

90+ Starter Phrases to Align Employee Feedback with Performance & Goals

These 92 starter phrases help you align employee feedback with their performance and goals. Set the tone for more productive, open performance conversations with detailed, goal-based feedback.

These phrases can also serve as a way to spot employees who need additional guidance or are ready for a promotion. If the performance goals of a manager are more in line with regular staff, that could indicate a performance issue. On the other hand, if you can apply several of the high-performer starter phrases to an employee, they might be ready to move up the ladder.

Choose a starter phrase from one of the stages below based on the employee's role and/or experience level: regular staff, management, directors, and executive level, plus phrases to use for any high-performing employee. While feedback tactics for each stage come from the same goal-centered structure, employee goals change depending on the stage and type of employee.

Pick one — or more — of these 92 starter phrases to kick off feedback conversations. But don't stop at the starter phrase — get specific with each employee:

Regular Staff Performance Feedback Phrases

1. Recognizes the needs of others and takes initiative to lend a helping hand
2. Establishes effective working relationships
3. Encourages collaboration and teamwork
4. Builds on mutual dependence and understanding
5. Promotes company culture among peers
6. Effectively communicates expectations
7. Excels in facilitating and engaging in group discussions
8. Keeps meetings action-oriented
9. Successfully communicates upward, downward, and laterally
10. Upholds company policies and values
11. Works effectively whether with colleagues or independently
12. Shares ideas and techniques
13. Builds strong relationships with others
14. Gladly shares expertise

High-Performing Employee Feedback Phrases

15. Continuously exceeds normal output standards
16. Is an important contributor to the success of the department
17. Makes a substantial contribution to the continued operation and growth of the organization
18. Consistently exceeds performance goals
19. Consistently meets or beats all deadlines
20. Prepares meeting agendas that are concise and time-saving
21. Manages productive, efficient meetings
22. Respects the time of others
23. Makes effective use of discretionary time
24. Displays an ability to learn rapidly and adapt quickly to changing situations
25. Shares learning experiences with peers often
26. Committed to continuously learning through [example]
27. Sets realistic timetables to keep projects on target
28. Is transparent with project progress
29. Makes effective use of all available resources when given a project
30. Seeks out additional resources and information
31. Clearly establishes project goals and objectives
32. Displays a practical approach to solving problems
33. Develops creative solutions
34. Turns problems into opportunities
35. Effectively solves problems rather than symptoms
36. Is skilled in proposing a variety of solutions
37. Achieves optimal levels of performance and accomplishment with/for...
38. Provides strong evidence of [strength or skill]
39. Excels at developing programs/strategies that have delivered X results
40. Improved production by X% by [action]
41. Exceeded the original goal of X by X% by [action]
42. Completed X project(s) with goal-crushing results

Management Feedback Phrases

43. Consistently appreciates and recognizes employees
44. Maintains a team environment that stimulates the growth of individual employees
45. Collaborates with direct reports to set aligned goals
46. Makes sure employees have a clear understanding of their responsibilities



47. Is readily available for support to employees
48. Recognizes and deals with signs of employee burnout
49. Provides team with support through [example]
50. Collaborates with individual team members to establish development paths
51. Holds employees accountable for their own results
52. Provides team with the resources needed to attain results
53. Provides support during periods of organizational change
54. Empowers employees with the authority and resources to achieve X results
55. Helps employees gain visibility through [action]
56. Encourages employees to solve their own problems
57. Delegates to match personal strengths
58. Delegates with clearly defined responsibility and authority
59. Shows sincere interest in employees and the solutions to their problems
60. Lends support and guidance to employees by [example]
61. Uses sound coaching techniques to resolve disciplinary issues
62. Provides continuous coaching
63. Is highly respected by employees for sharing concerns, problems, and opportunities
64. Excels in living the organizational values
65. Engages employees through a variety of strategies

Director Feedback Phrases

66. Develops continuous improvement methods
67. Develops totally new strategies
68. Devises improved means of accomplishing results
69. Displays an ability to learn rapidly and adapt quickly to changing situations
70. Creates employee development paths
71. Shares learning experiences with peers
72. Committed to continuously learning through [example]
73. Responds quickly to new instructions, situations, methods, and procedures
74. Develops innovative strategies such as [example]
75. Responds quickly and decisively, even under adverse conditions
76. Fosters a curiosity for innovative possibilities
77. Promotes innovation by [example]
78. Used creative alternative strategies, such as [examples] that drove [results]
79. Clever and imaginative when confronted with obstacles



- 80. Is continuously experimenting to drive [results]
- 81. Initiates and executes creative ideas such as [example]
- 82. Creates aligned departmental goals
- 83. Contextualizes goals for their department to build trust and transparency

Executive Level Feedback Phrases

- 84. Exemplifies and influences the company's mission and vision
- 85. Is able to translate company vision into viable action plans
- 86. Creates flexible plans to meet changing opportunities
- 87. Effectively puts plans into action
- 88. Excels in developing strategic alternatives
- 89. Effectively formulates strategies, tactics, and action plans to drive X results
- 90. Helps to set company goals
- 91. Is capable of distinguished performance in a higher-level position
- 92. Is constantly enhancing growth potential through additional education and training

*The phrases mentioned above were derived from **Effective Phrases For Performance Appraisals**.

