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# Impactful Performance Management: Driving Effective Decision-Making through Coaching & Leadership

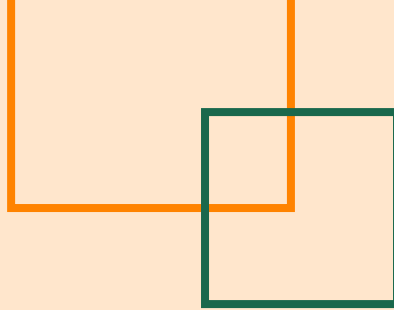
Many organizations believe they're hiring and promoting employees based on performance only. However, both [academic research](#) and employee perception indicate that talent decisions are not always made objectively. To ensure you are rewarding effective performance, it's essential to be proactive and analytical by looking at outcomes, rather than falling prey to often unconscious emotional judgements made by managers.

It is common for favoritism to creep into performance management in the pipeline. Managers may make emotionally-driven reviews of employees based on recency effects (over-weighting something that happened recently as opposed to over a longer period of time), personality traits, or other subjective factors. For example, a supervisor may positively review an employee because they are agreeable and engaged during meetings. Conversely, a team member who often plays the role of devil's advocate might be viewed negatively and labeled a nuisance, despite their valuable contributions in encouraging diverse thinking that shine a light on areas others may have missed. Evaluating team members based on likability can result in organizations missing out on the value produced by employees with better outcomes.



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To implement an outcome-driven management strategy, start by examining how developmental assignments are currently allocated within your organization. Developmental assignments are the precursor assignments – often stretch – that people are given *prior* to promotion. Who gets labeled a high performer, and on which criteria? It is important to define the criteria for being a high performer explicitly so that these can be measured objectively. Justifying developmental assignments should rely on measurable outcomes, such as demonstrated interest and ability, as well as alignment with career trajectories. A competency-based system that defines the required competencies for different levels and creates rubrics for performance is recommended. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence can serve as an external tool to help identify potential favoritism.

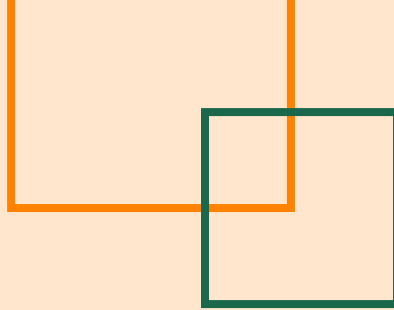
Additionally, measure developmental opportunities by quantity, including the number of opportunities provided and the criteria used for assigning them. Providing a clear pathway for employees to opt in demonstrates transparency in what promotion entails. A comprehensive measurement strategy should track the number of opportunities given, the criteria for selection, and performance in those opportunities.

Once you've got a system in place, the next step is to then train managers on how to evaluate these rubrics effectively. Managers should also receive training on providing regular, direct, and concrete feedback, creating a feedback culture that goes beyond annual performance reviews. Feedback should be an integral part of management strategy, and this expectation should be tracked and measured as a goal. The annual performance review should just be way to formally document what's already been communicated throughout the year.



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Managers don't usually give feedback transparently and regularly because it's not seen as an integral part of management strategy. It can also feel uncomfortable. But it's important to reframe feedback so that it isn't just a one-time annual chore, but rather a core responsibility for managers — and this can be measured, too. If there's an expectation that managers are coaching their teams 20% of the time, this needs to be explicitly tracked and turned into a measurable goal so that there are clear measurements driving performance.

Though tackling fairness in the pipeline may seem like an overwhelming task, you can make changes to the status quo by taking a proactive stance. By focusing on measurable outcomes and training managers to set clear and objective criteria for performance, your organization will be well on its way to leveling the playing field for all employees and creating a positive workplace environment.

Our team at Orange Grove Consulting can help turn effective management strategy into reality through our [Leadership Development programs](#), which provide managerial training that teach skills to build and manage the performance of effective teams. When coupled with our [organizational assessments](#) and [HR data analysis](#) we can provide targeted recommendations for process and organizational change to positively impact company culture and employee engagement. [Contact us](#) to learn more.

# About Orange Grove Consulting



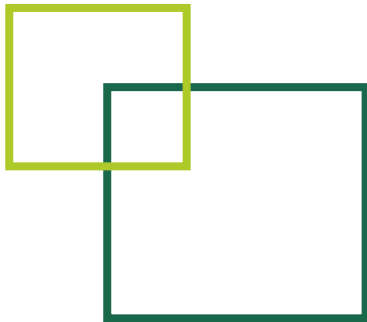
## Learn More

[Thought Leadership](#)

[Our Solutions & Approach](#)

## Focus

We specialize in helping organizations improve culture, engagement & talent management through a set of consulting tools and training programs. Our end goal is to improve talent management systems and operationalize processes that create more innovative, productive and competitive workplaces. Our network of consultants, trainers, and coaches provide a rich skillset, generations of experience, and the highest level of service for our clients. As your talent management and leadership development partner, we have solutions to make your teams more effective and your workplace less divided.



## Services

Searching for new ways to reach your talent management & organizational goals? Let us help! We offer a range of solutions including [Leadership Development Programs](#), [Assessment & Survey tools](#), [Strategy & Planning Options](#), [Compensation & Pay Equity Studies](#), [Facilitation & Process Optimization](#), and [Data Analytics & Reporting Solutions](#).