

Coaching in the modern workplace is finally changing (yay!), but despite our giant leaps forward, one problem has remained: **everyone still hates annual reviews!**

“Annual reviews are often considered time-sucks of meaningless paperwork and awkward meetings between manager and subordinate who suddenly seem like strangers.” ~Katie Donovan, [Forbes](#)

Hinging everything on a single, all-encompassing evaluation is a terrible idea. So why do companies continue to use annual reviews? Perhaps they’re waiting for some great alternatives...

According to researchers at the [Institute for Corporate Productivity](#), 10% of Fortune 500 companies have already abolished the annual performance review. So what are *they* doing? We’ll show you.

3. Regular Check-Ins & 1-on-1s

We know what you’re thinking: *MORE reviews?! That’s no solution!* We couldn’t agree more: in fact, we recently [teamed up with 7Geese](#) for an employee coaching webinar. Instead of pushing for more annual *reviews*, we’re advocating for [more pulse checks](#) to connect and touch base with your people.



FEATURE INTERVIEW

Employee Coaching Advice from Blankslate Partners CEO Isabella Egan

To learn more about leading your people through 1-on-1s, [listen to our webinar](#).

Replace Annual Reviews with Performance Development

Fortune 500 company [Accenture](#) is shifting its focus to immediate performance development, rather than an annual, forced ranking based on the past year's metrics. *Favour **development** over evaluation* and [studies show](#) your people will feel less stress and perform at a much higher level.

“Reviews are painful to do and remove both managers and employees from their normal workflows. When employee feedback and weekly goal-setting is a part of the normal work-

flow, there is no additional effort and there is less resistance. Managers have the information they need to guide employees rather than simply grading them. Regular communication creates better relationships long-term.”

~David Hassell, Founder & CEO of [15Five](#)

Yes, evaluation is crucial. But without regular check-ins and clear channels of ongoing communication, the information collected is going to be influenced by a slew of unconscious biases. Some widespread biases include: “[recency reality bias](#)”, “[halos or horns](#)” and “[rater bias](#)”.

By establishing regular check-ins, you’re better able to provide your people with a comfortable environment. This way you can give and receive *genuine*, real-time feedback:

“If an employee is having a bad day or week, or is unhappy in their role, it’s easy to hide it,” says Alex Turnball, the CEO and founder of [Groove](#). He says [Regular One-on-One Meetings Saved Groove’s Company Culture](#).

We recommend scheduling [1-on-1 meetings](#) every two weeks for new employees, and once a month once they hit their groove. It’s a time commitment, but it pays [big dividends](#).

2. Performance Software For the Win

Whether your team is two, or two hundred, performance software can help you set goals and streamline your people progress. Our friends at [7Geese](#) offer a handy OKR (objectives & key results) management app that helps you provide sustained feedback and coaching for your people. The benefits to performance software are innumerable. Positive feedback motivates people to stay on the right track. Plus, when employees can monitor their own progress, they can take steps to change what’s not working. When they see how and where they’re falling behind, they can easily course-correct.

1. Eat Some Humble Pie

Let's say you already have your performance software and 1-on-1 meetings in place—how do you get the most out of them?

According to most experts, the answer is *humility*.

A [study](#) in the [Academy of Management Journal](#), revealed that leaders who take part in the learning process are seen as more effective:

“Growing and learning often involves failure and can be embarrassing. But leaders who can overcome their fears, and broadcast the process of working through messy internal-growth are viewed more favourably by their followers. They also legitimize the growth journeys of their followers, which leads to higher performance.”

By opening up during ongoing, day-to-day interactions, you create transparency and encourage honesty among your people.

“Admitting your mistakes, spotlighting the strengths of your people, and modelling teachability are the core of humble leadership. These behaviours are powerful predictors of their own, as well as the organization's growth.”

Leaders trust their people, guide them toward their own solutions, and help their teams operate at a higher level. Try thinking of yourself less as a boss, and more of a steward—then see how your people respond.

If you'd like a helping hand on how to cultivate humble leadership and develop your communication skills, [drop us a line](#). We'd love to offer you a free 30 minute consultation to set you on your way.

