

38 performance review questions + tips to improve reviews

Source: leapsome | Published: May 26, 2026 | PMS Relevance: PMS CORE | Type: Practitioner Guide | Geography: Global

Source URL: <https://site.leapsome.com/blog/performance-review-questions>

Executive Summary

This article addresses the widespread dissatisfaction with performance review processes, citing research indicating that only 46% of employees feel satisfied with career development opportunities and that only 20% feel their company's performance practices motivate them. The author, writing for Leapsome, argues that the quality of performance review conversations is determined largely by the quality of questions asked, and that most reviews fail due to generic questions, one-sided delivery, and absent follow-up plans. The article presents 38 categorized performance review questions spanning overall performance, employee strengths, current role, areas for improvement, future growth, and end-of-year reflection. Supporting evidence draws on Gartner (2024), Leapsome's own Workforce Trends Report (2024), and a Gallup report (2022), alongside practitioner quotes. The article concludes by positioning Leapsome's AI-enabled review platform as a solution to administrative burden and feedback quality gaps, framing automation and AI as mechanisms for reducing bias and improving review efficiency.

Key Insights

1. A self-reported 'feedback gap' exists: 70% of managers believe they gave constructive feedback recently, while only 37% of individual contributors agree, according to Leapsome's own research.
2. Only 20% of employees report that their company's performance practices motivate them to do great work, per a 2022 Gallup report.
3. Lack of career growth is cited as one of the top reasons employees leave jobs, reinforcing the argument that performance reviews serve a retention function beyond evaluation.

Practical Takeaways

- Framing performance review questions around specific, observable behaviors and outcomes — rather than broad or binary prompts — is associated with more substantive employee responses and reduced defensiveness.
- Structuring reviews across distinct categories (strengths, current role, improvement areas, future growth) allows for more targeted conversations than a single undifferentiated review format.

Frameworks Mentioned

360-Degree Review — A feedback method incorporating input from an employee's peers and subordinates in addition to their direct manager, described in the article as providing a more rounded performance picture.

OKRs — Referenced briefly in the context of Leapsome AI's capability to generate development goals and OKRs in few clicks.

Critical Analysis

Strengths: The article provides a concrete, categorized list of 38 questions that practitioners can adapt, with explicit contrasts between effective and ineffective question formats. It draws on multiple external sources (Gartner, Gallup, Betterworks) alongside its own data. **Limitations:** The article is produced by Leapsome, a performance management software vendor, creating an inherent conflict of interest. One of the three headline statistics — the 70%/37% feedback gap — derives from Leapsome's own Workforce Trends Report, which is not independently verified within the article. The Betterworks statistic (64% of employees view reviews as a waste of time) is cited without a year, study name, or methodology. Practitioner quotes are positive and selectively sourced, with no counterarguments or critical perspectives presented. The article transitions into explicit product promotion in its final sections, including calls-to-action and a product demo invitation, compromising its neutrality as an informational resource. The '210 hours per year on annual performance reviews' and '61% increase in direct reports' statistics are presented without source attribution.

Organizational Practice

The article describes a typical performance review cycle in which HR distributes structured forms (checklists, surveys, or essay questions) once or twice per year; managers collect performance data and conduct one-on-one review meetings with direct reports; and HR aggregates results before sharing them with team leads. Some organizations described use continuous feedback check-ins between formal cycles, and 360-degree review formats that incorporate peer and subordinate input. End-of-year reviews are framed as consolidation points for feedback gathered throughout the year rather than standalone evaluation events.

Strategic Implications

The article reflects an observable trend toward continuous feedback models replacing or supplementing annual review cycles, with AI-assisted summarization and competency framework generation emerging as reported capabilities in enterprise HR platforms. The cited perception gap between manager and employee experiences of feedback quality points to a measurement and calibration challenge in performance management design. The emphasis on career development integration within review processes aligns with broader talent retention dynamics noted across multiple cited sources.

Validation Status: passed