

### **Poor Excuses for Managing Poor Performance Poorly**

Do you shy away from giving what is viewed as negative feedback or criticism? You may if any of these beliefs apply to you.

- Criticism just disrupts working relationships.
- Hints and sarcastic comments about an employee's performance generally do the trick; if they're halfway intelligent, they'll pick them up.
- I don't want to seem harsh or unkind. No one likes hearing negative comments about themselves. Who am I to judge someone else's behaviour anyway?
- I prefer to put off performance feedback until the time is right – usually at the annual performance appraisal or, better still, just before they go on holiday, so the employee has time to calm down.
- If I wait long enough, the situation will probably resolve itself anyway.
- I'm uncomfortable with this sort of thing; I find it stressful and demoralising. It's better to keep one's opinions to oneself.
- I've let the situation go on for so long now, I've become so angry that I'm sure I'll lose my temper.
- People know that 'no news is good news' and I'll let them know when I'm not happy with their work.

If you subscribe to any of those excuses, forget them. Giving information on performance – positive, constructive and corrective – is a manager's responsibility. Speak up when you see the need for improvement, because when you let things slide, people think all is well and what they're doing is acceptable. At the same time, don't speak in haste: think it through first.

(from 'Management Theory & Practice', pp512, Kris Cole, 2010)