

## Managing Performance Collectively

All too often, Performance Management (PM), or whatever name you give it, is seen as a “must-do” rather than a want-to-do process. In our opinion, this usually stems from poorly managed PM processes, with little or no training to **facilitate** effective PM discussions.

Another recurring issue is differing processes within the same organisation and a poor understanding of how vital PM is to an organisation’s culture, motivation, and productivity.



LaPD Solutions believes that the PM process impacts many ingredients of organisational success by:

- assisting managers in identifying and addressing performance issues as they arise (*these may not be in the control of the reviewer*).
- providing Human Resources (HR) with valuable insights for training needs, succession management, retention and recruiting.
- providing the opportunity to give rewards, address coaching needs, and implement consequences as necessary. (*The latter many people fail to do*).
- offering the opportunity for employees to voice their opinions and feel listened to, valued and respected.
- gathering “clean” information to make informed decisions on individual and team performance. Roundup-style whole-team PM sessions are worth every minute.
- the alignment of individual, team, and organisational goals. Helping everyone feel a part of the wider organisation.
- possibly allowing team members to provide input on their peers' performance evaluations (but be aware of potential personality clashes).
- taking **immediate** action on those not pulling their weight. (*Research shows that people work together most cooperatively when slackers are forced to be accountable.*)
- helping people feel they are being treated fairly and that they have a say in how they are evaluated. (*Consider an informal discussion about this with each person and then the group/team as a whole*).
- allowing team members to agree on how they would be held accountable and on the consequences of failing to meet expectations. (If the team agree on the rules collectively, they will be far more likely to adhere to them, police them and accept the consequences if they break them).



We often assume that only our knowledge of others is sufficient to give feedback, but is it enough? We must consider how that person impacts our wider team and ask ourselves: what do others know that we don't? (Johari Window thinking can assist here).



### Saboteurs:

People retaliate against **perceived** unfairness by sabotaging others. Team members seek vengeance on slackers. How should leaders deal with the need for fairness? Hard-nosed leaders who go by the numbers might be tempted to use money as the basis of fairness. For example, they might assume they can establish fairness through equitable raises or severance packages. But both research and personal experience indicate otherwise. Fairness calculations also involve the less tangible factors of transparency and empathy.



### The brain scans of high IQ people: ([From this website](#))

“What would we expect to find if we examined the brain scans of people with high versus average IQ scores? We might picture the active brain of an Einstein as a hotbed of smouldering colours, but we’d be wrong. Neurologist Richard Restak summarised a UCLA study that compared individuals with high IQs to those with average IQs.” Restak wrote, “The researchers started off with the seemingly reasonable idea that smarter brains work harder, generate more energy, and consume more glucose. Like light bulbs, the brains of bright people were expected to illuminate more intensely than those less bright with a reduced wattage.



What they discovered instead was exactly the opposite. Higher IQ people had cooler, more subdued brain scans “while their less intellectually gifted counterparts lit up like miniature Christmas trees.

“Why would smarter brains work less hard? One strong bet is that when we are inexperienced and we still have a lot to learn, we have to make a conscious effort to think about what we’re doing. But later, after we’ve become more adept, much of what initially took effort becomes automatic.

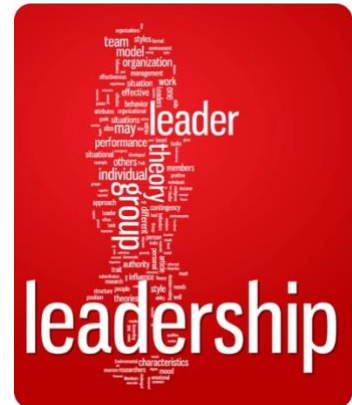
“In effect, it seems that high IQ people can more easily filter the signal from the noise, knowing what information to process to derive an outcome without the need to process all the other spurious thoughts.”

One of a leader's most important responsibilities is to help create a safe workplace culture within which personal growth and professional development are most likely to thrive. If a workplace was viewed as a garden, then leaders must function as attentive and caring people who have been given arguably the highest responsibility. A responsibility that includes nurturing, encouraging, supporting, managing, guiding, and developing the organisation's most important asset, its people who, if the culture fosters engagement and retention, are, in fact, the organisation's future leaders.



### Some food for thought:

- There must be enduring trust and psychological safety among all our people.
- We cannot control most of what happens to us, but we can control how we respond to it using EI.
- It is imperative to encourage and appreciate, indeed passionately invite disagreement and challenge.
- We must continually stress the freedom to say what we want or need to say (psychological safety), as this is the very foundation of innovation (Our own [ES<sup>2</sup>](#) thinking).
- Being right and thinking we are right feel the same from our perspective, so be careful of that, as belief creates reality ([Handout](#) on Belief Creates Reality).
- What we see and believe is often what we **expect** to see and **prefer** to believe.



In the afterword of the book, Ken Paller says:

“As a final thought about the relevance of neuroscience for leadership, I'd like to stress integrity. This book is full of useful ideas that emerge from neuroscientific considerations. However, ethics may not always come along for the ride when we learn about how we might use our brains better and improve our talents.

“In the workplace, as anywhere, allowing our actions to be guided by ethical principles is of primary importance. Integrity and compassion for others should be job Number One. Hopefully, a neuroscientific understanding of the human mind will further illuminate why these principles are so important.”

Performance Management, or as we often call it “Career Development”, should be a two-way conversation between two people which balances what the organisation is paying us to achieve. It should also aim to create the right environment for ALL colleagues to work in a safe and supportive environment, where they are not only permitted to say what they want but are (through the People Strategy) told that **they must say what they want or need to say.**

