no role to play. There are times when a mix of incentives and disincentives will impact quickly on behaviour in the workplace. But while you can use them to, in the words of the old adage, ‘lead a horse to water’, you can’t expect they will make it drink unless the horse has a thirst.

Rather, in an environment where for most of us our lowest level needs are fairly well-covered, we need to identify what motivates people most, to then determine how best to foster their motivations. It is interesting in this regard to consider the outcomes of a study carried out by the Department of Labor in the United States as far back as 1977 (*Job satisfaction — is there a trend?*) which found that the ten factors which most motivated ‘white-collar workers’ were, in order of importance:

- 1 interesting work
- 2 opportunity to develop special abilities
- 3 enough information
- 4 enough authority
- 5 enough help and equipment
- 6 friendly and helpful co-workers
- 7 opportunity to see results of work
- 8 competent supervision
- 9 responsibilities clearly defined
- 10 good pay.

This provides a number of clues on the motivational techniques most likely to work.

Another prominent motivation theorist and researcher, David McClelland (1984a, 1984b, 1995), discovered that, once the basic physiological needs have been met, there are three motives that collectively explain the widest range of human social behaviours. These he termed the Three Social Motives: Achievement, Affiliation and Power.

Essentially, within a school context, this means that each individual staff member has an ongoing need to:

- meet or exceed a personal standard of excellence and/or improve their own performance; and/or
- maintain, or avoid disruption of close, friendly relationships with other people, for the sake of the relationships; and/or
- have an influence or make an impact on others, by performing powerful actions, or seeking status and recognition.

These motives not only drive behaviour, by influencing people's thoughts, but also direct behaviour. We tend to make choices and react to situations according to the degree of opportunity they provide to satisfy the needs specific to our particular motive.

Motivation in the PM cycle

Research in a range of organisations suggests that the main tools available to managers for motivating teams are:

- approval, praise and recognition;
- trust, respect and high expectations;
- loyalty that is given in order to be received;
- removing organisational barriers to individual and group performance;
- job enrichment;
- good communication; and
- financial incentives.

It is a set of tools that readily can be integrated to the performance management cycle that has been advocated in this book.

Stage 1: Planning

This stage embraces:

- definition of job responsibilities outlined in Chapter 1;
- taking into account school and system requirements, guidelines and priorities;

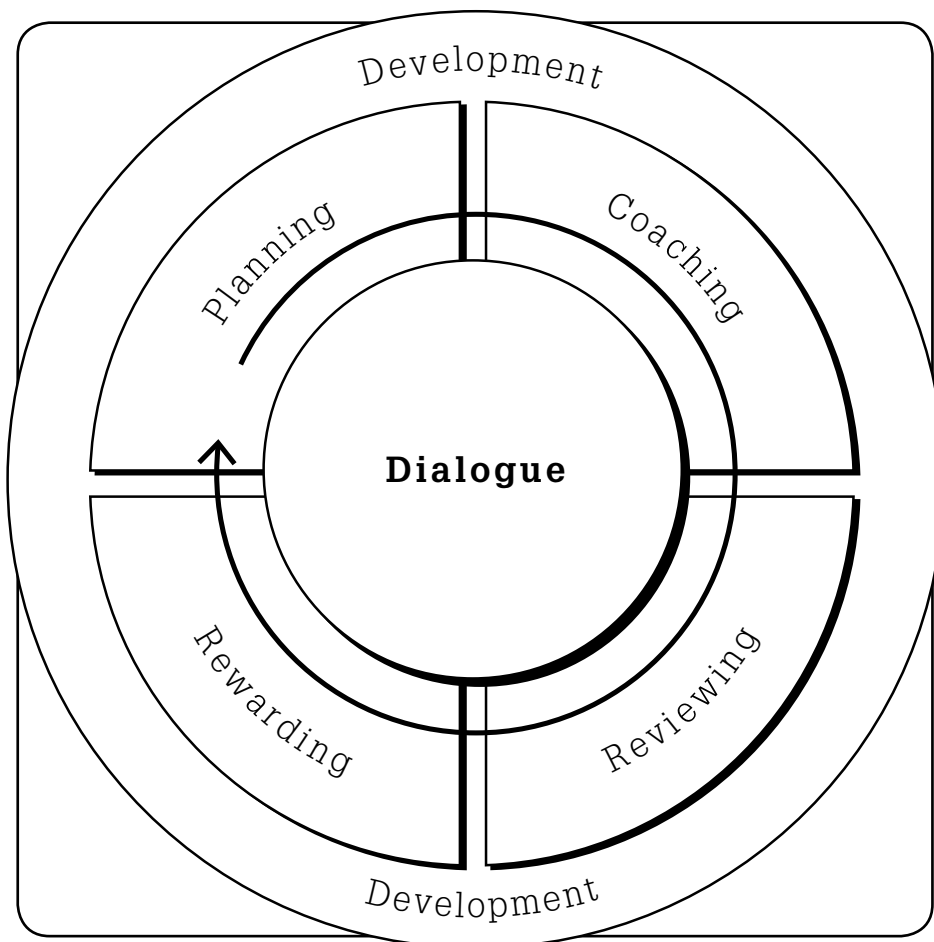


Figure 2.3 Motivation in the PM cycle

- setting performance expectations, which is taken up in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5 for team leaders and teachers; and
- objective setting for the beginning of the period.

If motivation is to be maximised in this stage of the cycle, it is important to ensure the objectives set are clear, specific, challenging and accepted by the individual concerned. These objectives become even more motivating if they reflect a shared moral purpose for the work of the school, which Fullan (2001) has suggested must involve:

- making a difference to the lives of children;
- respectful treatment of others;
- school and system improvement;
- closing the gap between high and low performing students; and
- improving achievement for all.

Beyond this, if we are to improve both the ability and motivation on which performance is based, then there will need to be an appropriate mix of challenge and support. The individual's expectations, for example, will have to be managed in terms of reward and recognition mechanisms and their capacity to do the job. More specifically, what we expect of them in terms of skills and behaviours, and how these link to rewards and recognition, must be clearly communicated, and then the supports put in place to ensure their skill level is built.

Stage 2: Monitoring/coaching/developing

This stage involves:

- monitoring;
- feedback and coaching, which are looked at in detail in Chapter 4; and
- development, which is taken up in Chapter 5.

Feedback and coaching are central to maintaining and growing motivation, not only to the extent they recognise, acknowledge and hence reinforce positive previous behaviour, but they assist people to develop and adopt new behaviours that will help them to do their work to better effect.

That said, feedback and coaching should be handled with care, and it cannot be assumed that *any* type of feedback will work and improve performance. Rather, if feedback is to serve as a motivator, it must be timely, accurate, specific, behavioural, constructive and from a credible source.

Stage 3: Reviewing

This is the stage of formal performance review.

A combination of reinforcement and development, where good practice is appropriately rewarded and/or shortcomings addressed through training and other support, can be an important contributor to improved morale.

Just as important, though, is to ensure there is equity in the treatment of individuals at each and every stage. Inequities in recognition, for example, can reduce as much as increase motivation, with the result that performance actually declines. Thus it is important that experience, ability, contribution and effort are recognised and rewarded, rather than assumptions made on the basis of the position one happens to hold.

The difficulty is, of course, that equity is always a value judgment, and what is perceived by one as equitable is judged by another as not. Remember, too, that equity does not imply equality of treatment, but rather a fair judgment of performance in terms of the standards or expectations that originally were set for that performance. This only highlights the importance of clarifying individual expectations at the planning stage of the performance management process, with later judgments referenced to these.

The purpose of review is to inform the next cycle of planning and hence the process starts all over again.

Collegiality

Building collegiality in the school not only constitutes an important basis for improving performance of staff, but can also develop a shared perception they are pursuing a common goal.

It would, according to Elmore (2002), 'be difficult to invent a more dysfunctional organisation for a performance-based accountability system' than the model of 'solo practice' that prevails in many of our schools. Schools, he argues:

aren't designed as places where people are expected to engage in sustained improvement of their practice, where they are supported in this improvement, or where they are expected to subject their practice to the scrutiny of peers or the discipline of evaluations based on student achievement.

(Elmore 2002, p. 4)

Growing awareness of this issue in schools and education systems is being reflected in an increased focus on teachers working in teams, and often with teams of students as well. This not only breaks down the traditional isolation of

classroom work but, when done well and combined with sharing of successful teaching practices, helps build the capacity of the profession as a whole.

Equally important, from the perspective of tackling perceptions that may hinder the development of a performance management approach, teamwork in schools can energise teachers and help focus their efforts on the key objectives of the school. That is why much of what follows in this book involves an effort to foster working in teams where people observe and share each other's work.

Building capacity

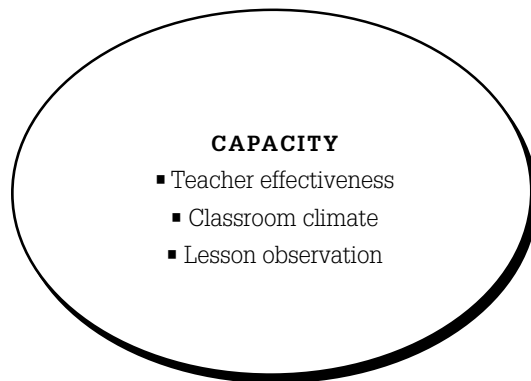


Figure 3.1 Developing capacity

Teacher effectiveness

A range of research has been conducted into teacher effectiveness, such as Hattie's research cited in the introduction to this book, a longitudinal study undertaken by Hill, Holmes-Smith and Rowe (1993) which shows that teacher effectiveness is a crucial driver of student achievement, and more.

Research into teacher effectiveness conducted by Hay Group in 1999–2000 moved to the next phase and developed a set of principles for effective teaching which suggest it involves a combination of teaching skills, professional characteristics and classroom climate. This research has informed this chapter of the book.

As a prelude to considering the chapter, however, you may like to consider what you believe makes a good teacher and discuss it with your colleagues with a view to developing a common list.

Certainly one characteristic likely to appear on everyone's list is that teachers really enjoy their work and are constantly looking at ways to do it to better effect, with a firm belief that their students can learn.

The material following is designed to provide a clear picture of what excellence in classroom teaching looks like and will help teachers to plan their professional and career development in and beyond your school.

It is, as suggested earlier, based on the three main factors for influencing student progress that the Hay Group research identified as within the teacher's control:

- teaching skills;
- professional characteristics; and
- classroom climate.

Each provides a distinctive but also complementary way in which teachers can understand, and hence improve, the contribution they make. And each should therefore be incorporated within the performance management process you adopt.

The three factors included in the model are different in nature and cannot really operate alone.

The first two for instance — professional characteristics and teaching skills — relate to what the teacher brings to the job. More specifically, professional characteristics are the ongoing patterns of behaviour that combine to drive the things we typically do, and teaching skills are the 'micro-behaviours' an effective teacher displays in their classroom each day.

While teaching skills can be learned, sustaining these over the course of a career depends on the more deep-seated nature of professional characteristics.

Classroom climate, by contrast, is an output rather than input measure. It allows teachers to understand how the students in their class feel about the dimensions of the classroom environment that influence their motivation to learn.

All competent teachers know their subjects. They have an idea of the appropriate teaching methods for those subjects, curriculum expectations and the ways students learn. More effective teachers, however, make the most of this professional knowledge in two linked ways.

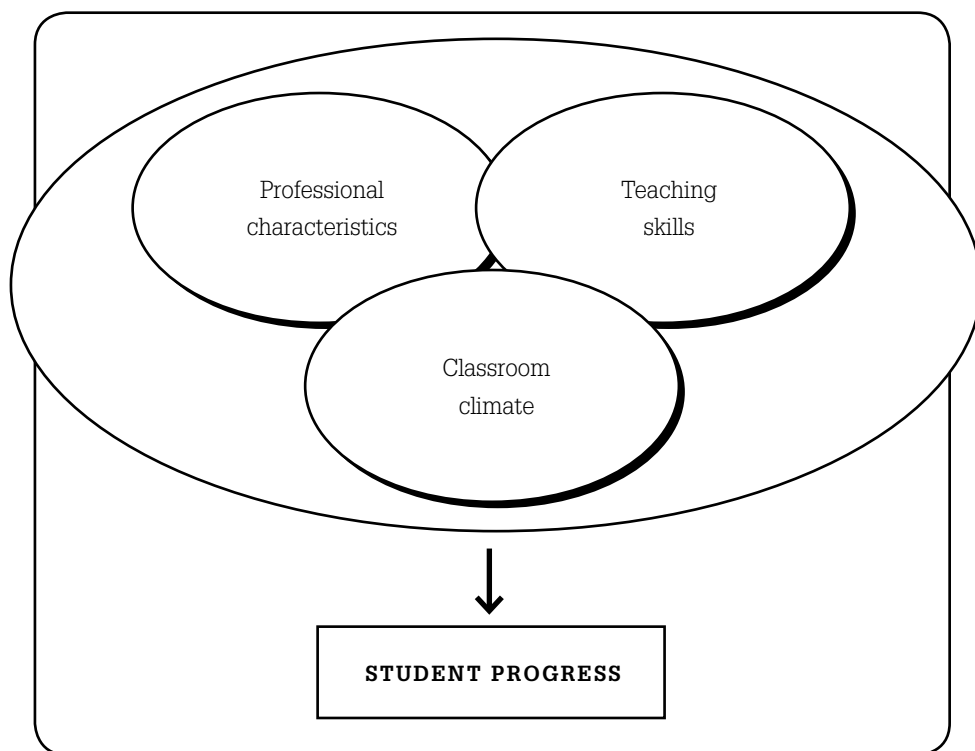


Figure 3.2 The model of teacher effectiveness

One is the extent to which they deploy appropriate teaching skills consistently and effectively in the course of all their lessons — the sort of teaching strategies and techniques that can be observed when they are at work in the classroom and in the student learning outcomes they generate.

The other is the range and intensity of the professional characteristics they exhibit inside and outside the classroom — the ongoing patterns of behaviour that make them effective teachers.

Student progress results from the successful application of subject knowledge and subject teaching methods, using a combination of appropriate teaching skills and professional characteristics.

Professional characteristics can be assessed and teaching skills can be observed. Classroom climate then provides another tool for measuring the impact created by a combination of the teacher’s knowledge, skills and professional characteristics. Thus, taken together, these three factors — teaching skills, professional characteristics and classroom climate — provide valuable tools for

teachers to improve student progress, and for evaluating the performance of the teachers themselves.

Effective teaching skills

Teaching skills are ‘micro-behaviours’ teachers constantly exhibit when teaching a class.

A number of well-developed models of teaching exist which are known to generate substantially higher levels of student learning than does normative practice. The characteristics of such exemplary practice tend to revolve around establishing a supportive yet challenging learning environment, a curriculum that takes students’ backgrounds and interests into account, and teaching practices that are flexible and responsive to student needs.

More specifically, research and classroom experience of good practice provides a picture in Figure 3.3 of what makes our best teachers successful in the classroom.

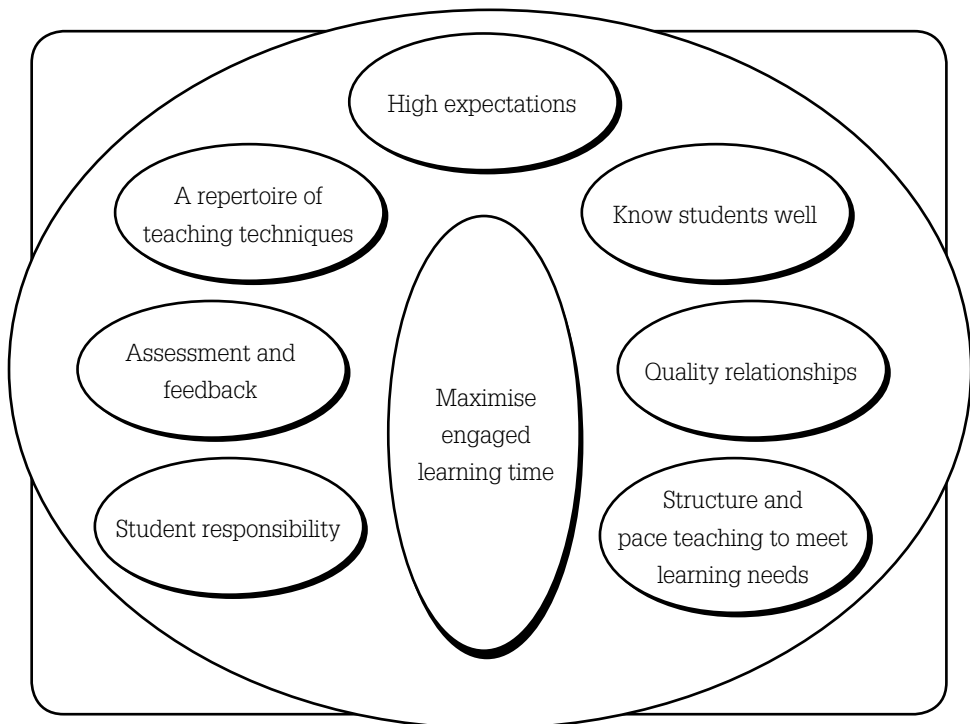


Figure 3.3 Effective teaching

- 1 *Effective teachers have high expectations to ensure that every student learns* — This demonstrates a commitment to every student's success, regardless of their background, and promotes the expectation that students put effort into learning at school.
- 2 *Effective teachers know their students well and build on what they already know* — Establishing what learners know and understand enables the teacher to set clear and appropriate learning goals, and to address specific conceptual misunderstandings the student may have. By building appropriate individual learning improvement plans, they assist students to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and dispositions expected at different stages of school.
- 3 *Effective teachers maximise each student's engaged learning time* — They ensure that each and every lesson counts, by emphasising that teaching and learning is the purpose of the lesson, and focusing on those activities which have relevant educational goals.
- 4 *Effective teachers develop quality relationships with students to promote optimal educational outcomes* — A supportive, challenging and optimistic learning environment is fundamental to high levels of student achievement; and teachers must strive to establish their classrooms as safe, secure learning environments in which all students can expect to be accepted, respected and valued at all times.
- 5 *Effective teachers structure and pace teaching and classes to match the learning needs of all students* — They ensure the purpose of instruction is clear and the complexity of tasks is matched to the learners' needs. Learning new tasks is scaffolded to enable learners to move from where they are now to higher levels of competence in the relevant domain. This implies that teaching strategies and classroom organisation are responsive to the wide range of student abilities found in a typical class.
- 6 *Effective teachers adopt a repertoire of techniques to make learning challenging, enjoyable, vivid and real* — Learning is more likely to occur where teachers plan and deliver a range of activities appropriate to the material to be learned, as well as the level, learning styles and maturity of the students involved. They make full and creative use of the space, time, collective skills and resources available, including the opportunities provided by new information and communication technologies. They connect strongly with communities and practice beyond the classroom and assist students not only to engage with contemporary knowledge and practice, but with local and broader communities as well.

- 7 *Effective teachers constantly monitor students' learning to determine strategies for further improvement and growth* — Constant monitoring of student learning enables them to establish appropriate starting points for teaching, to match instruction to the capacities and current understanding of the student concerned, and to provide positive, constructive feedback which recognises what the student has achieved and helps them to improve.
- 8 *Effective teachers encourage and support students to take increased responsibility for the management of their own learning* — Our best teachers create learning environments which model and promote self-management and increase students' responsibility towards learning itself. They support them to develop and use an array of self-management skills, strategies and attitudes such as self-confidence, self-discipline, and an ongoing desire to learn.

Schools can take and adapt this portrait of effective teaching to inform the development of performance management processes that identify the strengths on which individual teachers can build, and deficiencies where specific improvement is required.

Professional characteristics of teachers

Professional characteristics underpin the capacity to apply subject knowledge and teaching skills and, as shown in the iceberg in Figure 3.4, tend to account for more of teacher effectiveness than what sits above the surface.

The term 'professional characteristics' is used to encompass deep-seated patterns of behaviour which outstanding teachers display more often, in more circumstances, and to a greater degree of intensity than their less effective colleagues.

These characteristics determine how the teacher does their job, and include their self-image and values, the way the teacher habitually approaches situations and, at the deepest level, the motivation that drives performance as discussed in Chapter 2 of this book.

The model in Figure 3.5, developed from the Hay Group research in the United Kingdom, comprises 16 professional characteristics that contribute to effective teaching.

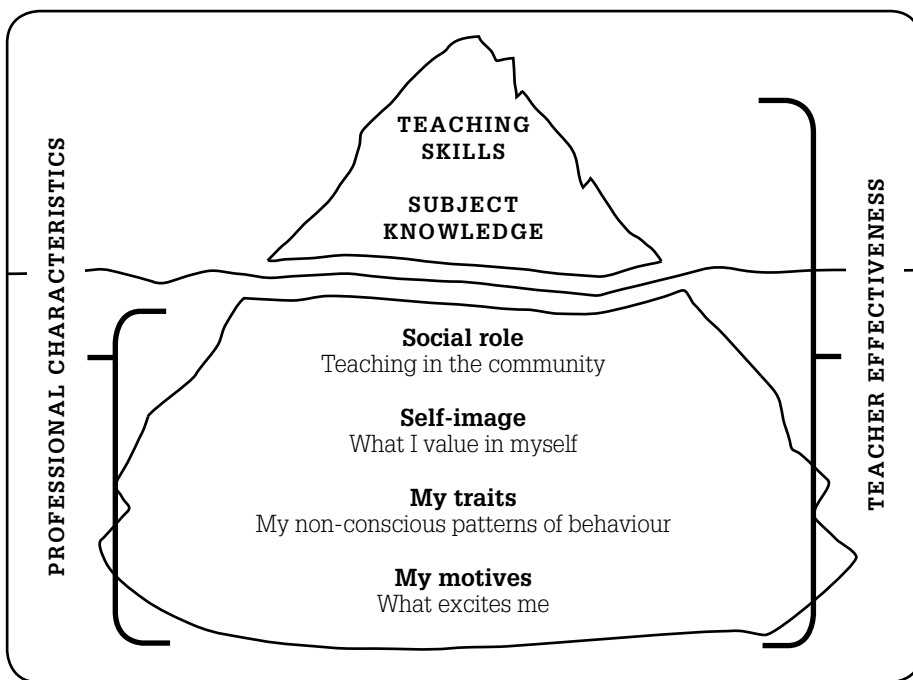


Figure 3.4 The iceberg model

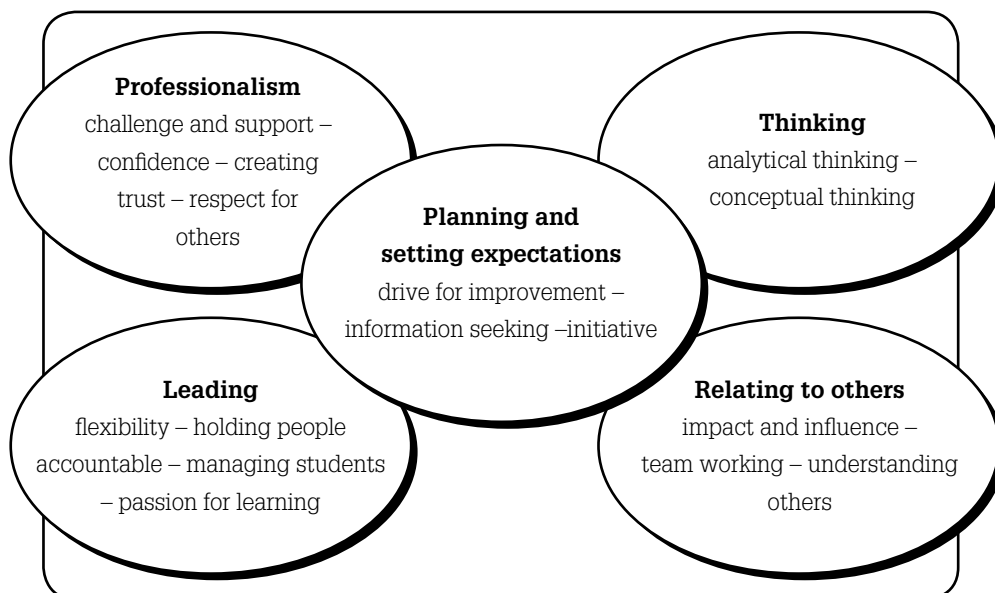


Figure 3.5 The model of professional characteristics

The model, it should be noted, does not suggest that all effective teachers demonstrate strength in all 16 characteristics. Rather, it is strength in each of the five clusters that is required; and then different combinations of characteristics within these clusters can be equally effective.

It is not, therefore, a ‘one size fits all’ approach and effective teachers will show distinctive combinations of characteristics that create success for their students.

The classroom climate

Classroom climate can be seen as the mirror image of the teaching skills and professional characteristics exhibited by teachers. It amounts, in effect, to the learning environment they help create and hence, the way in which their teaching is experienced by students and its consequent impact.

Classroom climate in this context is defined as the collective perceptions of students of what it feels like to be a student in any particular teacher’s classroom, and the impact those perceptions have on students’ motivation to learn and perform to the best of their ability.

The following dimensions all contribute to the climate in a classroom, and constitute aspects of how students feel while there.

- *Clarity* around the purpose of each lesson and how it relates to the subject as a whole, as well as about the aims and objectives of the school.
- *Order* within the classroom, and the way in which discipline and civilised behaviour are maintained.
- A clear set of *standards* about how students are expected to behave and what each individual should do and try to achieve, with the focus clearly on high rather than minimum expectations.
- *Fairness*, that is evident in a clear and consistent link between actual performance and rewards and an absence of favouritism.
- *Participation* where students have the opportunity to become actively engaged in the class through discussion, questioning, group work and a range of other activities.
- *Support* that sustains students emotionally and ensures they are willing to try new things and learn from mistakes.
- *Safety* which sees students free from the risk of emotional or physical bullying or other factors that may arouse fear.

- *Interest* that is evident in the classroom being viewed as an exciting place to be, where students feel stimulated to learn.
- An *environment* that is comfortable, well-organised, physically attractive and clean and hence a congenial place to work.

To the extent that teachers can develop the skills and professional characteristics which contribute to a climate of this sort, they can expect to more effectively motivate and engage their students in learning at school.

Measuring classroom climate

Research by Russell (2002) and others in Australia suggests that both primary and secondary teachers can only predict to a limited extent the assessment their students would make of the climate that prevails in their classrooms.

Little wonder, then, that a number of schools and education jurisdictions are considering, or requiring, the administration of student opinion surveys to gain greater insight into their students' perception of the classroom climate. This in turn enables individual teachers to focus their professional characteristics and skills on those aspects of climate that most need to be improved, and/or to seek to develop new capacities where effectiveness needs to be improved.

One example of how student opinion may be sought asks students to respond on a four point scale, from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4) to the 43 statements included in Table 3.1.¹ While the survey has been developed for responses related to the school as a whole, it can be readily adapted to apply to a single class so that individual feedback on climate can be obtained.

Table 3.1 Sample student opinion survey

2005 Attitudes to School Survey — Secondary

- 1 My teachers treat students in my classes fairly
 - 2 My teachers help me with my work
 - 3 My teachers expect high standards of work from me
 - 4 My teachers explain things clearly to me
-

1 Source: The State of Victoria, Department of Education and Training.

-
- 5 My teachers keep control of my classes in a firm but pleasant way
-
- 6 My teachers show me how to do things when I am having difficulties
-
- 7 My teachers make me work hard
-
- 8 My teachers give me helpful comments about my work
-
- 9 My teachers make the work we do in class interesting
-
- 10 My teachers encourage me to improve my standard of work
-
- 11 My teachers are easy to understand
-
- 12 My teachers praise me when I do well
-
- 13 My teachers put a lot of energy into teaching our classes
-
- 14 My teachers get upset with the class only when we deserve it
-
- 15 My teachers take time to help me when I have trouble with my work
-
- 16 My teachers give me challenging work which I am expected to finish
-
- 17 The work I do is well-organised
-
- 18 My teachers tell me when I make a mistake
-
- 19 My teachers are inspiring to listen to
-
- 20 My teachers are well-prepared
-
- 21 I have not been bullied at my school recently
-
- 22 I get on well with others at my school
-
- 23 I respect myself
-
- 24 My teachers listen to what I have to say
-
- 25 I don't feel lost at this school
-
- 26 I try very hard in school
-
- 27 I feel I have much to be proud of
-
- 28 My teachers acknowledge me when I do well
-
- 29 I enjoy the work I do at school
-
- 30 I am keen to do extremely well at my school
-
- 31 I feel I have a number of good qualities
-
- 32 I have not been deliberately hit or kicked by another student recently
-
- 33 At this school there is a teacher who cares about me
-

Table 3.1 (Continued)

34	I am accepted by others at this school
35	Learning in my school is fun
36	Doing well in my school is extremely important to me
37	I take a positive attitude towards myself
38	I like my teachers this year
39	On the whole I am satisfied with myself
40	I look forward to going to school
41	Other students never spread rumours about me at my school
42	My teachers understand my point of view
43	I have not been teased recently at my school

This survey can be used to highlight aspects of classroom climate the students appreciate and other aspects that may need to be improved.

An alternative approach developed by Hay Group in the United Kingdom can be completed online by students (at www.transforminglearning.co.uk), with the result that rapid feedback can be obtained. Figure 3.6 provides an example of the type of questions that students complete, while Figure 3.7 illustrates the feedback that can flow to the teacher. This in turn feeds into an online development planning tool that teachers can use (Figure 3.8).

1 Are you clear about what the teacher expects you to do?			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
yes	usually	not really	no

Figure 3.6 Sample question for students from online classroom climate questionnaire

2 Schools may preview this tool at the listed web address. Beyond this, however, you must register to gain access to this facility. The tool currently is in use in Australian schools and will be available in an Australian version in 2007.

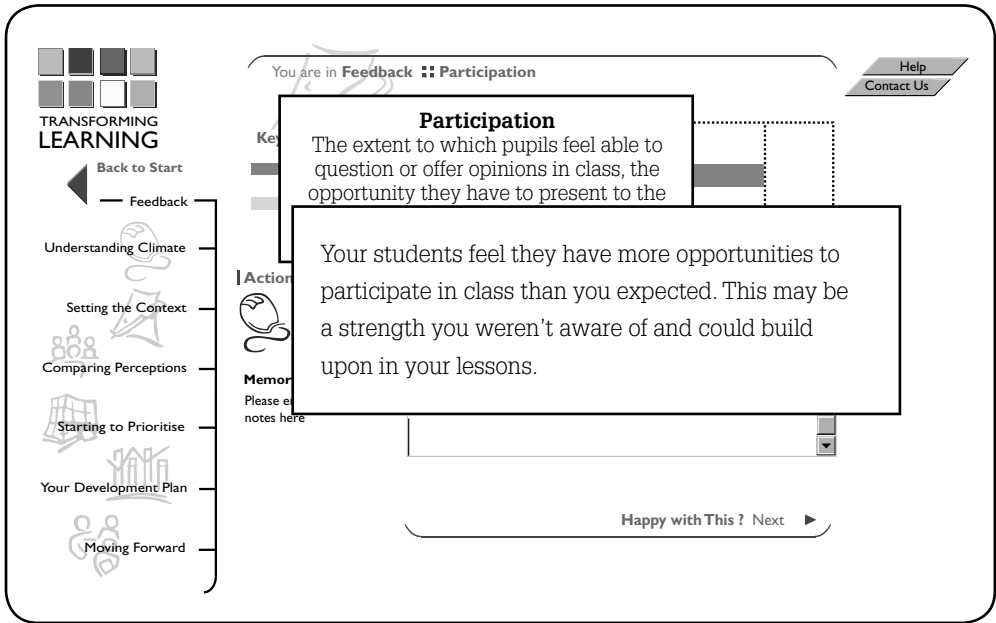


Figure 3.7 Sample of online feedback

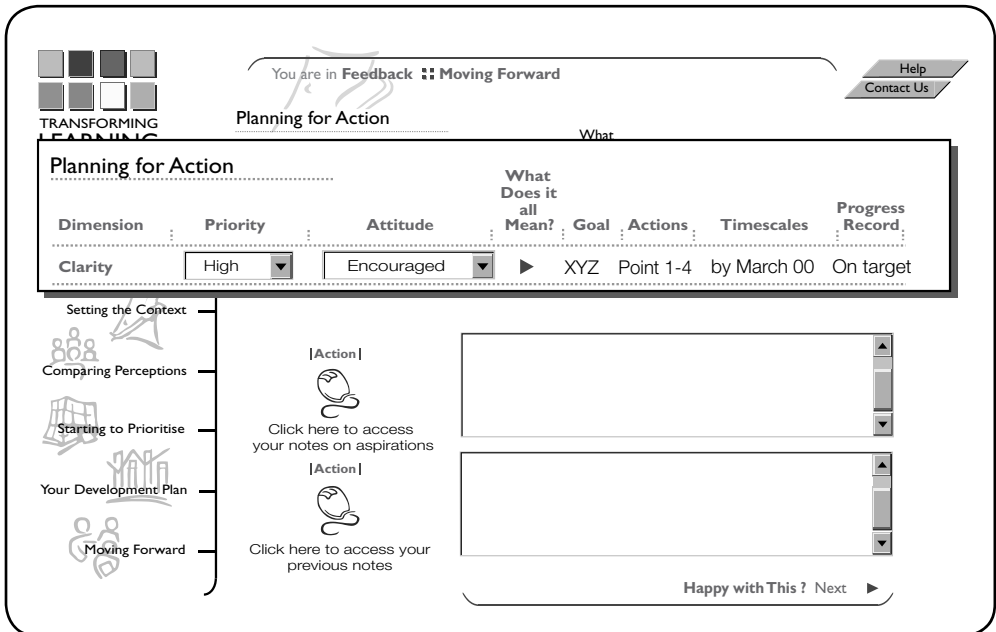


Figure 3.8 Sample of online action planner

Regardless of the tool that is used, however, the data that are gained provide teachers with feedback on the degree to which their teaching is having the intended effect, and hence any need for significant change. It also provides important data to inform the sort of appraisal, feedback and coaching discussed in detail in Chapter 4 of this book.

Experience using Transforming Learning in the UK and Australia (both as a sole data source and as a complement to classroom observations by peers and colleagues), has shown that schools and their teachers are able to use feedback from their students as a contribution to proper evaluations of performance, and as pointers to appropriate development activities.

Observing lessons

One of the best ways of breaking down the isolation of the classroom referred to in Chapter 2 ('Collegiality'), and ensuring the exchange of mutual feedback and support, is for teachers to observe each other's lessons in a constructive way.

The outline of effective teaching, provided as Figure 3.3 and its accompanying descriptions, can be used to guide the observation of lessons with a view to:

- recognising and reinforcing good practice; and
- identifying shortcomings where alternative teaching approaches may have worked to better effect.

The power of lesson observation can only be unleashed, however, if all involved are clear about the ground rules that apply.

More specifically, a protocol is needed for observing one another in the classroom based on the principles provided in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Principles for lesson observation

When engaging in lesson observation you should:

- agree on why you are doing it, and what you intend to get out of the process
 - look for specific evidence, or examples of events you can discuss together
 - concentrate on building strengths, rather than dealing with weaknesses
 - always look for what you can learn as well as what you can teach others
 - invite others into your classroom as a matter of course.
-

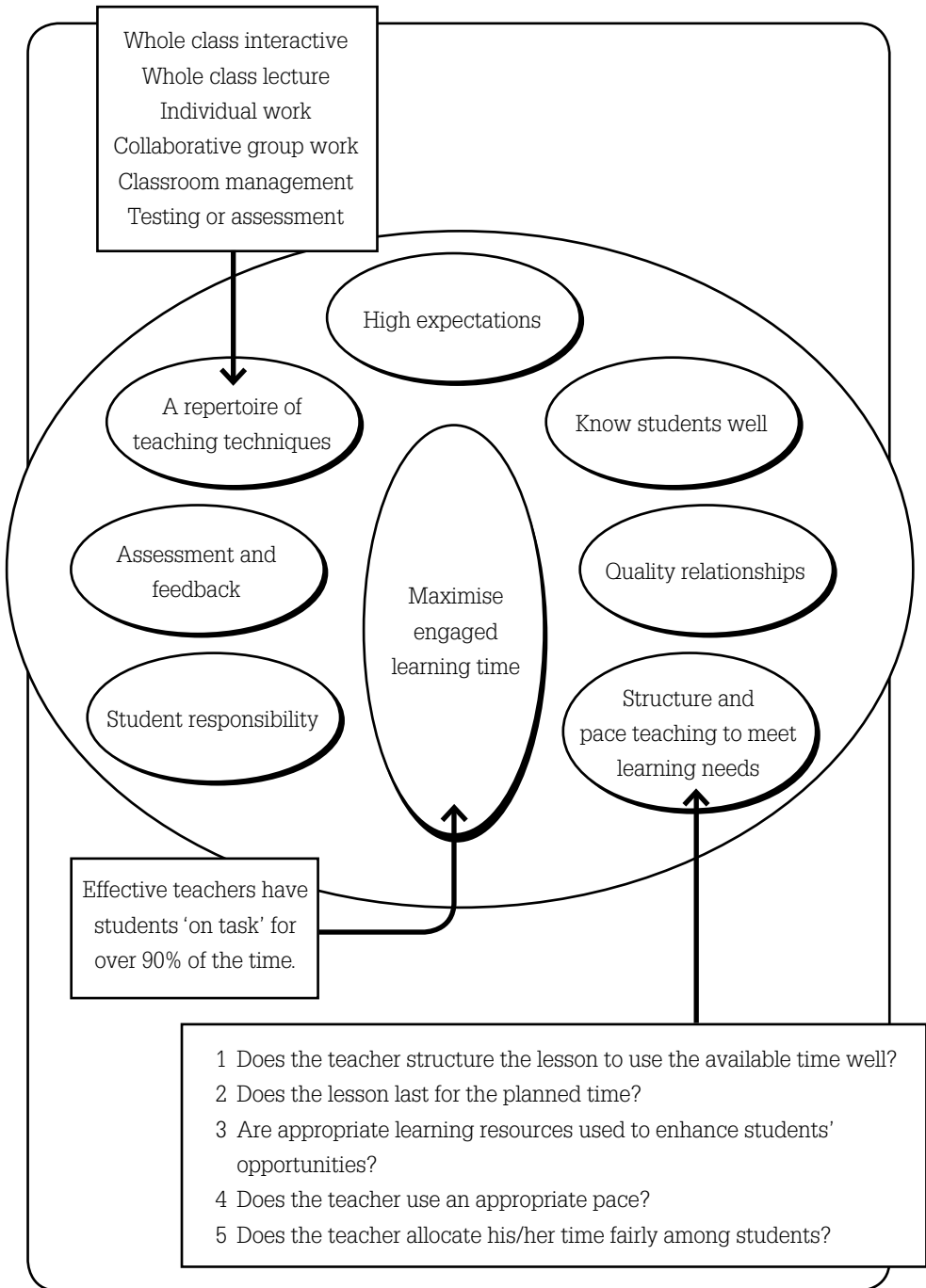


Figure 3.9 Using the effective teaching framework to structure lesson observations

Guidance for team leaders in the school

This chapter is designed to support you, as a team leader, to help others to improve their performance through an agreed process of performance management.

The chapter provides advice on the day-to-day practices that leaders and managers undertake when they recognise the success of their team and school depends on the continuous professional learning and development in which they engage.

The team leader and performance management

Performance management in any organisation should be a process of continuous learning and improvement. Its focus is improved student performance through improved teacher performance.

Team leaders in this context are expected to:

- promote high expectations and an unrelenting focus on student learning;
- help teachers to set objectives and create an improvement plan;
- challenge and support teachers while ensuring alignment of personal objectives to department and school priorities and targets;

- provide guidance, coaching and other support to help others to improve their performance;
- provide regular, timely and constructive feedback;
- make objective judgments about performance; and
- seek and respond positively to feedback on their own performance.

Key factors contributing to the success of performance management in the school are:

- the skills and commitment of the team leader;
- the degree to which teachers are empowered to manage their own performance; and
- the quality of the relationship established between the team leader and the teachers in their team.

Key to being a successful team leader is:

- enabling teachers to solve their own problems with the support you provide; and
- a constant focus on raising each teacher's capacity and self-esteem.

Setting the objectives

The objectives you set together with each teacher in your team will guide the strategies they adopt, and then any assessment of performance that is made. These objectives will work best if they are:

- directly related to the teacher's own aspirations;
- directly related to the team/department/school priorities; and
- directly related to the overall moral purpose of the school in the terms outlined in Chapter 2 of this book ('Motivation in the PM cycle').

The qualities of a good objective, as shown in Figure 4.1, are that it is:

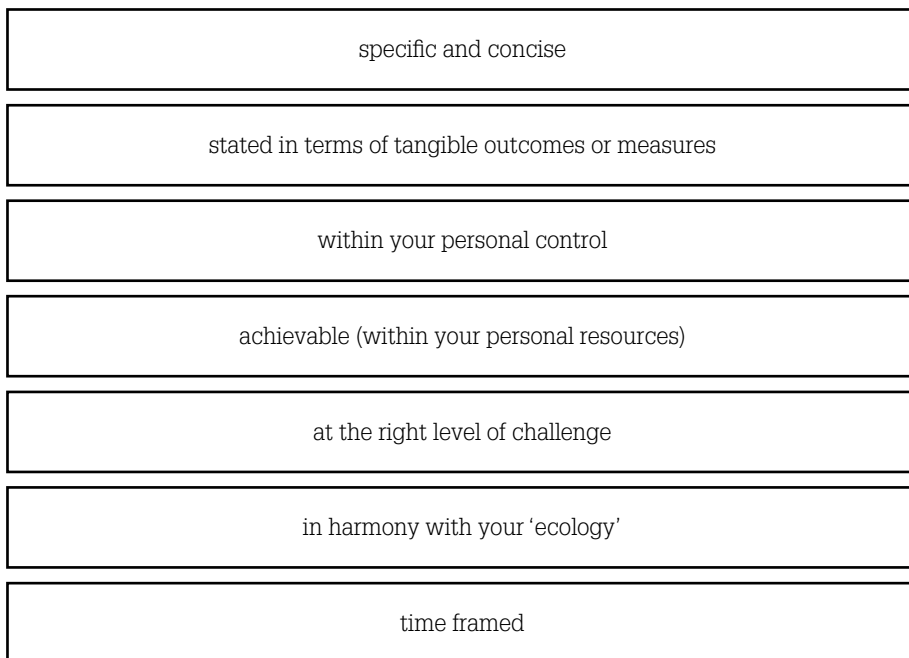


Figure 4.1 What makes a quality objective?

In setting objectives, it is recommended you hold a discussion with each member of your team along the lines of the five key steps embodied in Figure 4.2. Each step is then outlined in more detail.

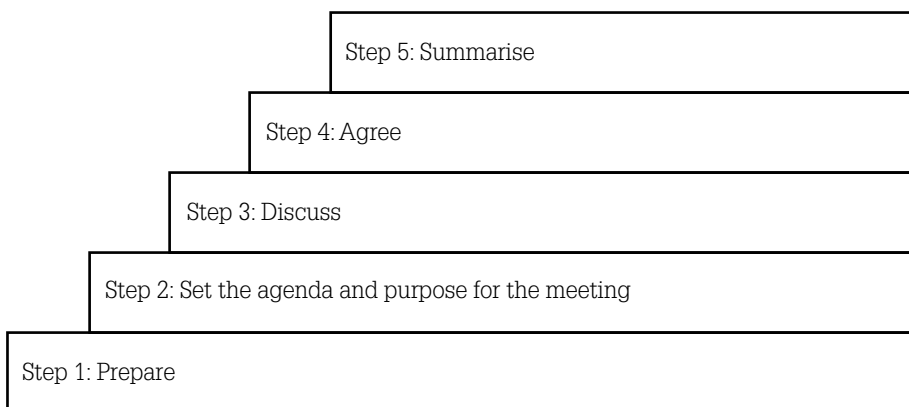


Figure 4.2 The five key steps in setting objectives

Step 1: Prepare

- Begin your own preparation for the meeting by reflecting on the role of the teacher concerned and try to see it through their eyes.
- Review the school's priorities, associated faculty/department objectives and your own performance plan.
- Sketch out some initial, tentative objectives in anticipation of what may be developed formally together with the teacher.
- Schedule a meeting with the teacher in a private, comfortable location and allow enough time for an open and honest discussion to occur. Keep in mind that if the teacher feels rushed, or that you are not concentrating on the discussion, they are less likely to consider the process important and may be less committed to it.
- Ask the teacher to prepare draft objectives from their own perspective prior to the meeting. Make sure you provide all appropriate information, such as student progress data and school/department plans, ahead of time to help them in this task.

Step 2: Set the agenda and purpose for the meeting

- Welcome the teacher and put them at ease.
- Emphasise the importance of this discussion to continuous performance improvement and their own personal and professional development.
- Outline the agenda embodied in Steps 3, 4 and 5:
 - Discuss job purpose/demands/expectations
 - Agree objectives
 - Summarise the discussion and offer ongoing support.

Step 3: Discuss job purpose/demands/expectations

- Refer to the relevant job description or role profile and ensure there is clarity around the purpose, demands and expectations attached to the job. (See 'Clarity of roles and job descriptions' in Chapter 1 for advice on determining role profiles.)

Step 4: Agree on 'objectives' and 'needs'

- Discuss with the teacher the priorities of the school and your own objectives as the leader of the team.
- Review the teacher's own proposed objectives.
- Seek agreement on three to five objectives relevant to the teacher's job description/ role profile and the broader priorities of the school as reflected in the expectations of you in your role.
- Seek agreement on an action plan for achieving these.

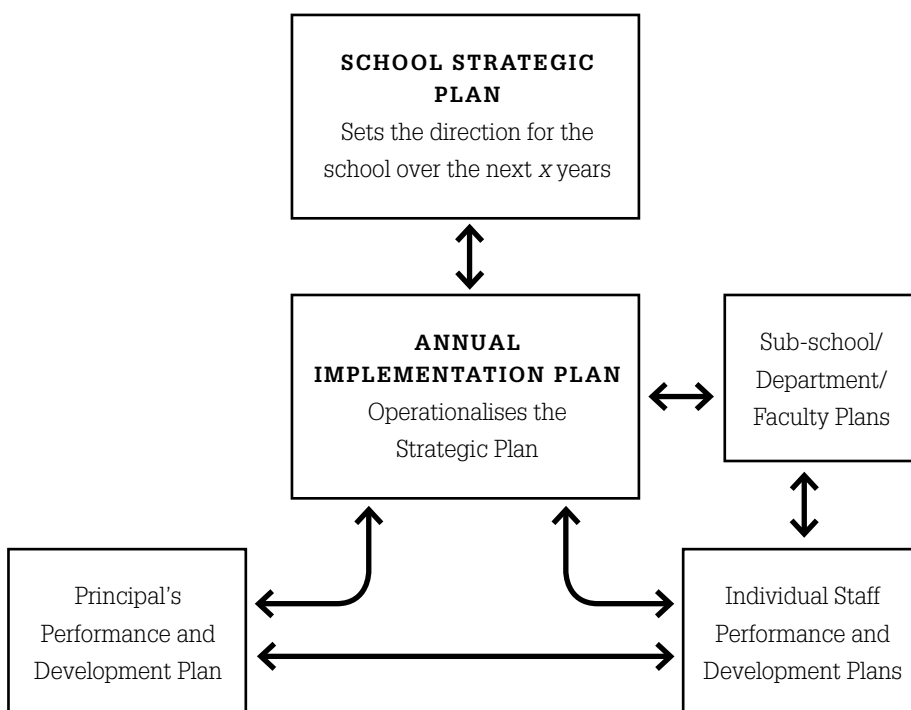


Figure 4.3 Aligning school–team–individual objectives

Step 5: Summarise and agree on support required

- Clarify and agree on the support you will provide to enable the teacher's objectives to be achieved.

- Invite any questions or concerns that may need to be addressed before the meeting concludes.
- Write up the results of the meeting. Use the pro forma provided in Figure 4.5 on page 59 as a guide.
- Encourage the teacher to come to you at any time to discuss any issue or problem that may arise.
- Express confidence in the teacher's ability to achieve the objectives and your own willingness to assist them in this regard.

The nature of objectives

As well as ensuring that individual objectives set are in line with those of the school and team, you should also seek to:

- develop 'win-win' objectives where there is benefit both for the school/team and the individual concerned — in other words, where objectives that are set overlap in the same way as the circles in Figure 4.4.

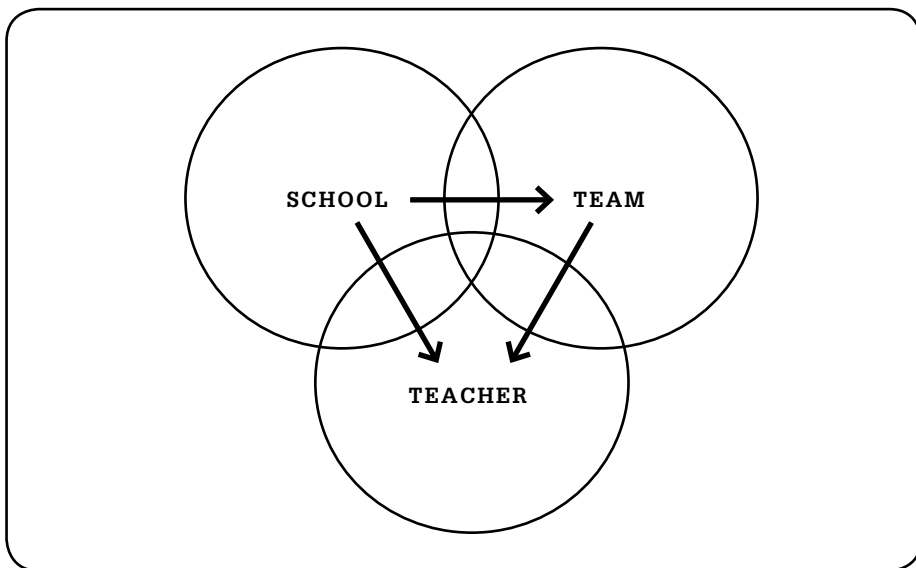


Figure 4.4 Setting school–team–individual objectives

- include at least one student progress objective and, where the teacher has a leadership or management role, a second student progress objective which relates to a subject or year group as appropriate.

It may also be appropriate to include a professional development objective which is more in the nature of a *means* to another objective, rather than an objective in itself. For example, a professional development objective for a teacher seeking to improve English language outcomes for students might be:

- to develop expertise in the teaching of reading with the aim of improving, within the next twelve months, the literacy performance of students who are falling behind.

When the objective is to improve the literacy outcomes for a targeted group such as this, developing expertise in teaching reading is part of what the teacher needs to do for this to be achieved. The learning and development of such expertise is, therefore, listed within the improvement plan.

Regardless of the objectives set, it is important to bear in mind that objectives must always be flexible. If factors change and the objectives set no longer are appropriate, then they should be amended or even re-set. This is part of ensuring a process of performance management that ‘lives’ through the year, rather than just being the product of a meeting ‘once a year’.

Achieving consensus

The preceding discussion assumes there is agreement on objectives by teacher and team leader alike. While that is always the aim, it does not necessarily occur. Draft objectives set by the teacher may, for example, be either too low or unrealistically high, in which case you should try to understand why, and explain what is expected so consensus can be reached.

If, for example, a teacher proposes an objective that is set too low, then you could:

- discuss it to determine why that is the case;
- identify any obstacles the teacher feels may prevent them achieving better performance and meeting a higher standard;

Figure 4.5 Recording individual objectives and improvement plan

Teacher's name:		Designated role:	
Team leader:		Year:	
Teacher's aspirations for the next 12 months:			
Key team/department/school priorities relevant to the teacher's role:			
Objectives for next 12 months (3 to 5 objectives, including a mix of student progress and professional development objectives which are tested against qualities outlined in Figure 4.1)	Strategies (Outline the means by which each of the objectives listed will be achieved)	Targets and measures (Specify the targets to be met if the objective is to be achieved, and the means by which progress will be assessed)	
Professional development/training required by the teacher:		Other support to be provided by the team leader:	
Date for progress review:			
Date for final review:			

- work with the teacher to overcome these obstacles, most likely with reference to the professional characteristics and/or teaching skills outlined in Chapter 3;
- commit to any additional resources or extra support that will enable the teacher to set and achieve a more challenging objective; and
- reconsider whether the objective is, in fact, too easy to achieve and hence too firmly within the ‘comfort zone’.

By contrast, if the teacher proposes an objective that is unrealistically tough, then you could:

- ask the teacher to explain their plan in detail to understand why they think they can achieve this objective (especially if this is a new area of activity or one where the teacher previously has been unsuccessful);
- assess if any estimates or resource requirements are overly optimistic;
- look for unrealistic assumptions about the availability of resources and other support, including the involvement and cooperation of others; and
- reconsider whether the objective is, in fact, too stretching and ultimately unachievable, while also reassuring the teacher you appreciate their willingness to take on such a difficult challenge.

If you still cannot agree after a thorough process of discussion, this may reflect the fact you have different expectations for the school and hence the team and the teachers it contains. Working through this will take time, and ultimately requires that you seek to focus on:

- the moral purpose guiding the school; and
- the performance data that exist, including a comparison with other similar schools.

On the other side of the equation, it may be the case that one reason you cannot agree is that your mode of behaviour and that of the teacher simply do not align. That requires an effort on your part to ensure your joint behaviours are purposeful in the terms embodied in Figure 4.6 and the more detailed description which follows it.

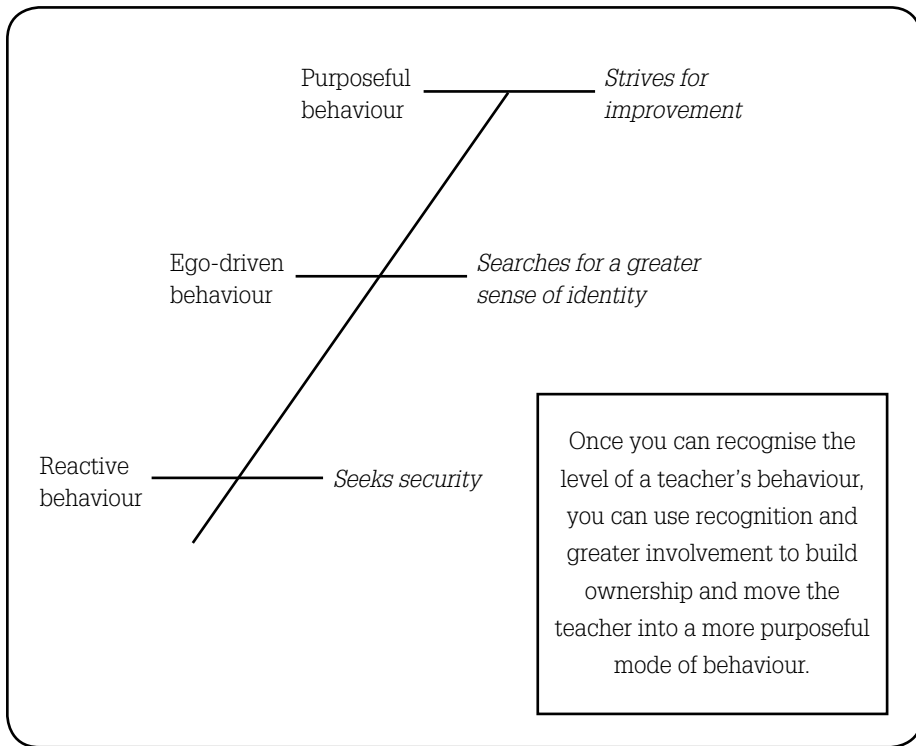


Figure 4.6 Types of behaviour

- *Reactive behaviour* is determined by the environment and is defensive in nature. It has a focus on the past ('it never used to be like this', 'appraisal never has worked') and is centred around a desire to survive. Teachers exhibiting reactive behaviour have a basic need for security. They focus on rights and strive to acquire more and more rights to provide a sense of progression and a route to 'ownership'. The more rights they have, the more secure they feel.
- *Ego-driven behaviour* is determined by self. It has a focus on the present and can be quite offensive. Teachers exhibiting ego-driven behaviour have a need to be recognised and to establish their identity. They search for ways of getting involved in projects which provide interaction with others. The greater involvement and interaction they have, the greater their sense of being able to influence others.

- *Purposeful behaviour* has a focus on the future and is characterised by versatility. Teachers exhibiting purposeful behaviour seek personal development which benefits both themselves and the school. They seek to increase their capacity and strive for increasingly high standards. Their end goal is personal improvement.

Should your best efforts to resolve a difference fail to produce agreement on an objective suggested by you as a team leader, and you feel it is important for accomplishing school or team goals, then your best course may be to:

- restate your understanding of the teacher's perception of the situation;
- express empathy and state your need for their acceptance of the objective you proposed to meet the needs of the department and the school;
- discuss the need for more resources and/or support if appropriate; and
- remind them you both need to agree on the selection of final objectives.

Ultimately you may just have to write the objectives and give the teacher the opportunity to note their disagreement/s and why. Before reaching this stage, however, it is strongly advised you seek help from the principal or another appropriate leader in the school who may be able to help reconcile the situation.

Using professional characteristics to improve performance

In Chapter 3 we outlined a set of professional characteristics which:

- enable someone to perform a job better in a wider range of situations, more often, and with better outcomes;
- distinguish the best teachers from the rest in a given role;
- comprise both deep-seated qualities (for example, motivation, traits) and easily observed knowledge or skills;
- can be measured; and
- are what enable people to do a task, rather than being the task itself.

These characteristics underpin the teaching skills and subject knowledge needed to do a good job.

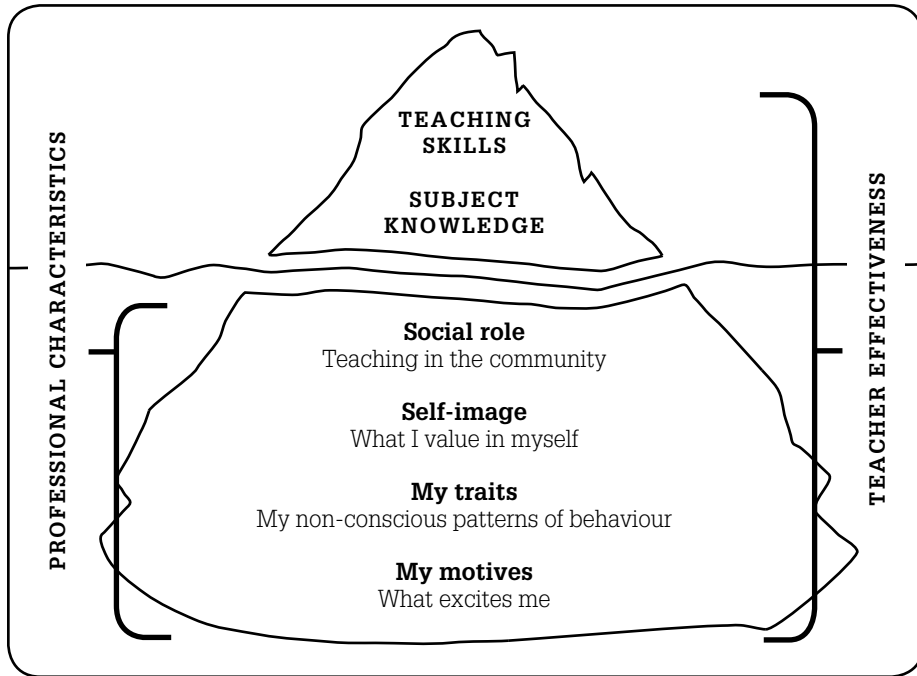


Figure 4.7 The iceberg model

The 16 characteristics of an effective teacher outlined in Chapter 3, Figure 3.5 — grouped under the headings Professionalism, Thinking, Planning and setting expectations, Leading, and Relating to others — can be used in discussions about performance management to help identify the ‘how’ of effective teaching. And, in this context, they also provide a framework for identifying gaps in performance that require developmental action to fill.

It is recommended, however, that you limit your discussion together to the three or four key characteristics that will make the most difference to the teacher’s performance, rather than focusing on all 16 with the result it becomes too remote and confused.

Monitoring and coaching

Continuous monitoring and coaching lies at the heart of successful performance management and involves a combination of:

- lesson observation;
- support; and
- coaching.

Conducting lesson observations

Lesson observation was discussed in Chapter 3 in the context of fostering collegiality, to break down the solo nature of a teacher's work, and building capacity by sharing what works in each other's classes.

It is also discussed briefly in this chapter since observing lessons provides:

- team leaders with important information to guide both their monitoring of teacher performance and the subsequent coaching they will provide to help teachers achieve their objectives; and
- teachers with feedback from their team leaders that can help them to improve.

As indicated earlier, observing lessons is not a random, or unplanned activity, but rather something with purpose and structure in mind. The framework of effective teaching provided as Figure 3.3 and the accompanying descriptions can be used to guide the observation of lessons and determine key questions to ask.

As a team leader, it is likely the outcomes you will seek from undertaking lesson observations will include:

- gaining objective information about the teacher's performance;
- making the teacher feel good about aspects of their performance that are noteworthy; and
- identifying the one or two areas where improvement is most required and can readily be achieved.

None of these outcomes ought to be a surprise to the teacher concerned. You should meet the teacher ahead of any observation and agree on the focus of the lesson and any ground rules to apply.

By the end of the lesson you should be able to identify areas of good practice as well as areas for improvement. This is done by comparing written, oral and observational evidence against clear and agreed criteria that relate to effective teaching overall, or maybe just one particular aspect related to the teacher's objectives.

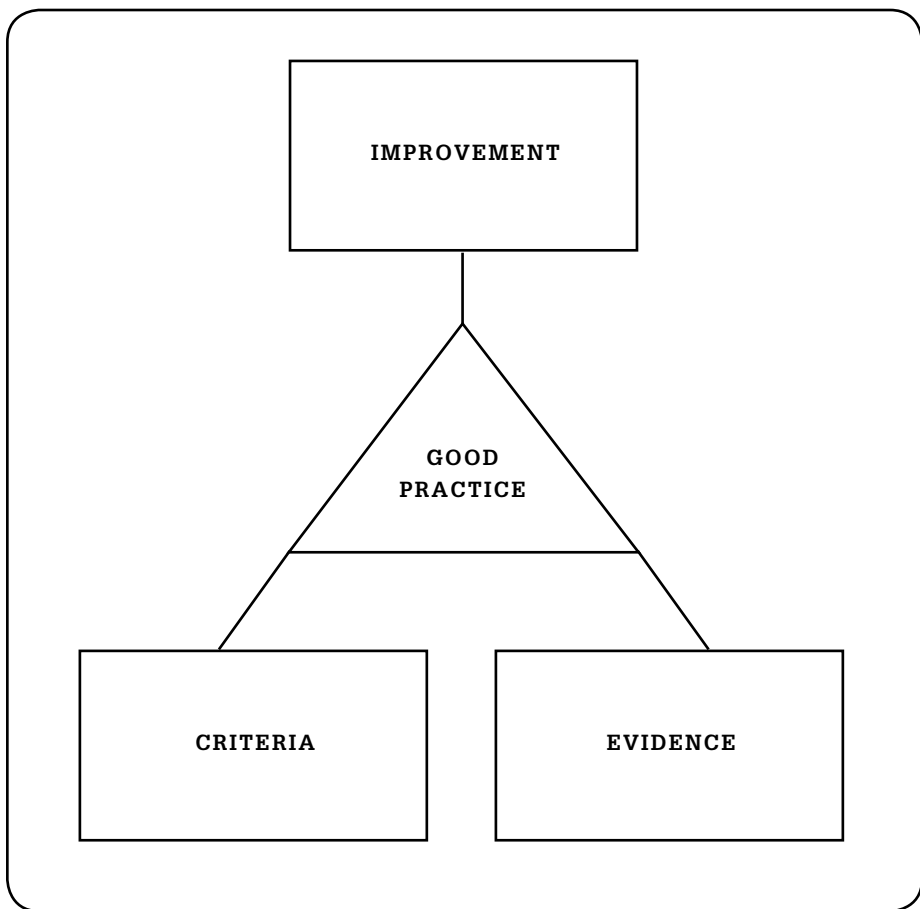


Figure 4.8 A framework for lesson observation

Table 4.1 provides even more detail on how you might prepare for the lesson, behave during the lesson and then follow it up.

Table 4.1 Good practice pointers for lesson observation

Before the lesson	During the lesson	After the lesson
<p>Agree practicalities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which lesson, when and where? ▪ Will there be a focus? ▪ What will students be told? ▪ Where will you sit? ▪ Will you get involved in the lesson? ▪ What if a student seriously misbehaves? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arrive before the start of the lesson. ▪ Use shorthand of some sort to record specific examples of what happened in the lesson, with a focus on what does or does not meet the standards in the criteria you have agreed. 	<p>Try using the following ‘six pack’ model to guide your discussion:</p>
<p>View the lesson in context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where does the lesson fit in the broader teaching program? ▪ What preceded the lesson and what comes next? ▪ What is the nature and context of the lesson? ▪ What are the intended learning outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talk to students, but only when this can be done without interrupting the lesson. ▪ Look at student work and the teachers’ notes/ mark book on student performance. ▪ If something unexpected happens, and the lesson is proving a disaster that is beyond the teacher’s control, leave and arrange another time to observe. ▪ Thank the teacher at the end of the lesson. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Introduction. Set the scene and purpose of the feedback. Amongst other things, this is an opportunity to put on your ‘team leader hat’ in a situation where the teacher may also be a close friend. 2 Ask the teacher to describe the elements of the lesson they felt went particularly well, and to give specific examples. 3 Add any further aspects of the lesson you felt were successful, with specific examples. 4 Ask the teacher to describe how, if they were to teach the lesson again, they would do things differently, and why. 5 Add suggestions, if appropriate, of how the lesson could be improved if it was to be taught again. 6 Summarise the feedback and note any actions for improvement and support, and how these will be monitored. Make sure you finish on a positive note.
<p>Agree on feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be given as soon as possible after the lesson. ▪ If that is not possible, then a brief verbal summary followed by a formal feedback session. ▪ Written feedback to be provided. 		

The pro forma provided as Figure 4.9 will help you to record your observations during the lesson and then provide feedback to the teacher concerned.

Figure 4.9 Pro forma for observing lessons

Teacher: Observer: Lesson observed:	
Focus areas for the observation (Outline of any agreed areas on which the observation will focus — for example, range of teaching strategies used, responding to different learning needs)	
Successful aspects of the lesson (Strengths)	Things that could be done more effectively (Areas to improve)
Suggested actions for improvement:	
Support the team leader can provide:	

Giving good feedback

Feedback is central to monitoring teacher performance and coaching teachers to improve. However, not all feedback is useful. To be effective it needs to be timely, specific, behavioural, regular and constructive. You also need clarity about the outcomes you seek from the process of giving feedback on performance to another teacher.

If you want the teacher to feel good about aspects of their performance, and to be determined to improve key aspects of their teaching, then you must provide feedback in ways that are likely to achieve these outcomes.

The following tried and true guidelines will help you in this regard.

Ensure that you have an audience

It has been said that the door to development is always locked from the inside. A crucial first step in the feedback process is thus to encourage the person to open the door. This can be achieved by something as simple as asking whether the teacher is ready for feedback on the lesson you have observed. Or it might require a conversation about the teacher's aspirations, in terms of the quality of their teaching in the shorter term, or the direction of their career in the longer term.

Conducting the feedback session

When providing formal feedback, make sure you:

- build rapport by showing real interest in the other person;
- explain the objectives of the session;
- ask what the teacher wants to get from the meeting;
- ask the teacher what they feel are their strengths and weaknesses;
- provide the feedback;
- mutually assess strengths/opportunities and shortcomings/development needs; and
- be tough about the facts, using available data and evidence, but be simultaneously open-minded about the reasons.

Reduce the amount of negative feedback

Aim for an 80:20 ratio of positive to negative feedback. Flooding someone with criticism rarely is helpful and will inhibit their willingness to change. If there is a number of areas of concern, then prioritise these and focus on the one or two that

most need to, and can be improved. If you put too much emphasis on negative aspects of performance, the teacher is likely to become defensive, blaming the students, parents, a lack of resources, and so on, with the result they are unlikely to put improvements in place.

Focus on their needs, not yours

Instead of ‘*I* was really pleased with the way students summarised their understanding at the end of the lesson’, try ‘*You* should be really pleased with ...’. After all, the point of the exercise is not to please you, nor to deliver the lesson to your liking, but to recognise and build on strengths, and create the conditions for improvement to occur. If things did go well, then you should encourage the teacher to feel good about them. Alternatively, if you have to provide advice, phrase it as ‘If *you* want fewer interruptions to the lesson, why not try ...’, which again means you focus on their needs.

Separate the person from the practice

Limit your description to what was said or done, rather than seeking to infer why. It is their practice that is outstanding, or that needs improving, and that ought to be the focus.

Be specific

Avoid general comments such as ‘the lesson got off to a good start’, and be specific instead, along the lines of ‘that cartoon you used in the PowerPoint presentation really seemed to catch the attention of the class’. If you feel things were excellent or poor, describe what happened in the class that led you to that view. The more specific the feedback, the greater the scope for learning, development and improved performance. Being clear about what is the behaviour enables the person to begin to contemplate alternative approaches they can adopt. Using the framework of effective teaching, in Figures 3.3 and 3.9 in this book, can help you to be very specific when giving feedback to colleagues on what you observed in their class.

Be objective

Be descriptive, rather than evaluative, with a focus on what effect the teacher’s actions had on you and the students in the class. Thus, rather than, ‘Your instructions for the practical activity were very unclear’, it is better to say, ‘When I asked several of the students, they said they were confused and unsure about what they were asked to do to carry out the practical activity’.

Focus feedback towards the future

The teacher cannot do anything about lessons they taught in the past. They can, however, do things differently and better in future, so the focus of talk should be what the teacher can do to improve the next time around. This converts negative feedback into a positive discussion, with a focus on behaviours the person can change.

Use 'and' rather than 'but'

You will be amazed how much more positive a sentence sounds when the word 'but' is removed. Typically, when people hear the word 'but' as part of the feedback process, they tend to recall only that part of the message that follows the 'but', and you lose the impact of any positive comments that preceded it.

Leave them with a choice

Offer information about the teacher's performance in ways that leave them a choice about what to act on and what not. Examine the consequences of decisions together, but do not simply prescribe change. It needs to be their decision.

Treat feedback as a two-way street

Invite the teacher to observe one or more of your classes both to provide feedback to you, and so that you can model approaches you are suggesting they might adopt.

Some feedback questions you may find helpful to use are:

- Is there anything else you feel I should know about — you, your class(es), or current issues — to understand your situation and be of most help to you?
- Do you believe you have accomplished what you set out to do?
- What are your career aspirations?
- What do you hope to accomplish before you move to a new role?
- Where do you see yourself going from here?

When you have talked through what the teacher wanted to accomplish, you could ask:

- Do you believe you have achieved this?

- What has made it possible for you to accomplish this? What obstacles have you encountered? How have you dealt with them?

And at the end of the discussion:

- What do you want to take away from this discussion?
- Has it been a worthwhile experience?
- How will you monitor yourself and your progress?
- What can you put in place to get feedback from colleagues?
- Is there anything else we need to do?
- In what ways do you think I can usefully assist you?

For the most part you can expect to provide positive feedback that allows you to give praise and compliments in a constructive way which not only makes the receiver feel good, but also helps improve their motivation and morale.

However there will be times when you will need to provide negative feedback if performance is to improve. Such negative feedback should be constructive, helpful and designed to encourage the receiver to learn and develop so their performance can be improved.

When giving negative feedback first ask yourself — Is this the right time and place? Have I got all the relevant facts? Is the situation really as I thought? What is the value of this feedback to the receiver?

Having prepared yourself in this way, you then need to be very specific, quote the facts and data you have acquired, and give examples where you can. Remember to describe the situation and not the person, concentrating on what was seen and felt, and not what was thought.

Avoid generalisations, such as ‘You are always late’, indicating instead that, ‘I am concerned about your timekeeping. You were late on three occasions last week and this morning you were not in class until 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time’.

This enables you to then focus on what actually can be changed. Comment in this context on behaviours, rather than any perceptions or interpretations you make. Avoid attempts to analyse possible causes of the behaviour, such as ‘I know you just do that because you have a need to be liked by the students you teach’.

Despite this advice, there will always be people who find it difficult, if not impossible, to accept that their own, often idealised or aspirational, view of their performance does not align with the view that others hold. And many such people respond to feedback in ways that parallel reactions to grief — beginning with surprise or shock, which gives way to denial and withdrawal, before any acceptance occurs of what has been said.

Our experience suggests that often in such circumstances, school leaders will try to ‘soften the blow’ in an attempt to protect the person, perhaps by rationalising the poorer aspects of performance or offering external factors the person can use as excuses for the shortfall in performance. Such an approach, however, neither helps the person to face the reality of the situation, nor to improve, and hence is unfair both to the individual concerned and to the staff and students with whom they work.

A preferable and workable alternative is to acknowledge the person’s adverse response to your news of poor performance (for example, ‘I know you must be disappointed to hear that ...’, or ‘I recognise this has come as something of a surprise/shock to you’). Then suggest they take time to reflect on what you have told them and/or discuss it with a trusted colleague, before returning to a subsequent meeting the following day.

Ultimately you, as the team leader, have the responsibility to ensure that each member of the team has an accurate, honest, evidence-based understanding of how others (that is, staff, students and parents) perceive their performance, and to then help them deal constructively with their own development needs.

The end-of-year review

The regular informal feedback you provide, and reviews of progress you may conduct as part of your monitoring and coaching throughout the year, will need to be supplemented by a formal review approximately a year after the initial objectives were set.

This provides the opportunity to:

- make a judgment about progress against the agreed objectives;
- determine individual development needs and how they best can be met; and
- set new objectives for the following year.

As with the planning discussion outlined earlier, you and the teacher should each prepare your own views on performance before the scheduled meeting. And if performance has been managed continuously through the year, then there should be no surprises on either count.

From your perspective the preparation should involve:

- reviewing the objectives and professional characteristics/skills developed over the year;
- clarifying what you and the teacher each want to get out of the review meeting;
- agreeing an agenda;
- coaching the teacher so they feel more comfortable in contributing to the discussion;
- taking a provisional view of actual performance;
- noting any specific feedback to be given;
- thinking through how the teacher may feel and react; and
- making sure the arrangements, such as the time, timing and venue, are most likely to contribute to a positive outcome for the teacher.

Bear in mind that judgments of performance should be informed by evidence related to what is expected of the teacher in their role, and not a matter of hearsay or ‘what I believe’.

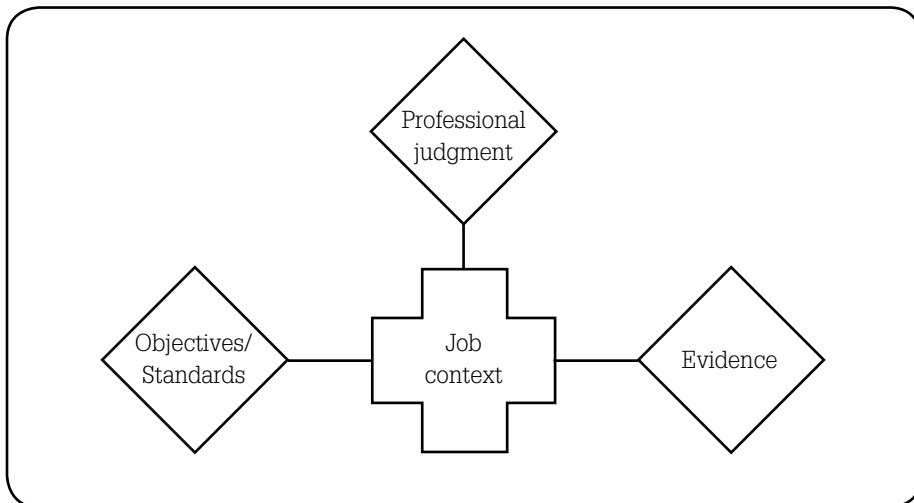


Figure 4.10 End-of-year reviews

Managing the performance review meeting

The review meeting itself then comprises six essential steps which are summarised in Figure 4.11.

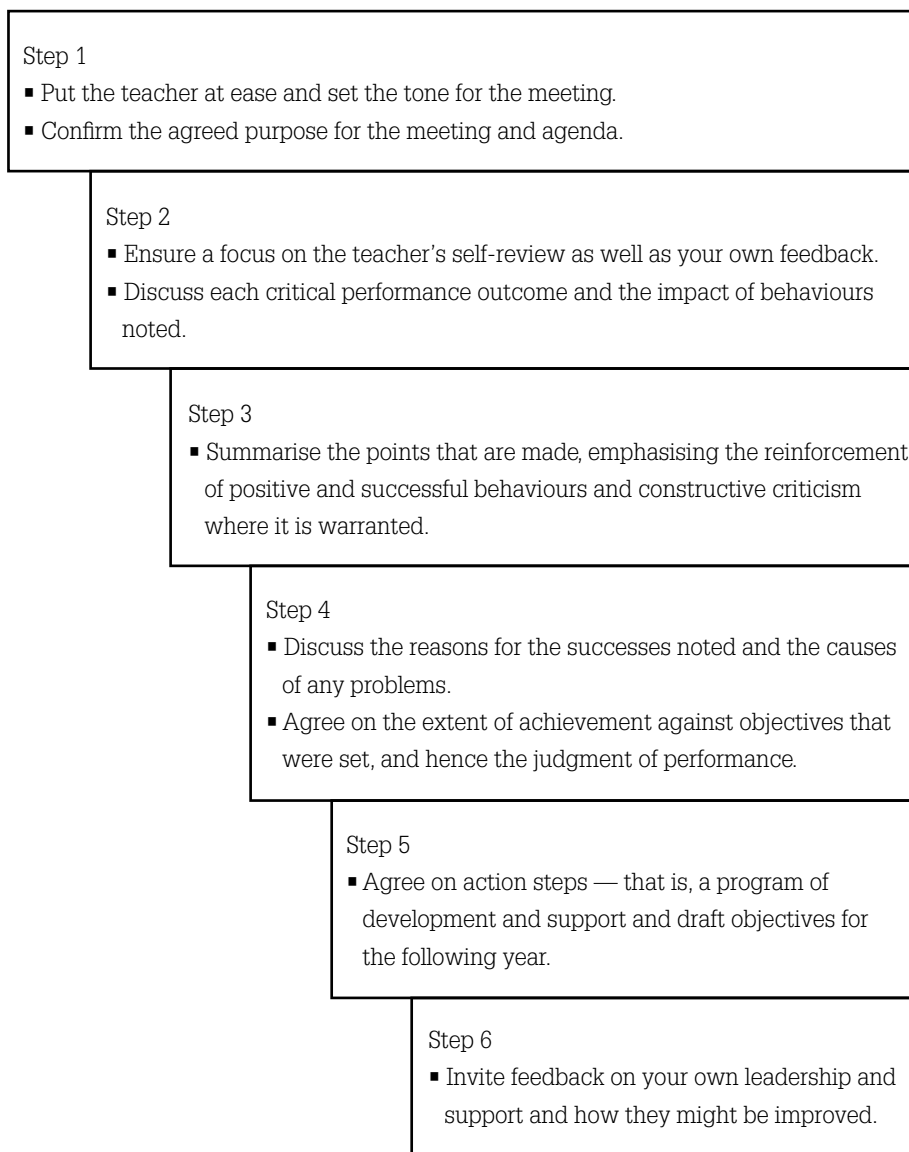


Figure 4.11 The performance review meeting

In broad terms, the meeting should comprise:

- planning and preparation on both sides;
- ‘warm-up’ discussion to put you both at ease;
- talking about the job and the context in which it is undertaken;
- expectations — what performance was expected?;
- job accomplishments/demonstrated competencies — what has been achieved?;
- consideration of any documentation and negotiation of assessment;
- objectives for the following year and associated action plan for development;
- and
- ‘wrap up’.

Then you will need to monitor performance and honour commitments in an ongoing way.

There are, in this context, a well-defined series of ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ which are best observed in preparing for, and conducting a final review. Since team leaders often are uncomfortable about conducting discussions of this sort, it is worth reviewing the following list of reminders which can help guarantee that the experience is a successful one.

Table 4.2 Dos and Don’ts of performance reviews

Do	Don’t
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carefully prepare for a performance review — not only know what you are going to say but also the language you are going to use ▪ Use teacher self-evaluation as a starting point — it is important to support and encourage honest self-evaluation ▪ Gather data on performance from a variety of sources for the full year, making sure you gain the teacher’s permission to get data from any colleagues ▪ Use managerial judgment based on behavioural evidence to balance the overall assessment ▪ Emphasise the description of results against objectives and the demonstration of behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limit yourself to recent data only, neglecting performance over the longer term ▪ Use mechanical formulae or rate each critical objective or competency in the same way ▪ Be judgmental or focus on the teacher’s personality as opposed to the way they behave ▪ Base your assessment on assumptions rather than evidence ▪ Discuss the performance of other teachers, compare this teacher with others, be vague or mysterious, or apologise for the assessment ▪ Tolerate unacceptable performance

Table 4.2 (Continued)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Explain how you determined the assessment, giving specific examples of how performance results were achieved and behaviours demonstrated▪ Confront and correct poor performance▪ Develop performance improvement plans▪ Conduct the meeting as a two-way process where you not only get the teacher's perceptions and reaction, but also ensure it is clear you are interested in what they think and feel▪ Focus on future development and consequent improvement of performance▪ Remember that improving student learning outcomes is directly connected to teachers continually improving their classroom practice▪ Remember to discuss both strengths and weaknesses — it is as important to build on the strengths as it is to address any shortcomings that exist▪ Discuss professional development opportunities and other strategies for improving practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Leave the teacher where they are, having judged their performance▪ Conduct a monologue where the teacher fails to get a say or put their point of view▪ Dwell on past problems, blame the teacher or put them on the defensive▪ Assume that improving performance is solely for those assessed as performing poorly in some way▪ Focus purely on weaknesses that need to be addressed.
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There should be no shocks or real surprises arising from the performance review. If there is an issue of unsatisfactory performance or issues related to particular events, these should have been subject to targeted discussions and feedback prior to the formal performance review.

Making professional judgments

Professional judgments balance day-to-day performance against the improvement objectives that were set and always must be evidence-based. Key sources of evidence you can use arise from:

- monitoring student progress over time;
- lesson observations you conduct;
- any professional development portfolio the teacher has agreed to keep; and
- any other documented evidence, including relevant data that exists.

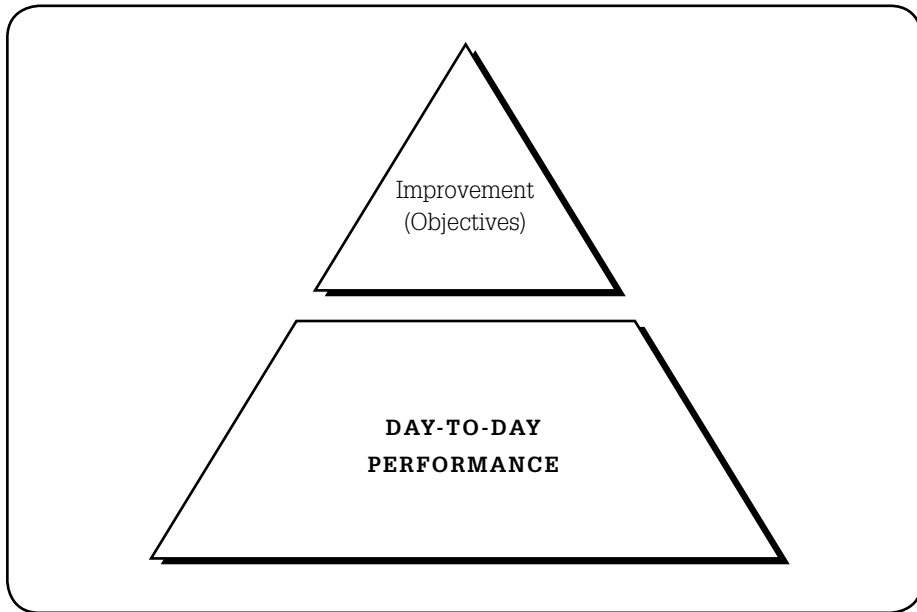


Figure 4.12 Making a professional judgment

Five key hints that can help you to make your judgments are:

- 1 Your judgment must be in the context of the job and take account of the teacher's stage of career.
- 2 Any judgment should be based on the degree of improvement achieved by the teacher, rather than focused purely on whether the objective has or has not been met. In other words, focus on what is better and/or different now and the degree of value added as a result.
- 3 Comment if possible on the actual progress of students against expectations and the objective set, since improved student learning is what it all is about. This is more likely to be possible if you and the teacher have monitored student progress over the year, which in turn can be guided by the pro forma provided as Table 5.1 in the following chapter of this book.
- 4 Reference day-to-day performance against a professional standards framework such as the agreed national standards included in Chapter 1 (Table 1.2) and explored further in the guidance for teachers that comprises Chapter 5.
- 5 Draw on all available evidence, including that provided by the teacher themselves.

Guidance for teachers in working with their team leaders

Performance management offers you the opportunity to be recognised for your achievements, receive feedback on your performance from a trusted leader of your team, and take an active role in your own future development through a process of self-evaluation and review.

The key steps outlined in this chapter for an empowered approach to managing your own performance and improving your outcomes are:

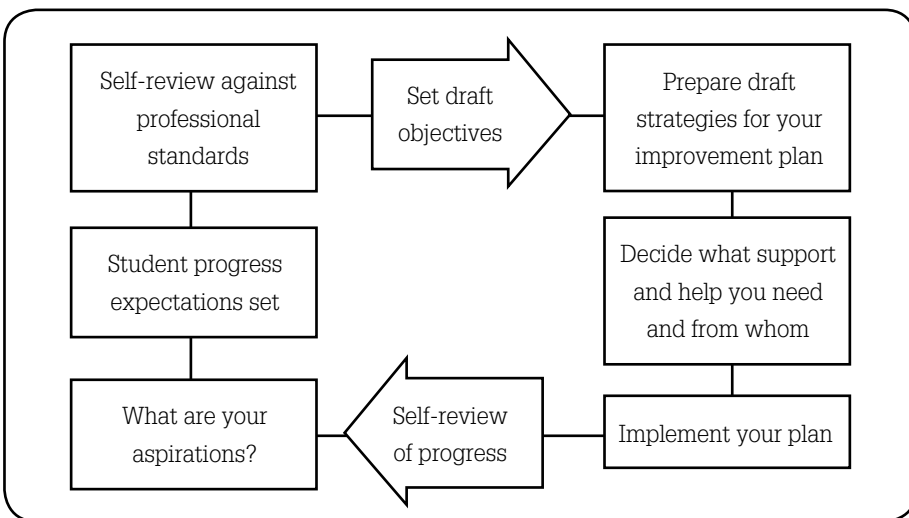


Figure 5.1 Managing your own performance

Setting your objectives

A wealth of research has demonstrated the importance of setting clear objectives for success to be achieved. Put simply, knowing what you want to achieve focuses your attention both on your objective and things that may help you to get there.

That said, objectives that are vague are unlikely to help, in the way that ‘I ought to lose some weight’ rarely yields that result. By contrast, as stated in Chapter 4, a quality objective is characterised by the fact it is:

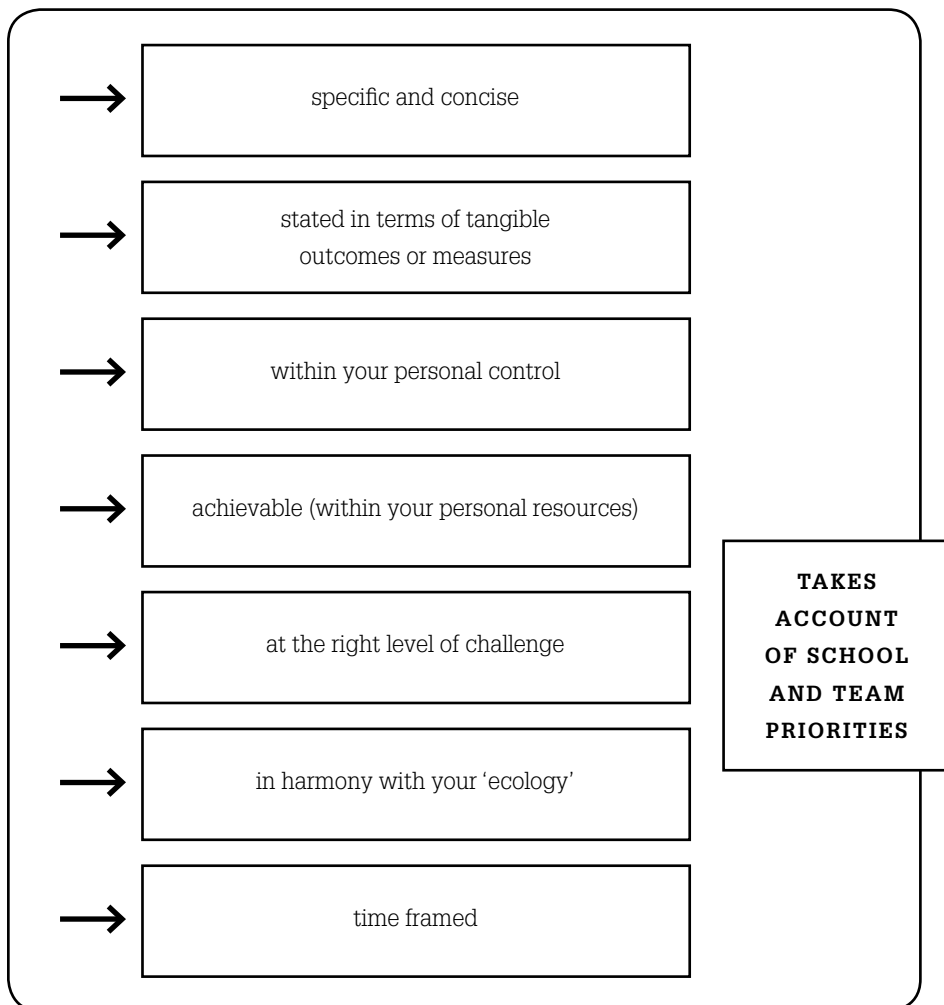


Figure 5.2 What makes a quality objective?

Quality objectives are also flexible so that if factors change, and they are no longer appropriate, then the objective is amended or even entirely reset. This is something that is best done together with your team leader to avoid any confusion later on.

It is generally the case that performance is higher when challenging, quality objectives are set, even if the objective is not quite met. If you aim higher, within realistic bounds, then you will find you extend your reach. You will also find that it helps build your enthusiasm and energy for undertaking the activities to attain it.

Since improved student learning is the moral compass which guides your work, the objectives you set should include at least one relating to student progress. If you also have a management responsibility of some sort, such as leading a department or subject area, then you really should set two — an individual objective for a cohort of students you teach, and a management objective for a whole year level or even the school.

Examples of these sorts of objectives are:

Individual student progress objective

- To improve the proportion of Year 3 students achieving expected Reading levels for their age from 85% to 90% by the end of the year.

Management objective for year level team leader

- To improve the average daily attendance level of Year 9 students over the next twelve months.

Monitoring student performance

Setting objectives to improve student performance requires you to monitor it over time. The pro forma in Figure 5.3, along with the three steps for tracking performance included in Table 5.1, can help you in this task.

Figure 5.3 Format for monitoring and/or setting student progress

Class /example with details of the class context (ability/absence rate/other factors)				
Prior attainment				
Expected progress				
Actual progress made				
Evaluation of progress				

Table 5.1 Tracking student performance

Step 1 <i>(Preferably early February)</i>	Context	Complete this section for each class with the help of your team leader. You may be guided by commercially or school produced predicted performance data. This may have to be modified to take into consideration the context of the class.
	Prior attainment	
	Expected attainment	
Step 2 <i>(Just before, and then during, your review meeting)</i>	Set a draft student progress objective	With reference to the school improvement plan and departmental improvement plan, set a draft objective for one of your classes, with sufficient challenge and stretch in the degree of progress you expect your students to make. The draft objective is discussed with your team leader and a final student progress objective agreed.
	Agree a student progress objective	
Step 3 <i>(Just before your final review)</i>	Complete final attainment and evaluation columns	Again, this is completed in discussion with your team leader. The evaluation takes into consideration student movement in and out of the class and any factors outside your control. It is the evaluation rather than the final attainment that is used as a basis for the final review.

Once your objectives are set and agreed, you can develop appropriate strategies to achieve them, with reference to the teaching skills and professional characteristics outlined in detail in Chapter 3 of this book. This in turn will help you determine the support you will need from your team leader and others in the school as implementation of your improvement plan begins.

Conducting a self-review

The process of self-review is an important part of the ongoing performance management process and your formal end-of-year review. It helps you to monitor your own performance through the year and provides input to your performance review meeting with your team leader as outlined in Figure 4.11 (page 74).

The process of self-review starts with identifying your aspirations and knowing exactly what you want for yourself. Systems and organisational learning thinker, Peter Senge (1992) puts it in terms of the ‘personal mastery’ which underpins all learning at the individual level.

Personal mastery in Senge’s view is based on the development and continual clarification of a personal vision — based on what we really want from our lives — to provide the framework for individual action. The energy source for personal mastery derives from the creative tension that exists between what we truly want (or personal vision) and the current reality — ‘holding a vision and concurrently telling the truth about current reality relative to that vision’ (p. 357).

Once you know what you want for yourself and where you want to go, then you can start making it happen.

If you don’t know where you are going, then any road will do!

Successful objective setting in this context is more than just a matter of planned, systematic thought. It involves a measure of dreaming and emotion as well. Using, in effect, what is commonly referred to as both parts of your brain — that is, both the left, which is commonly thought of as the logical thinking side of the brain, and the right, which is usually seen as the creative side.

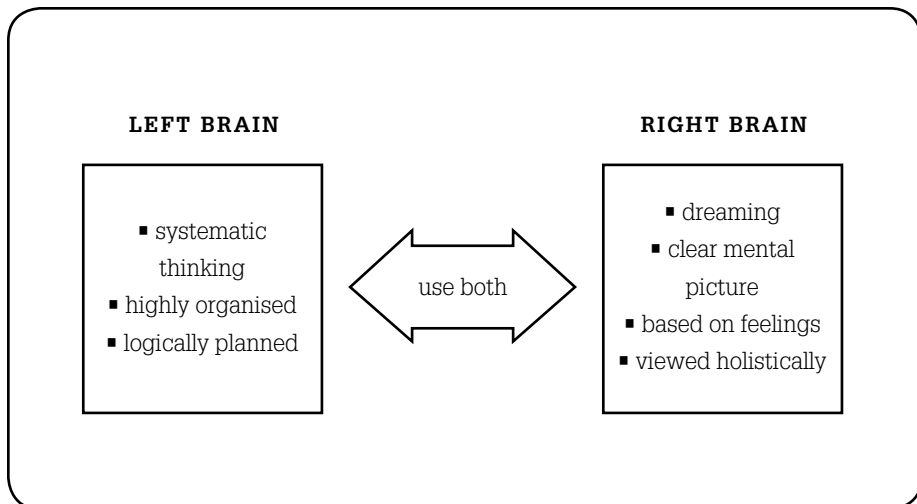


Figure 5.4 Using your whole brain

Most individuals have a defined preference for one or other of these styles of thinking. But, if we are conscious of the distinction involved, we can combine our logical, sequential, rational, analytical, objective preferences of the left with the random, intuitive, holistic, synthesising, subjective tendencies of the right and thereby adopt a more ‘whole brained’ and hence broader approach.

The challenge, then, is to integrate this approach with your overall moral imperative to contribute to improved learning for all the students you teach, using the following ten steps for self-review.

Ten Steps for Self-review

- 1 Know what you want for yourself — your aspirations.
- 2 Complete Step 1 of the tracking student performance pro forma (Table 5.1) with the help of your team leader.
- 3 Set a draft student progress objective.
- 4 Complete the self-review pro forma provided as Figure 5.5, using the professional standards framework provided in Chapter 1 of this book (Table 1.2) and explored in more detail in Figures 5.8 to 5.11.
- 5 Ask colleagues and students to provide feedback on your performance as appropriate.
- 6 List your strengths and areas where you believe most improvement is required.
- 7 Prioritise areas for self-improvement, with reference to the draft student progress objective as well as school and departmental improvement plans.
- 8 Write draft objectives for these prioritised self-improvement areas to supplement the student progress objective.
- 9 Think about what you will do differently to achieve these objectives, the resources and professional development you may need, and the support and help you require from your team leader.
- 10 Give a copy of the draft objectives to your team leader to consider before you get together in your first review meeting.

A professional development portfolio

You could also consider starting a professional development portfolio to guide your ongoing development, comprising:

- Your job description
- A copy of the school improvement plan

Figure 5.5 Self-review summary

Professional standard areas	Strengths	Areas for improvement
Professional knowledge		
Professional practice		
Professional values		
Professional relationships		
<p>Draft three to five objectives, including your student progress objective. (Make sure you give these draft objectives to your team leader before your review meeting to help frame your discussion.)</p>		

- Your self-review documentation
- Your pro forma for monitoring student progress
- A copy of your objectives and improvement plan
- A log/record of professional development activities you undertake
- A copy of written feedback from lesson observation(s)
- A copy of your final performance review statement
- Letters from parents, notes from students, photographs, certificates, etc.
- Anything else you want, as it is *yours*.

A portfolio of this sort is particularly useful when you:

- discuss performance at your end-of-year review, as it can provide verification of your self-assessment;
- assemble evidence to support any job application you make within or beyond the school; and
- plan for further learning and growth.

Seeking and responding to feedback

You may seek feedback on a regular basis and/or as part of your process of self-review. You undoubtedly will receive feedback as part of any lesson observation schedule that occurs. Regular feedback is vital in helping all of us to improve our performance. It provides us with information from different sources and perspectives, and gives insight to how others respond to the efforts we expend. Feedback is something to be welcomed, rather than feared.

The following tips may prove useful when seeking and responding to feedback from others.

Listen to feedback and try not to reject or argue with it straight away

This sometimes means listening to things we would rather not hear. But if we are defensive or resistant, people will simply not provide feedback in future, much to our own cost. So listen carefully and ask for clarification if there is anything about which you are unsure. Show encouragement, since the person providing the feedback may be as nervous as you. Listening does not mean acceptance in all cases, but at least be open to what is being said.

Be clear about what is being said, and why

Try to avoid jumping to conclusions and becoming defensive. Make sure you understand before you respond. Paraphrasing is a useful technique to check you have understood what has been said. Ask the person to provide specific behavioural examples.

Check it out with others rather than relying on a single source

People view situations from a range of different perspectives. Eliciting information from a variety of colleagues or sources, such as students and parents, helps provide a balanced view. (See also '360 degree or multi-rater review' in Chapter 1.)

Ask for the feedback you want/need, but may not automatically get

If feedback does not occur naturally in the school, you may need to ask for it. Sometimes feedback is restricted to one area of our practice and we may need to request it on other areas as well, especially to inform the development of your personal improvement plan.

Decide what you will do as a result of the feedback

The feedback you receive will confirm where your practice is good and meets the expectations and standards of the school. It also will highlight areas where you need to improve. You will need to determine how best to build on your strengths and address your development needs. To assist your thinking, review the feedback in light of the professional characteristics described in Chapter 3 of this book.

Thank the person for giving the feedback

Constructive feedback is invaluable and you should thank the person for giving their help. In addition, you could tell them the aspects you found most useful and how you now intend to respond.

Frequently asked questions about the process of self-review

Before proceeding to explore a professional standards model you can use to help guide the process of self-review, it is important to address a number of questions which commonly emerge.

Who knows my objectives?

Your objectives and associated improvement plan are recorded during your initial review meeting. Both you and your team leader will keep a copy of the plan, and it is appropriate for the principal to keep copies of plans for all teachers in the school. Beyond this, the professional development coordinator should be informed of any specific learning and development needs they will need to help you to meet.

How can managers other than my team leader (usually a head of department) support me without being part of my process of self-review?

You could consider providing them with a copy of your objectives and improvement plan and discussing their role in supporting you to achieve this. While not formally part of the review process, there is nothing to stop you involving them along the way and enlisting their support.

How can we support each other as members of a team to meet objectives which are specific to individual teachers?

Once again, the answer lies in sharing the objectives you have set. This enables you to see the degree of overlap that exists, and hence the potential for collaborative action to improve, as well as the differences, where you may be able to learn from each other's different strengths and/or share the outcomes of your different learning tasks. Indeed, research shows that sharing our own goals with colleagues, and enlisting their support in working toward them, significantly increases the probability of achieving them (Boyatzis 2002).

What data can help to set student performance targets?

While schools can choose to use the data they find most reliable and helpful, it is important to ensure a mix of internal and external sources so a measure of objectivity is assured. Relying solely on school-based data may build in a bias related to expectations in the school which do not necessarily match the standards expected in other comparable schools.

Who determines who my team leader will be?

Principals are responsible for appointing team leaders. Since the relationship between teacher and team leader is crucial to ongoing success, principals should be sensitive and ensure that team leader allocation takes account of this. They

should, therefore, consult widely, though the final decision is theirs. All team leaders should be in a position to help and support teachers to achieve their objectives, and the principal in turn should support the team leaders in this role.

Can I opt out of performance management?

That depends on the decision of the school but ultimately, if improvement is expected, then it is not really something from which you can disengage. Performance management increasingly is emerging as the hallmark of being a professional in an organisation, and an important aspect of ensuring a more collegiate, rather than individualistic approach. It is in the best interests of our students that we commit to a personal program of continuous improvement.

What if it all starts going wrong?

If you feel that the process is not proceeding as it should, you can take the matter to the principal for consideration and review — this is one reason the principal is one step removed. At the very least you can ask for a meeting between your team leader and you, with the principal as mediator, to get things back on track. If this does not work, then you ultimately have the right to take your grievance elsewhere. This should be indicated in clear grievance procedures written into the school performance management processes.

Can I choose the lesson(s) my team leader will observe?

While the choice of lessons should be the subject of consultation between you and your team leader, it is important to ensure that ‘real’ lessons are observed. Since improvement, not judgment, is the purpose, you should be honest about the lessons that are seen, rather than seeking set-piece lessons that make you look good. That is one reason why you could consider having more than one lesson observed, since different lessons will work to differing degrees. If you also encourage other colleagues to observe your lessons, you will have an even more balanced set of perspectives on your teaching effectiveness.

Is there a link between performance reviews and pay?

This depends on the policies of the school and/or the jurisdiction in which you work. Where such a link exists, it only reinforces the need for objective evidence to be sought, and for input to be received from more than one source.

Finding time for the process

There are, according to Covey et al. (1994), two primary factors that drive the choices about how we use our time — urgency and importance. Although we deal with both factors, one of them will tend to be the basic paradigm through which we view our time and our lives.

Few of us realise how powerfully urgency affects our choices. The phone rings. A child demands instant attention. Someone appears at the door. Or a deadline approaches. The dilemma is to what extent urgency affects your life, and how to focus more attention on what really matters most.

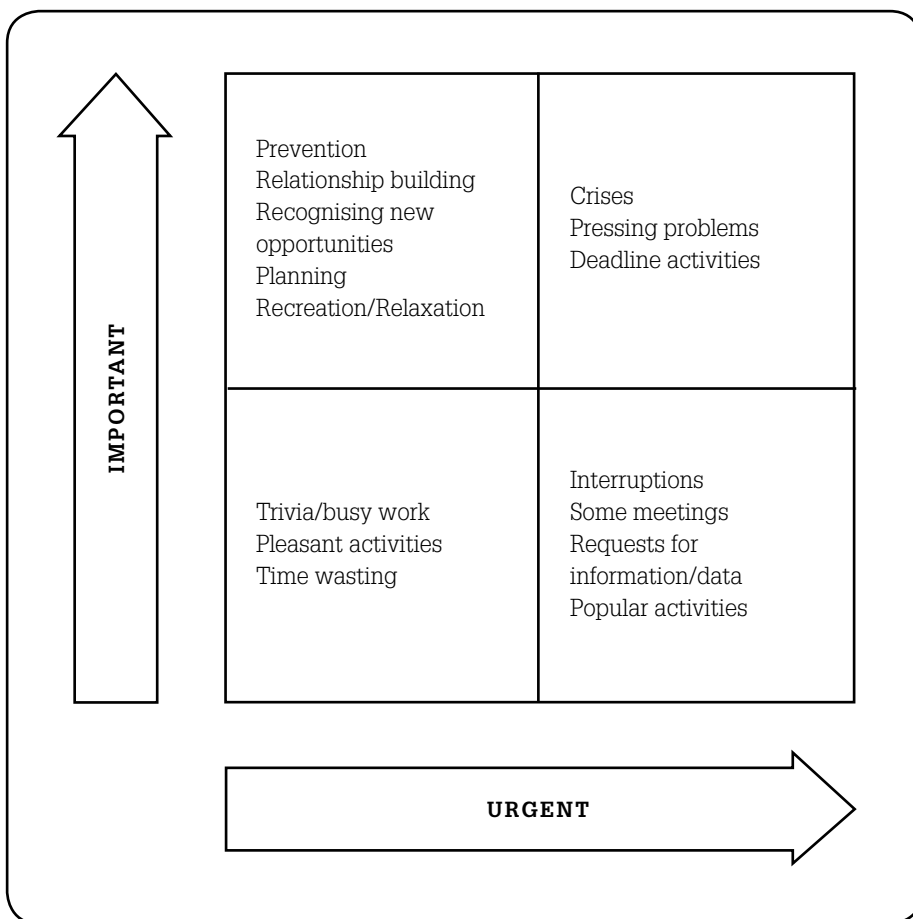


Figure 5.6 Time management matrix

Remember it is not urgency in itself that is the problem. The problem arises when urgency is the dominant factor in our lives and importance isn't. We become so busy doing things, we don't stop and ask whether what we are doing is really important and needs to be done. This in turn results in loads of activity that only leads to crisis, burn out and stress.

Performance management, and its focus on objectives that matter most, can actually be an investment of time to reduce the number of future crises, and hence use this resource to better effect.

A professional standards model of self-review

The professional standards model of self-review outlined below focuses on an analysis of performance against the four key dimensions comprising the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching, agreed by MCEETYA and outlined in Table 1.2 previously. The more that performance in these dimensions improves, the greater the progress that students will make.

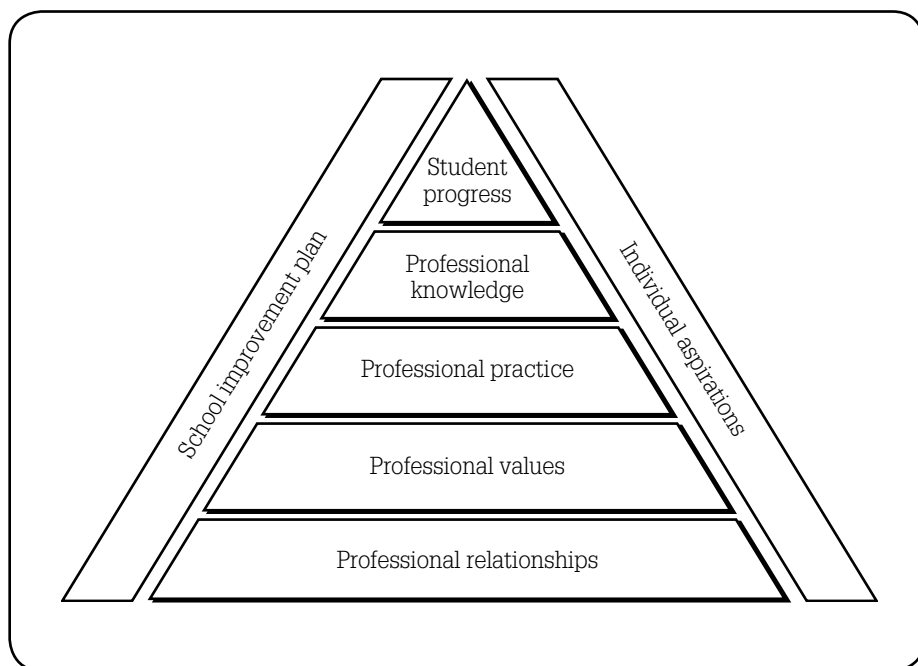


Figure 5.7 The professional standards model

Each dimension in the model is defined in Figures 5.8 to 5.11. Each figure contains a cluster of standards under descriptive headings, which constitute examples of good practice as demonstrated by research. For each cluster, you can use the rating system:

- M** Current level of performance is good and I need at least to MAINTAIN it
- I** Performance in this area is reasonable with room for IMPROVEMENT
- C** My day-to-day practice does not reflect this standard and I need to CHANGE the way I am doing things and seek to develop these skills.

Your ratings will help you to summarise the strengths on which you can build and areas where you most need to improve. This in turn can enable you to identify specific professional development activities and other support to form the basis of your personal improvement plan.

You can then prioritise the areas for improvement, taking account of the overall school improvement plan, and set draft objectives for your selected key priorities for action.

While the tables will help you in your self-review and the development of an appropriate personal improvement plan, they should not be regarded as either exhaustive or fixed. Rather, they should be used flexibly, and amended/supplemented as needed to meet the specific circumstances of your school and the role you fulfil within it.

Figure 5.8 National Standards — Professional Knowledge¹

Descriptions of good practice	M/I/C	Professional Development to improve
<p>Knowledge and understanding of the discipline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows the structure and major concepts of the discipline ▪ Reads material containing up-to-date knowledge and information about the discipline ▪ Engages in discipline-related discussion with colleagues within and beyond the school ▪ Researches unfamiliar areas of discipline matter to prepare for teaching these areas 		
<p>Links to other content areas and integration of learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refers to programs of study in other relevant areas/ year levels when developing schemes of work ▪ Relates discipline to the requirements in other areas of the curriculum ▪ Reads about broader cross-curriculum initiatives ▪ Relates teaching to requirements for the curriculum as a whole (for example, to develop thinking and problem-solving skills) 		
<p>Teaching the content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learns and applies new teaching techniques applicable to the discipline ▪ Uses students' everyday experiences to illustrate ideas and issues ▪ Responds to students' questions with a range of examples drawn from discipline knowledge ▪ Regularly devises lessons, homework activities and assessment tasks appropriate to the level(s) of students in the class ▪ Identifies issues that lead to increased understanding and later curriculum developments in the discipline ▪ Structures complex elements so the underpinning ideas can be established and taught to individuals, groups and the class as a whole 		
<p>Understanding how young people learn and facilitating this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows how learners develop coherent structures of information ▪ Helps students make connections between new situations and familiar ones ▪ Challenges and corrects naive misconceptions students may hold ▪ Extends students' knowledge and skills beyond the narrow contexts in which they are first learned 		

¹ Only abbreviated versions of the standards are included in Figures 5.8 to 5.11. The standards in full can be found in Table 1.2 in Chapter 1.

Figure 5.8 (Continued)

Descriptions of good practice	M/I/C	Professional Development to improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conveys underlying principles that can be applied to problems in new contexts ▪ Promotes students' self-awareness as learners 		
<p>Knows and understands a range of learning philosophies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supplements content and pedagogical knowledge with 'pedagogical content knowledge' about how to teach in particular disciplines ▪ Articulates the philosophical basis of their own teaching approach 		
<p>Critically evaluates and applies teaching and learning theories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regularly questions the way things are taught and seeks improvements ▪ Continually maintains up-to-date knowledge of teaching techniques and evaluates their effectiveness in the classroom 		
<p>Accommodates diverse student needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows each student's background and the implications of this for their learning at school ▪ Understands that different students have different learning needs 		
<p>Structures learning to take account of these differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plans sequences of lessons to address the strengths and/or learning weaknesses of individuals or groups in the class ▪ Varies tasks and approaches to provide appropriate challenge and support to individuals and groups ▪ Explains concepts in different ways to take account of varying levels of understanding 		

Figure 5.9 National Standards — Professional Practice

Descriptions of good practice	M/I/C	Professional Development to improve
<p>Effective communication and setting clear goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has clear learning objectives for each lesson/sequence of lessons ▪ Draws the attention of students to the purpose(s) of each lesson and then the extent to which this has been met ▪ Provides students with an overview of lessons/modules ▪ Develops beliefs in students about what they can achieve ▪ Explains an idea in different ways to students to take account of various levels of understanding ▪ Supports students to visualise the successful outcomes of their work 		
<p>Repertoire of techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses a variety of methods to create interest and engage students' minds (for example, stories and anecdotes, group work, use of ICT) ▪ Varies tasks and approaches to provide appropriate challenge to individuals and groups of students (for example, varying time, format, language) ▪ Strikes a balance between the main elements of teaching (whole class instruction, individual work, collaborative group work, class management activities, assessment, review of learning) ▪ Uses modelling to help students understand difficult concepts ▪ Relates classwork to everyday experience of students ▪ Tries out new approaches to teaching and learning gained from colleagues and/or research 		
<p>Structuring of content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plans lessons to meet identified learning goals ▪ Discusses planning with colleagues to ensure sequencing is right ▪ Changes lesson plans during the lesson in response to what occurs and feedback that students provide ▪ Reviews and improves schemes with colleagues, making appropriate changes based on feedback ▪ Helps students to make connections with learning in other discipline areas ▪ Amends lesson plans in order to develop pace and uses opportunities to respond to unexpected weaknesses 		
<p>Managing the class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensures that learning is the primary focus of lessons ▪ Sets clear expectations for learning behaviour ▪ Takes action when standards of behaviour and learning fall below expectations ▪ Is consistent in both the recognition of good behaviour and achievement and the management of poor behaviour and achievement 		

Figure 5.9 (Continued)

Descriptions of good practice	M/I/C	Professional Development to improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides constructive feedback to students ▪ Boosts confidence in a class, group or individual (for example, by encouraging students to take pride in their work, using displays) ▪ Regularly uses time for reflection on learning in lessons 		
<p>Creating safe, supportive learning environments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effectively manages the use of classroom space ▪ Models the equitable and respectful treatment of all students ▪ Values all positive contributions in class ▪ Takes action when student safety is jeopardised or infringed 		
<p>Using formative and summative assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides students with an understanding of the standards of work expected of them and their relationship to class targets ▪ Works with students to set individual learning goals and targets ▪ Reviews performance with individual students or groups (for example, after a learning task) ▪ Provides ongoing feedback to keep students informed about how well they are progressing and how any problems can be overcome ▪ Involves students in self-assessment and peer assessment ▪ Reviews the performance of a student or class with colleagues in the school ▪ Provides clear reports to students and parents on student progress, performance against expected standards, and advice on how to improve ▪ Takes action to alert a parent or colleague about underperformance of an individual or group 		
<p>Evaluating teaching and providing feedback to students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviews and improves teaching approaches with colleagues and makes changes according to the feedback received ▪ Builds an element of risk into lessons to evaluate new teaching approaches ▪ Develops a feedback system for students (for example, by describing the meaning of marking systems for assessment tasks) ▪ Regularly provides constructive formative feedback to students ▪ Marks work promptly to keep students informed about how well they are progressing and how problems may be overcome, so expected standards can be achieved 		

Figure 5.10 National Standards — Professional Values

Descriptions of good practice	M/I/C	Professional Development to improve
<p>Commitment to personal development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seeks opportunities to build knowledge and skills in one’s discipline, teaching methodologies and other class-related areas ▪ Reflects on own performance as a means of self-improvement ▪ Actively seeks feedback as a major source of learning and improvement ▪ Seeks opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in areas that may be useful, although currently outside areas of responsibility ▪ Plans activities to improve capability at work (for example, observation of others, undertaking training programs, participating in working parties) 		
<p>Responsive to context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operates within the school’s values and improvement plan ▪ Plans ways of operating that take account of different environments and cultures ▪ Adjusts ways of working to changes in the environment (for example, a new curriculum framework, different teaching approaches) ▪ Alters strategies and modifies behaviour when plans and approaches are not working ▪ Seeks and acknowledges the merits of different viewpoints and responds positively to evidence from data and research 		
<p>Partnership with parents/carers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides parents/carers with key information about their children’s learning (for example, standards expected, progress made, ways in which to improve) ▪ Seeks parent/carer participation in class and extracurricular activities ▪ Sets homework activities that require learning resources to be used which are based in the home and community ▪ Encourages parents to initiate contact about any concerns related to their child’s education at school 		
<p>High professional ethics and respect for students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows what is expected of professional teachers and adheres to this ▪ Sets high personal standards as an example to students and other staff ▪ Respects the individual needs, contributions and feelings of all students in the class ▪ Responds objectively to students, especially in the judgment of their performance 		

Figure 5.10 (Continued)

Descriptions of good practice	M/I/C	Professional Development to improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assumes responsibility within own job description and takes action to maximise opportunities within one's control ▪ Makes suggestions for improvement within one's department and school 		
<p>Act professionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Works diligently to meet targets and deadlines and ensures all work is completed to agreed standards ▪ Works to achieve standards of excellence for the school ▪ Applies school systems and procedures consistently (for example, discipline procedures) ▪ Maintains a professional approach at all times, even when under pressure, and remains calm in difficult situations ▪ Keeps things in perspective and maintains commitment and effectiveness 		

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Figure 5.11 National Standards — Professional Relationships

Descriptions of good practice	M/I/C	Professional Development to improve
<p>Engage with diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifies the different needs of students and adopts strategies to meet them ▪ Seeks to make all students feel valued and that they can succeed at school 		
<p>Form/engage in professional relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actively seeks partnerships with colleagues (in and beyond the school) and a range of school community members ▪ Seeks opportunities to connect students to the wider school community 		
<p>Work with colleagues, home and the community to promote student learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shares and asks for ideas, and offers and seeks help from others in the school ▪ Contributes to an atmosphere of teamwork and cooperation within and beyond the school in the interests of student learning ▪ Actively participates in team-based teaching and learning activities (for example, collaborative development of teaching units, team teaching, lesson observations) 		
<p>Develop relationships of trust with students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Takes account of the feelings and emotions of students and is sensitive to their temperaments and moods ▪ Seeks to view things from the perspective of others ▪ Appreciates and respects diversity within the classroom ▪ Responds to students' interests, emotions and concerns ▪ Consistently acts to maintain students' self-esteem 		

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Monitoring the impact of your performance management system

Monitoring the impact

It is important to monitor the impact of performance management at two levels:

- *Level 1* — Did it happen and, if so, in the way it was planned? This is a relatively simple task, and the action list in Chapter 1 (Figure 1.2) provides a basis for monitoring of this sort.
- *Level 2* — How effective has the performance management process been in terms of its purposes and outcomes? This arguably is the more important question at this stage, and hence is the focus of the advice in this last chapter of the book.

Level 2 monitoring is, in effect, concerned with the benefits that result from implementing performance management in the school and ensuring that those benefits flow, if that is not already happening.

The potential benefits arising from performance management will vary according to the scale and quality of the implementation program you put in place.

Improved climate

At the lower level, you can expect your program to lead to better team leader/teacher skills in setting objectives, managing one's own and others' performance, and reviewing performance as a whole. Improved skills and a better-managed process should in turn lead to a more positive school climate in each of the dimensions of rewards, clarity, team spirit, flexibility, responsibility and standards. These were identified by Hay Group for the purpose of its online suite of tools for measuring school and classroom climate. (See also, 'Measuring classroom climate' in Chapter 3.)

Table 6.1 Dimensions of a positive school climate

Rewards	More frequent and positive recognition of good performance and addressing performance issues	Clarity	A clearer idea of the 'big picture' and how my job contributes to it
Team spirit	More collegiate working and identification of dependencies and interdependencies should lead to a rise in team spirit	Flexibility	Removing some of the constraints on performance
Responsibility	More delegation with increased accountability for the results	Standards	The setting of challenging, but also realistic goals and monitoring of the standards achieved

At this level it is appropriate, therefore, to use a school climate survey of some sort to measure the impact of your performance management over time. More specifically, it is advisable to conduct the climate survey at the start of implementation so some baseline data is in place, and then repeat it every 12 to 18 months to assess the impact you have achieved. It is important to note, however, that even though improved school climate data is a usual result, it is not the sole indicator of improved teacher performance. Care must be taken to set such data alongside student achievement data to ensure that the full picture is known.

Improved capacity and links

At higher levels, the performance management process should also lead to changed behaviours reflecting what is known about the teaching skills and professional characteristics that work best (see Chapter 3 for more detail), and better linkages between the range of processes used in the school. The benefits that can be expected to flow from a fully-fledged performance management intervention in schools are summarised in Figure 6.1.

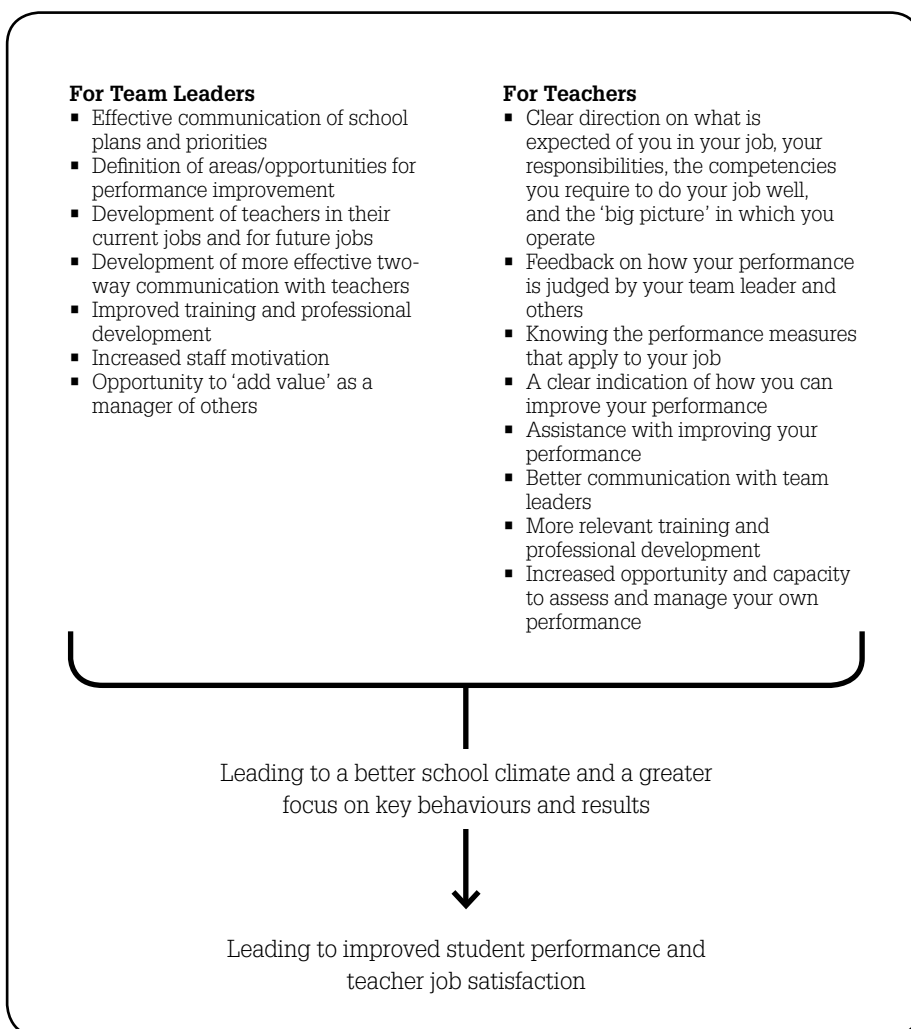


Figure 6.1 Benefits expected from performance management

Tools you can use

The following tools are provided to assist you to move beyond an assessment of the implementation of performance management itself (the lower level), to an evaluation of the broader impact performance management has had on the school.

Surveying staff

A relatively simple way of determining if the benefits sought have been achieved, and school climate improved, is to survey the staff as a whole — or at least a cross-section of staff. There are many surveys your school can adopt, including ones you may devise yourselves.

The following set of questions is based on evidence required to meet the *Investors in People Standard*¹, which is a tool for delivering school improvement that applies in the United Kingdom. It is interesting to note that positive outcomes to the questions on this list mean that the school already has around two-thirds of the evidence required to be recognised as an *Investor in People*.

Questions for staff

- Do you believe the school is genuinely committed to supporting your development?
- Give an example of how you have been encouraged to improve your own performance.
- Give an example of how you have been encouraged to contribute to improving the performance of others.
- Do you believe that your contribution to the school is recognised?
- Describe how your contribution to the school is recognised.
- Have you received appropriate and constructive feedback on a timely and regular basis?
- Describe the nature of the feedback you received.
- Do you clearly understand what your development activities should achieve both for you and the school?
- Explain how you have contributed to achieving the school's aims and objectives.

1 <http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk>

- Do you understand what your team leader should be doing to support your development?
- Describe how your team leader has effectively supported your development.
- Do you understand why you have undertaken development activities and what you are expected to do as a result?
- Give examples of what you have learned (knowledge, skills and attitudes) from development activities undertaken.
- Explain the impact of your development on your performance, the performance of your team and the school as a whole.

Additional questions for team leaders

- Does the school ensure that you have the knowledge and skills you need to lead the development of your staff?
- Do you understand what you need to do to support the development of staff?
- Give examples of actions you have taken and are currently taking to support the development of staff you lead.
- Explain how, with your help, staff have improved the performance of the school, teams and themselves.

You will note that a significant number of the questions are open-ended rather than requiring a simple yes or no response. This is designed to promote conversation between colleagues about the performance management process and its impact, as the basis for collective examination of how it can be improved.

Creating a balanced scorecard

A balanced scorecard is a means of taking what you want to achieve in the school and mapping it to a range of manageable measures to ensure you are on track. It is an approach that seeks to:

- view the school from a range of different perspectives;
- use both hard and soft measures — for example, exam results (hard) balanced by student opinion of the teaching they receive (soft); and
- relate the information gained to clear, assessable goals.

Here is an exercise that will help you to adopt this approach.

- 1 Consider the stakeholders shown in Figure 6.2 and identify one or two key performance indicators for each. In other words, try to determine what success will look like from the perspective of each group if your school objectives and priorities are achieved. Remember this can be a mix of hard and soft measures since both are important to these key groups.

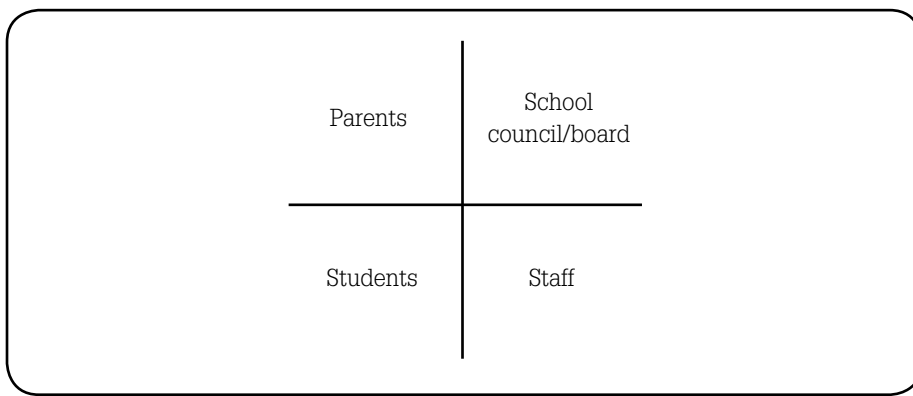


Figure 6.2 Balanced scorecard stakeholders

- 2 Draw a graph showing the performance trend over the last three years for each measure where the relevant data exists. Where it does not, then make an assessment of current performance as a baseline for future evaluation.
- 3 You are now in a position to set specific objectives and targets in each area. This template of objectives and performance indicators constitutes a starting point for monitoring what you have achieved, and setting targets for future success.

Having identified what makes a difference to each of your stakeholder groups, you can monitor those indicators that make the biggest difference to the overall performance of your school. These can be represented in the form of a 'performance dashboard' which can demonstrate progress over time and inform the necessary monitoring of performance and subsequent planning for improvement that your school's governing body will undertake.

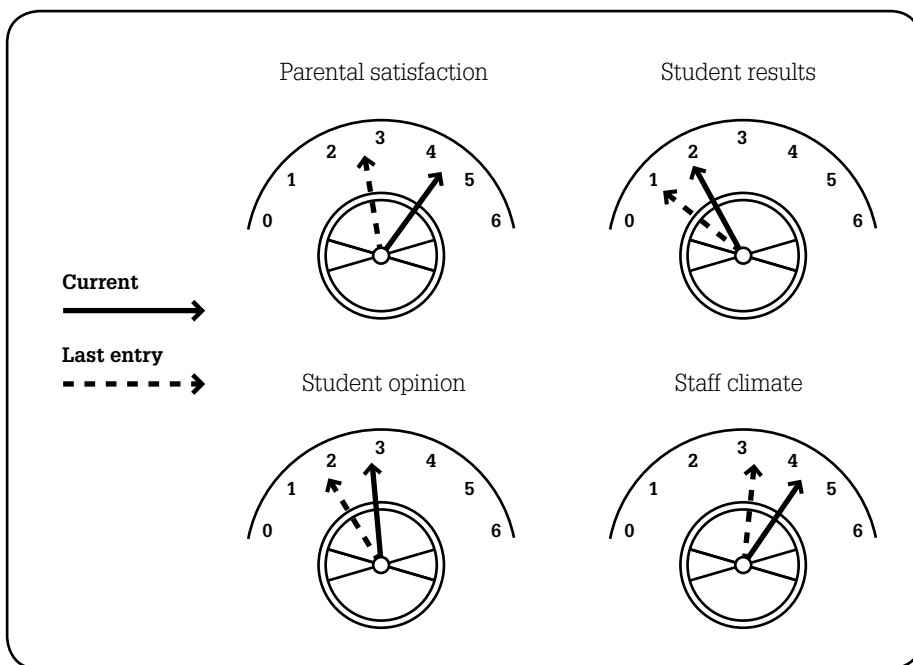


Figure 6.3 A performance dashboard for your school

It also provides an interesting, easy to interpret means of engaging stakeholders in discussion about what has been achieved and the resultant priorities for the next year.

Two important ground rules

Regardless of the particular tool you adopt, there are two things that are vital to your success.

First, you need a clear strategy about what you want and how you intend to get it. Otherwise, how will you know if you are measuring and managing those things that will help you achieve it?

Second, you need to focus your attention on those things that actually make a difference to the performance of your school, and the teachers and students who comprise it. There is always a temptation to measure the things that are easy to measure, whether they make an impact on performance or not. If you do this, however, you will focus attention on things that do not really make a difference and weaken your impact as a result. Remember, what gets measured gets done!

Picking the right measures can be a challenge, particularly the soft measures to balance the harder, more quantitative ones that you need. Using perceptions of staff and/or students about the climate in the school can certainly help.

The Hay Group questionnaire referred to earlier in this chapter², with its key dimensions of flexibility, responsibility, standards, rewards, clarity and team commitment can provide important information on how individuals and groups see actual performance of the school, compared with the level of performance they feel should exist. (See Figure 6.4 below.)

This in turn provides a context for school improvement as action is initiated to close what emerges as the dimensions with the biggest ‘actual to ideal’ gap. In the case of Figure 6.4, the areas of clarity and team commitment are clearly the major concerns of the Year 3 teaching group, though there also is a substantial gap in the areas of standards and rewards (the latter referring to performance-based feedback).

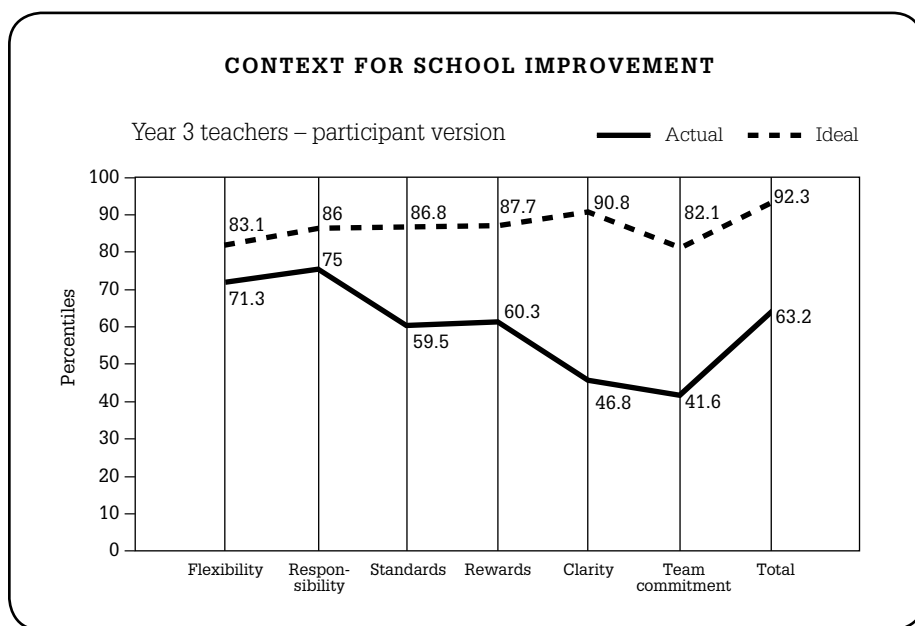


Figure 6.4 The context for school improvement

² Available online at www.transforminglearning.com. Schools may preview this tool at the listed web address. Beyond this, however, you must register to gain access to this facility. The tool is currently in use in Australian schools and will be available in an Australian version in 2007.

It's all about improvement

This last chapter of the book has brought together the advice on implementation which precedes it, in order to focus on assessing the impact of the processes you put in place.

It serves to demonstrate that performance management is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means to the end of continuous school improvement aimed at improved student learning and increased staff morale.

A process of performance management is, after all, the only antidote to the sort of dysfunctional 'solo practice', which Elmore (2002) suggests militates against:

sustained improvement ... where [teachers] are supported in this improvement, or where they are expected to subject their practice to the scrutiny of peers or the discipline of evaluations based on student achievement.

(Elmore 2002, p. 4)

In the absence of the combined challenge and support an effective performance management system contains, teachers are free to practise in idiosyncratic ways, with the outcomes relatively unobserved.

Performance management, by contrast, requires scrutiny of how teachers teach and the learning they produce, as the basis for setting clear objectives and targets for improvement with the support of a personal development plan.

Performance management is not the be-all and end-all of improvement in schools. This also requires effective leadership, a commitment to use data and evidence to ensure that proven best practice is spread through the school, and much more. It is, however, intimately bound up with any research-based models of school improvement that currently exist, and a key means of closing the loop between the moral purpose which drives all of our work, and the degree of improved student learning that results.

This book will help you to design and implement a performance management process that meets this aim and strengthens the effectiveness of your school.

References and further reading

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