

Capability Procedure - The essentials.

Why is it needed?

Recognition that you are doing a good job is inherently motivating and helps staff feel engaged at work. If people are under-performing they deserve to be told at the earliest opportunity and helped to improve. If poor performance is ignored it can have a detrimental impact on the reputation of the team, customer service, efficiency and morale of colleagues.



How do I best manage performance issues?

To address capability issues you need to be explicit about the standards of work you expect. These can be found in any number of source documents: job descriptions, our behaviours, appraisal documentation, policy and procedure documents, published standards of professional bodies (for certain occupations). You then have to be clear about where and how these standards are not being met.

When meeting with your member of staff you need to explain your concerns, be clear about what you expect and explore why standards are not being met. Understanding why they believe they are not performing will make it much easier to work on an improvement plan, encourage them to suggest ways in which they think they can improve their performance and put the right support for them in place. Your approach to this conversation could have a huge impact on both their performance and engagement.

We have developed a number of 1 page Guides to help support you in having different types of conversations with staff. This conversation will require a combination of

a direct approach and a coaching style built on good relationships and engagement. The Guides can be found on the Intranet at <https://i.warwickshire.gov.uk/content/good-conversations/good-conversations>.



What do I need to do first?

If a member of your team is underperforming, firstly you need to understand why? Have an early conversation with your member of staff. The longer performance issues continue unchallenged the more difficult they are to address. Is it because they won't do the work or because they can't do the work? This is a critical distinction to make. If it is because they won't do the work, then you are dealing with a conduct issue and this should be addressed through the Disciplinary procedure and advice should be obtained from the HR Advisory Service. If it is because they don't currently appear capable of doing the work then you need to use the Capability procedure.



Is there anything I need to be mindful of?

Keep to the process. Don't be negative about the prospects for improvement. Encourage employees to be equally positive about turning the situation around. Be aware of equality issues. Are any employee's protected characteristics having any impact on their performance e.g. a disability? If you are in any doubt talk to the HR Advisory Service.



How will the procedure help?

The procedure has an escalating process that combines specific review meetings with improvement periods where employees have clear 'windows' to demonstrate improvement. There is also onus upon you in these windows to provide support, guidance and monitoring. Your aim should be to help the employee achieve the required standard at the earliest stage possible in the process. Use the Performance Improvement Plan in the procedure to clarify what needs to be done, by whom and by when.

