



# Performance Management and Appraisal Training

In partnership with **sportscotland**  
2022

# Session Objectives

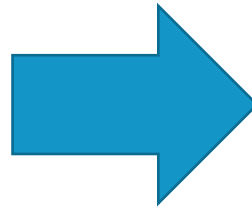
Key Learning points for today's session are as follows:

- To **recognise the pitfalls** of poor performance management and appraisal practices
- To **recognise contributing factors** to poor performance
- To **address the importance of providing constructive feedback** and apply models on how to achieve this in practice,
- To **demonstrate appropriate objective** setting as a key aspect of the performance management process
- To **obtain an increased awareness of how to apply a fair and consistent approach** to the appraisal process and
- To **explore ways to manage difficult conversations**

# Utilising the Probationary Review Period

## Why have a probationary review?

**What is the purpose of a probationary period?**



**To support an employee in settling in**

**To address any issues of concern early on**

# Common Questions

**Are probationary periods a legal requirement in the UK?**

**Should a contract of employment be issued before the probationary period is passed?**

**What is the longest probationary period you can have?**

## Potential issues with Probationary Reviews

- **Avoid 'storing up' issues** to address in a probationary period review - deal with issues as they happen
- **Give feedback, positive and constructive, throughout** the first weeks and months rather than waiting until the end of the probationary period
- It's **not a substitute for a proper induction** process.



# Tips for holding a probationary period review

## Do

- ✓ Be open and honest about your concerns
- ✓ Give constructive feedback
- ✓ Provide examples to highlight your concerns

## Don't

- ✗ Delay discussions
- ✗ Be confrontational – issues can sometimes be a simple misunderstanding
- ✗ Focus completely on negatives – give praise where it is merited

## Potential Outcomes Following Probationary review

No concerns



Pass probationary letter with no meeting

Minor concerns



Raise minor issues informally as they happen and issue a letter of concern



Probationary Meeting followed by probationary period extension or fail (dismissal)

Major concerns



Potentially dismissal before probationary period ends



## Moving employee to a new role

- You can also have a trial period where an employee moves from one role in the organisation to a new role.
- This is good practice because you don't know how the employee will settle into a new role.
- This should be done as part of a variation to contract letter.
- Outcomes of the review period should be clear in the letter e.g. confirmed in the new role, revert to previous role etc.

# The Appraisal Process

# The Purpose of holding appraisal

The main purpose of holding appraisals is to assist employees in improving their performance.

Appraisals should consist of 3 elements:

- 1. Measurement**
- 2. Feedback**
- 3. Positive reinforcement**

# Overview of the appraisal process

- The company should have a **recognised month** each year where appraisals take place
- Line managers should then schedule in a date with each employee under their management, giving at least **2 weeks notice**
- The employee should complete the first section of the form and **return it** to their line manager

# Overview of the appraisal process (Cont)

- The line manager should review the employees completed appraisal section and **consider** any **past performance and targets** they wish to discuss with the employee
- During the meeting the line manager and employee can **discuss** the employees past performance, targets, training and development and any other performance related issue
- Following the meeting, the line manager should complete the appraisal **review form** and return this to the employee for them to sign and add any comments.

# Benefits of Appraisal

Individual	Line Manager	Organisation
Receives valuable feedback on their performance	Relationship with the individual will be strengthened	Problem areas can be highlighted and solutions discussed
Learns precisely what is expected of him/her	Information from employee can help with job design	The line manager can succession plan for the future
Gains recognition for his/her efforts and can identify training and development needs	Improved individual performance should increase team performance	Discussion of employees ideas and expectations improves communication

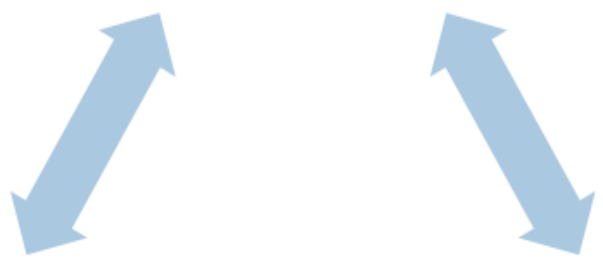
# Potential Drawbacks of Appraisal

- It can be **tempting to store up concerns** to deal with in an appraisal process. Disciplinary or performance issues should be dealt with as they happen.
- **Employees can feel uncomfortable or suspicious** about appraisal discussions – criticism, however constructive, is never easy.
- Line Managers can **view appraisals as an unnecessary and time consuming** process.
- Both employee and line managers can see and approach the process as a **box ticking exercise**.
- It **can lead to discussions around pay** which are best kept separate.

# 3 Stages of Appraisal

Pre-Appraisal

- Employee Prep
- Manager Prep
- Logistics – give plenty of time!



Post Appraisal

- Document discussions
- Deal with actions
- Schedule follow ups

During Appraisal

- Two way discussion (Aim for 70% employee talking is the optimum)





# Do's For Preparation

- ✓ Review the job description and last years appraisal form (you should take this into the meeting with you)
- ✓ Talk to other line managers and peers if appropriate for actual feedback on how the employee has performed
- ✓ Think through what aspects of the employees performance are to be discussed and have specific examples of both good and bad performance
- ✓ Be prepared to back up any criticism with facts and examples

## Do's For Preparation

- ✓ Consider points the employee may wish to raise and think through how delicate areas will be handled
- ✓ Take some blank paper for general notes during the meeting, they can be useful as a reminder once the meeting has ended
- ✓ Remember that nothing you say in the appraisal should be a surprise. You should arrange weekly or monthly catch ups with your employee so they know how they are performing throughout their employment

# Don'ts For Preparation

- x Underestimate the time necessary for the meeting. There is no ideal length of time but it will probably take longer than you think
- x Don't forget to brief each employee well in advance about the purpose and scope of the meeting
- x Don't be tempted to complete the appraisal form and objectives before the meeting – it should be a joint effort in the interview
- x Don't allow interruptions during the meeting – turn off mobile phones etc
- x Don't overlook the importance of the employees personality and how they may handle criticism

# During the appraisal – Tips for Constructive Feedback

- Delivering feedback constructively well can be hugely beneficial to an employee's development and can strengthen your relationship with employees.
- Conversely, poorly delivered feedback can have the opposite effect!
- Ask questions to prompt the employee to explore the issue themselves
  - How do you feel about your X skills?
  - If you were to rate your X skills on a scale of 1 to 5, where would you place yourself?
  - If you were to work on one area of your development this year, what would it be?

# What NOT and what TO say

What <u>not</u> to say...	What to say...
You are very careless	There are regular mistakes in your work that we need to discuss. Here are some examples
You do a good job	Your paperwork is always 100% accurate and on time
You make too many mistakes.	I want to discuss what we can do to reduce the level of mistakes
Your supervisory skills are not up to scratch	What are your views on your ability to supervise?
You need to sort this problem out	I want to discuss how I can support you in sorting this problem out
You're simply not up to the job	I believe that you are capable of improvement and would like to discuss what further training might be helpful.

# Common Errors

## Remember to avoid:

**Halo Effect** - tendency to overrate a favoured employee, or an employee who had a prior good rating

**Horns Effect** - tendency to rate an employee lower than circumstances warrant

**Recency Error**- letting outstanding work [or unsatisfactory work] immediately prior to the evaluation offset an entire year of performance

**Cookie Cutter Effect** - not focusing on individual specific performance. Rating all your employees, or groups of employees the same

# Setting SMART Objectives

**Specific**

**Measure**

**Achievable**

**Relevant**

**Timebound**

# Post Appraisal

## **Type up the notes from the meeting and add final comments**

Do not add anything into these final notes that were not actually discussed in the meeting. This is a good place to thank the employee for their efforts etc.

**Send the completed form for the employee** to review, add their comments and sign. Request this to be completed within a specific timeframe i.e. 2 weeks

## **File document**

Ensure final document is retained and put on employee's file

## **Deal with follow up actions swiftly**

Failing to action what has been agreed in an appraisal without further discussion can be demotivating for employees. Be careful not to over-promise in an appraisal – you can always say you will have a think about things and come back to them.



# On going Feedback

- Ideally, you would have either a quarterly or six monthly follow up session to check in on how the employee is getting on
- Deal with conduct and performance issues as they happen – don't store them up for the appraisal!
- Don't forget to give praise throughout the year where it is merited!

# Conduct or Capability?

# Setting off on the right foot

## **CONDUCT**

"Conduct" refers to the employee's attitude or behaviour at work. Where the employee generally has control over their actions/conduct at work

## **CAPABILITY**

"Capability" refers to an employee's skills, ability, aptitude and knowledge in relation to the job that he or she is employed to do. Generally, outside of the employees' direct control

*Won't*

*Can't*

# Conduct

- Failing to follow procedures
- Failing to follow instructions (you would need to check that they know **and** understand the procedure)

**With conduct issues it may be the case that the person is capable of doing the job but just do not apply themselves to achieve, for example:**

- person is capable but attitude to the job is not appropriate
- not applying themselves
- neglecting duties and responsibilities that they know and understand are part of their duties and responsibilities
- breaching procedures that they know and understand

**In addition, issues that come under the heading of conduct could be:**

- Breach of health and safety procedures
- Timekeeping issues
- Failing to correctly adhere to contact procedures during absence
- Attitude to fellow work colleagues, clients, customers

# Example of misconduct

- Failing to turn up to work on time
- Failing to abide by health and safety rules and procedures
- Frequent short term absence and/or failing to follow the absence reporting procedures
- Posting an inappropriate comment on social media

## GROSS MISCONDUCT

- Failing to follow a reasonable management instruction/ gross insubordination
- Reporting for work under the influence of drink or drugs
- Using foul and abusive language towards another member of staff/manager/client
- Bulling or harassing a colleague
- Discrimination against another due to their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation etc

# Examples of Capability

- inadequate or insufficient training;
- tools and equipment that do not work properly or frequently break down;
- poor quality or inadequate supervision and/or support;
- lack of understanding on the employee's part about his or her job duties, priorities or goals, which may arise because no one has properly explained these issues or given the employee feedback;
- unclear instructions;
- work overload, causing stress and fatigue;
- unrealistic targets or deadlines that are virtually impossible for the employee to achieve;
- poor working relationships causing the employee worry, upset or stress;
- physical or mental ill health, for example where the employee's state of health, or medication taken to deal with it, is causing tiredness; and
- personal problems that would inevitably affect the employee's concentration.

# Why is it tricky to tell the difference?

1. Employees cover up their lack of capability with their conduct
2. Dealing with conduct is easier, so sometimes managers shy away from dealing with real performance issues
3. Sometimes it is both conduct and capability

(9/10 times it is the employees conduct that is the problem)

# Capability/ Performance Management Process



# Recognising the issue

If an employee is showing signs of failing, the first step is to establish the root of the problem and how you can help them without invoking the formal procedure.

1. Invite them informally to a meeting to raise your concerns
2. Ideally this should be as soon as you are aware, don't leave it until their appraisal to raise the issue
3. Your feedback should be factual and based on what you have observed
4. Advise them of the impact or consequences of their actions
5. Ask them what they like about their job which may help the employee be less defensive

## Recognising the issue (cont)

1. Work with them to discuss how to resolve the issue. Do they require further training?
2. Seek their agreement that there is a problem with certain aspects of their performance
3. Ask the employee what they think the root of the problem is
4. Establish if there are any external factors impacting on performance – consider these as mitigation
5. Review their job description and what is expected of them – this might have changed
6. Keep notes of the discussions you have

# Informal discussion

If you believe there to be issues with a Team Member's performance the first step is to sit down with them and have an informal chat. You do not need to give the Team Member any prior warning of this meeting, but you can if you wish. In this discussion you should cover:

- Specific examples of where you feel their performance does not meet the required standards you expect
- Establish if there are any reasons for this, both inside and outside of work if applicable
- Establish if they have any training requirements
- Ask if there is anything you can do to assist and support them
- Agree a timeframe for a follow up discussion to review - 4 weeks is the optimum timeframe
- Ensure that you are clear with them of your expectations and where you would like to see improvement. Be specific and ensure they understand what you are asking of them

If the Team Member's performance improves following your discussion, then make them aware of this in the review meeting and give them positive feedback. The issue can be closed, however be aware that someone's performance can pick up for a month and then fall back into old habits, so keep an awareness of performance over time.

If there has been no significant improvement and you still feel that they are not achieving the required standard, you should progress to Stage 1 of the Formal Process as outlined below.

# Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

# Performance Improvement Plan

The next step is to begin the formal process:

- Note the shortfalls in the employees performance
- Note the expected standard
- Focus on 3 key SMART objectives
- Advise that these will be reviewed in 8 weeks
- Agree on suitable timeframes to meet to discuss progress i.e. weekly, fortnightly, monthly
- Agree on any training/support that is required in addition to this
- If you agree on actions to help the employee, ensure that you stick to them

# SMART PIP EXAMPLE

**SPECIFIC** - Consistently ensure paperwork for new coaches is completed in time

**MEASUREABLE** - Each new coach up to a max of 3 each week

**ACHIEVABLE** - Make sure it is something other individuals in their role can achieve

**REALISTIC** - Does their workload allow for this? Do they have support?

**TIME-SCALED** - The objective should have a time frame i.e. **6 months**

# When to use a PIP?

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) can be used when an employee's performance is falling below an acceptable standard.

It shouldn't be a first step in addressing performance issues – it's a detailed and lengthy process and should be a last resort.

It's only designed for performance issues, not conduct issues.

# Communication Tips for PIP discussions

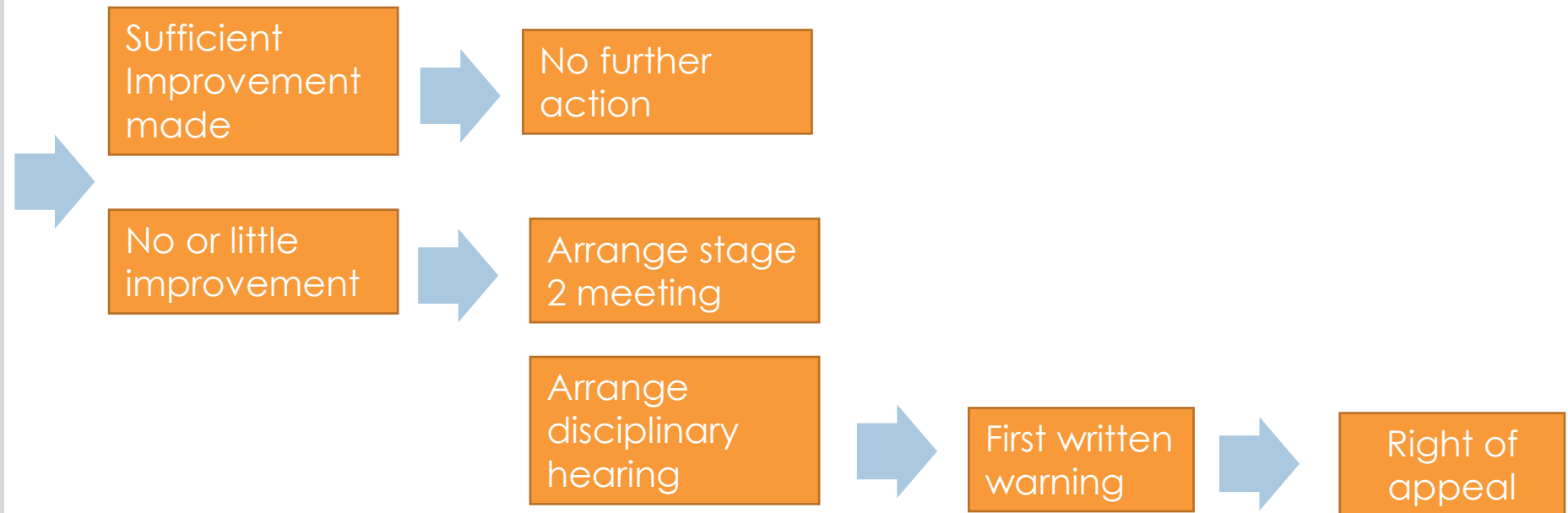
- Stick to facts
- Avoid generalisations
- Ask open questions
- Listen to the employee
- Use positive words and tone of voice
- Think about your body language
- Focus on future improvement
- Check the employee has understood what you have said



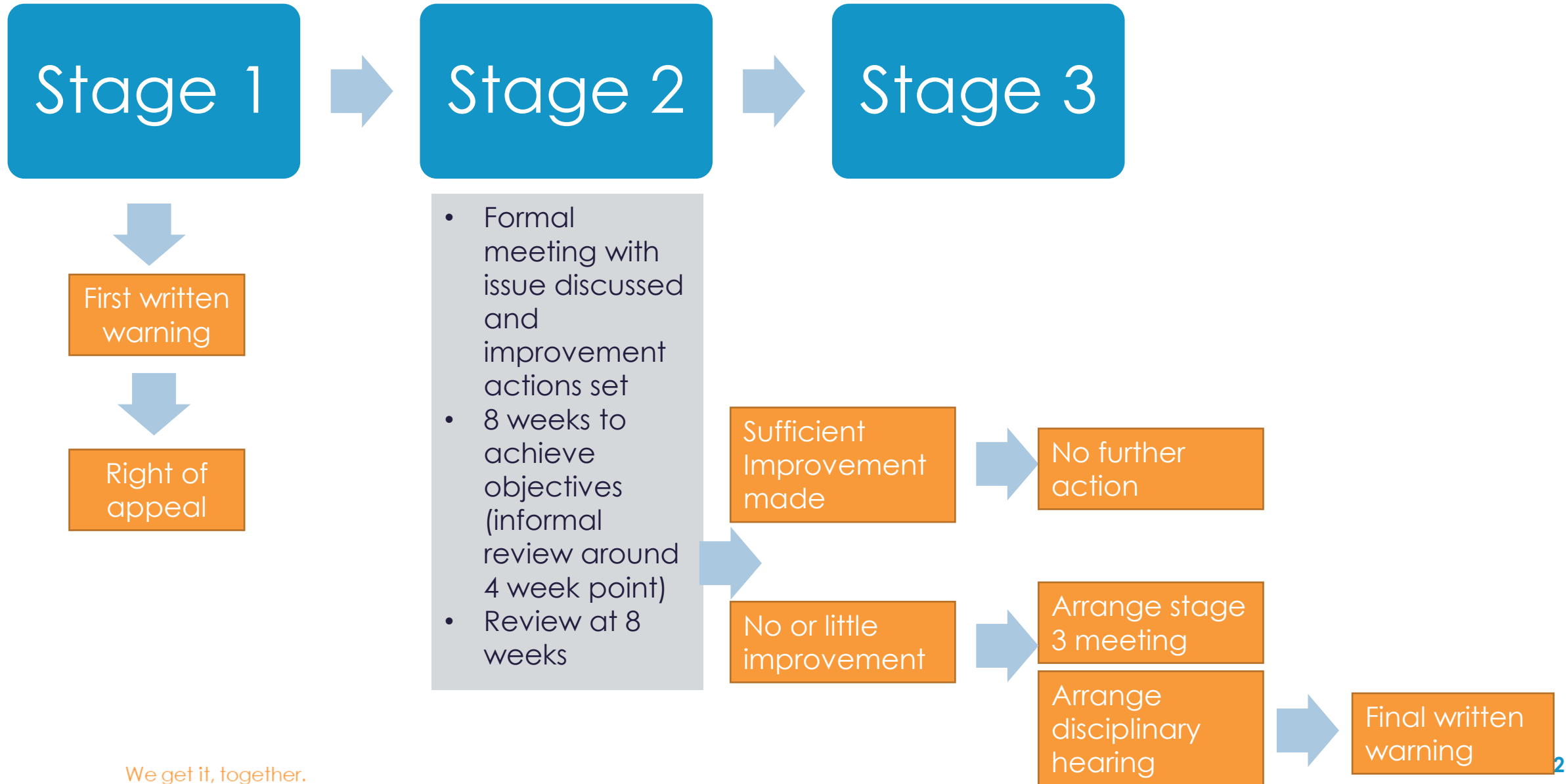
# Formal Process – Stage 1



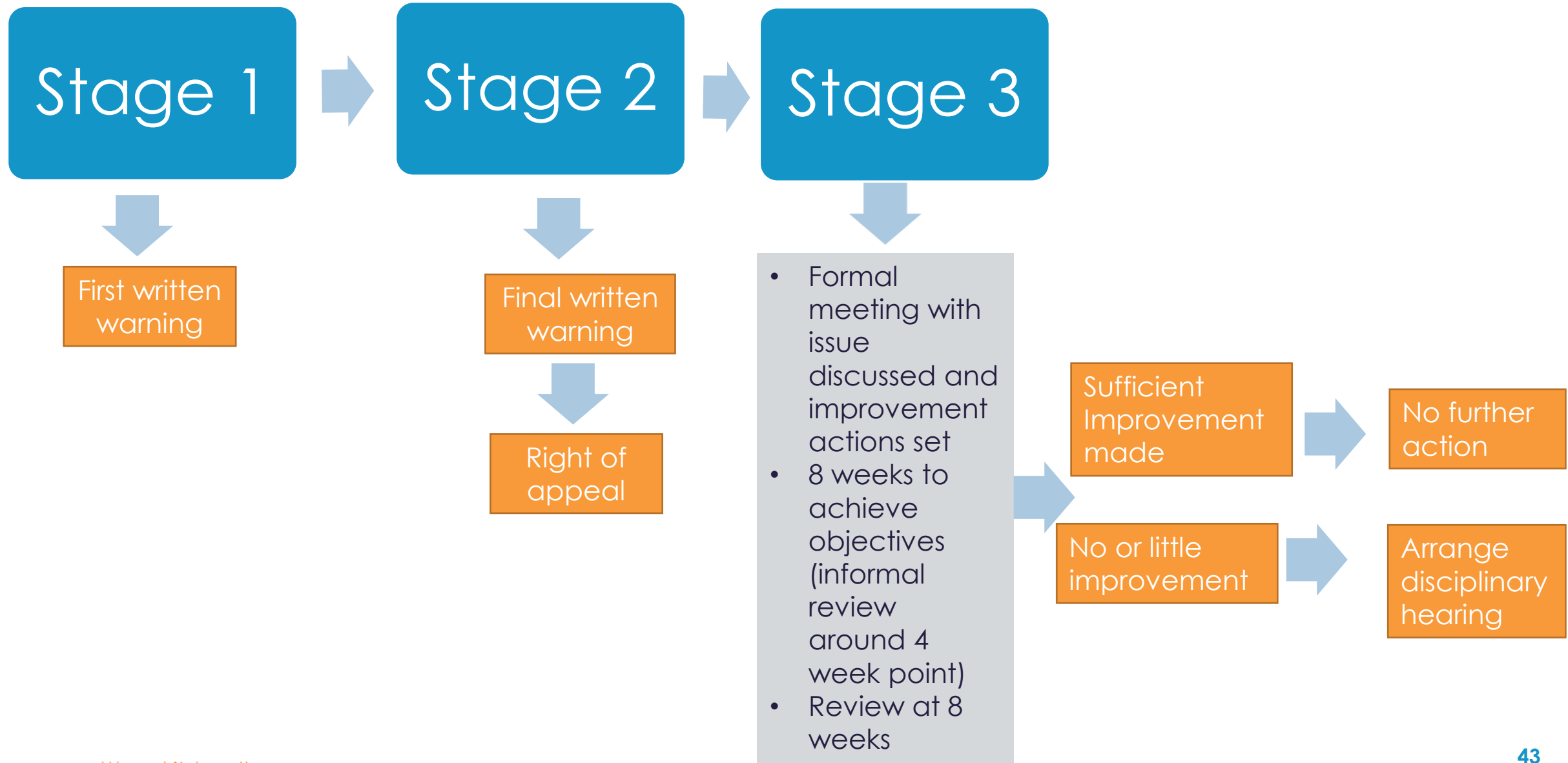
- Formal meeting with issue discussed and improvement actions set
- 8 weeks to achieve objectives (informal review around 4 week point)
- Review at 8 weeks



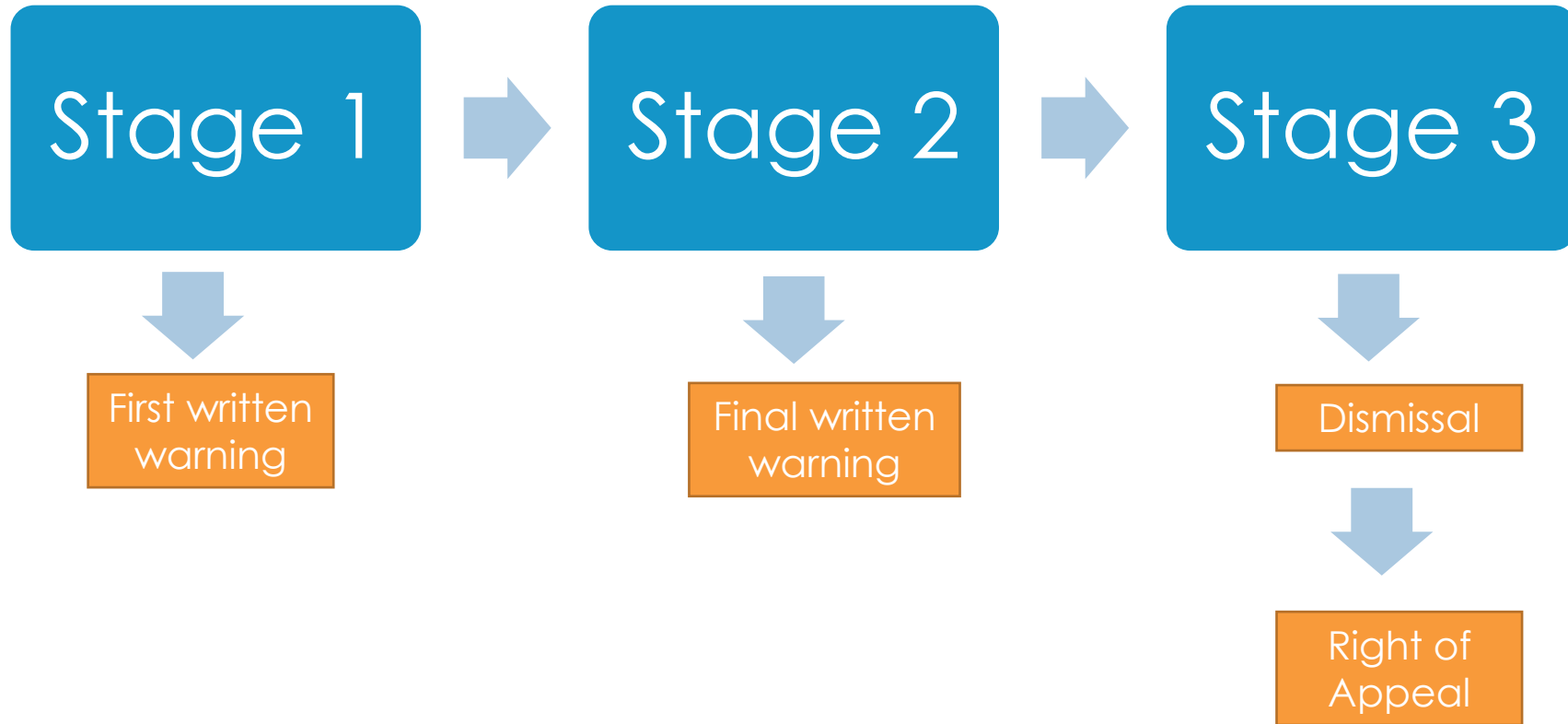
# Formal Process – Stage 2



# Formal Process – Stage 3



# Formal Process – Escalation of Sanction



# What can go wrong?

Grievances

Absence

Temporary  
Improvements

Process Apathy

It's not an easy process, and it can lead to other issues, but it is the tried and tested way of handling true performance issues.

# Are there other ways to deal with performance?

- Deal with issues during probationary period, or at the very least in the first 2 years of service
- Demotion, but you still need to go through the Performance Improvement Process
- Settlement agreement but this is costly



# Having Difficult Conversations

# Difficult Conversations

Addressing the issue with the individual turns the situation into a positive one:

- **Providing critical feedback** can help the employee improve
- Having a discussion with the employee can give them the opportunity to talk about something they **have bottled up**
- In a misconduct situation, a conversation can **elicit** the reason for the misconduct
- It encourages **positive thinking/culture**



# Importance of Having Difficult Conversation

Address difficult issues at the earliest opportunity:

- Waiting for a more suitable opportunity results in the issue not being dealt with
- A problem will not usually resolve itself
- Even if the manager thinks a problem is temporary, it may reoccur if it is not dealt with
- Not dealing with the issue can lead to further complications

# Recap

- Managing employee performance is key to reaching your strategic goals
- The Appraisal process can enhance relationships and make for more engaged employees
- Preparation is key; don't go to an appraisal unprepared
- It is not just about the past, but also about the future
- Give help and support where you can or organise training if it is required
- Appraisals should be kept separate from any conduct/ capability concerns
- Have a think about the issues you have with your employee and decide if it is conduct or capability
- If it is a performance issue, have an initial informal discussion
- Where required set a PIP, and if no improvement invite to disciplinary

# Thank you

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We get it, together.

# Any Questions?

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# What Questions should we ask in an Appraisal?



We get it, together.

**How can you tell if an  
employee has already  
check out?**



We get it, together.

**How long should a PIP  
be?**

## Further support

Hub page:

<https://www.frenchduncan.co.uk/sportscotland/>



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# Feed back Form QR code

