

3 ways to bring balance to employee goal setting in 2026 - HR Executive

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Executive Summary

This article addresses the importance of performance goals in building talent, adapting to change, and employee wellbeing. It presents data from a broader performance management survey showing that nearly half of employees have four to six goals, while 35% have one to three. The article offers guidance for HR leaders on how to make goal setting a collaborative process, equip managers and employees with the right training, and provide ongoing support. It emphasizes the need to balance the number of performance goals with an employee's capacity and the organization's ability to provide meaningful support.

Key Insights

1. More than 80% of surveyed employees have six or fewer formal, documented performance goals
2. Collaborative goal setting helps employees set realistic goals that align with business needs
3. Training for managers can help them facilitate goal-setting conversations and support employees in achieving their goals

Practical Takeaways

- Make goal setting a collaborative process between employees and managers
- Provide training to managers on effective goal setting
- Offer ongoing support to employees as they pursue their performance goals

Critical Analysis

The study is based on a performance management survey, which provides cross-industry data. However, the sample size and methodology are not specified in the article.

Organizational Practice

The article discusses organizational practices related to performance management and goal setting.

Strategic Implications

The findings suggest that striking the right balance in the number of performance goals is essential for both organizational success and employee wellbeing. The article offers practical guidance on how HR leaders can create a culture of meaningful, balanced goal setting.

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