

case study

Automating performance management helps Vauxhall transform company culture

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High Potential Manager, Vauxhall

For an automotive company used to engineering new cars to squeeze another few kilometers out of a tank of petrol, it wasn't too big a stretch to imagine that doing the same thing on the administrative side would yield greater efficiencies. The question was, how?

Shortly after celebrating its 100th year in business, UK-based Vauxhall found itself in a position familiar to many other businesses. There was an urgent need to cut costs while driving business results up. In order to compete in a changing market, Vauxhall needed to create a culture of high performers.

With a new CEO behind the wheel, Vauxhall wanted its employees to embrace revamped cultural priorities and turn those into demonstrable results.

Turning to technology

The company was comfortable with using new technologies to signal change, so it decided to move to an online system to link business strategy and automate performance management. Although Vauxhall was familiar with doing 360° assessments, previous assessments had always been paper-based, which provided low rates of return and were cumbersome to administer.

To translate cultural priorities into 360° questionnaires and reports that could be applied strategically, Vauxhall needed simple and intuitive technology. Getfeedback, specialist in driving up employee performance, was contracted to create a flexible online system for Vauxhall.

"We took the objectives from their balanced scorecard process, and embedded a 360° review system," explained Steve Bicknell, COO of Getfeedback. The result was an ultra-intuitive online system to help manage employee performance, with automatic prompts and reminders.

Employees access their own 360 reports

"What made the process really effective for Vauxhall was that individual employees could access their own 360 report," said Steve Bicknell. "This meant that both the process and data would be firmly in the hands of each employee. At the same time we reduced the administrative burden for HR."

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By involving a third party, Vauxhall increased the confidentiality of the process, helping to increase employee acceptance. As Vauxhall is a highly unionized environment, employee buy-in to the project was essential.

Appraisal completion is up from 15 to 92%, proving that employees are supportive of the project.

"Having the data in a coherent format has already highlighted areas for development," said Richard Pennington, head of Planning and Development at Vauxhall.

Focusing on employee performance is important to a company wanting to improve performance, but typically companies aren't willing to spend much when there's also a need to cut costs. The annual cost of support and individual reports provided by Getfeedback was an affordable 50 pounds per person, about the cost of a tank of petrol.