2016

MANAGING A CHILDCARE BUSINESS
PART 4   MANAGING PEOPLE

Part 4 *Managing People*

Contents

1.Managing People

Effectively managing a team of staff can be one of the most satisfying and one of the most challenging tasks for any business manager. For early years' services, good staff are vital in ensuring a high-quality provision for children and parents. Early years services are built on developing strong relationships. Staff need to develop strong relationships with children, parents and each other.

Therefore, managers need to get all facets of human resource management right! This includes recruiting the right people, developing staff and keeping up to date with roles and responsibilities. Managers also need to be able to strategically plan for their long-term needs and be aware of their responsibilities as employers. Getting all these aspects of human resources right could be the difference between the success and failure of an early years' service.

What is Human Resource Management?

Human Resource Management involves the recruitment and management of the people who work in an organisation. The focus of Human Resource Management is to attract, select, train, motivate and compensate employees, while making sure that they comply with employment legislation. A team of professionals cannot be built by an early years' service without good Human Resource Management. Thus, businesses with good Human Resource Management (HRM) have higher profits and better quality than businesses without or with poor HRM.

Benefits of Good Human Resource Management

Research shows that the human part of resources in an organisation makes up for approximately 80 percent of the organisation's value, so good Human Resource Management is very important. Employees are a critical factor of any business. Successfully

managing the human resource part of business can be important, even for very small businesses. After all, in a service economy, employees are part of the delivery of the product and service. Their performance, commitment and loyalty to the job are critical and can be enhanced through successful HRM. In the most general sense, HRM serves to motivate employees to top performance and maintain an organisational culture of high morale.

Main Elements of Good Human Resource Management

Recruitment	•EYS have to develop policies and proceedures for hiring people who are right for the job. •EYS have to outline the obligations and rights of the future employee. •Recruitment should be completed through interviews. •Good HRM will make sure that only the most skillful people are hired for the job, increasing the organisation's value.
Training & Development	•EYS need to train and develop employees by organising training programmes based on the employee's needs. •EYS need to be aware or required training and source no-cost or low-cost options that may be available
Performance Appraisal	•Good HRM involves motivating employees by encouraging them to work to their full potential, and offering them information regarding their job performance from time to time. •EYS goal should be to constantly develop and improve employees.
Conflict Resolution	•Whether the conflict is between two or more employees or between management and employees, a good HR practice is required to help settle any conflict. •Employees whose rights have been violated, or who experience harassment or discrimination can contact their EYS managers for assistance.
Compensation & Rewards	•Good HRM means compensating those who have exceeded expectations, which serves as an incentive for them and other employees to continue doing great work. •Compensation packages can include holiday bonuses, end of year bonuses, holidays, awards, promotions and more. Even simple things like a "thank you" programme can produce results.

Develop your Human Resource Policy

Human resource policies are the formal rules and guidelines that businesses put in place to hire, train, assess, and reward the members of their workforce. These policies, when organized and disseminated in an easily used form, can serve to pre-empt many misunderstandings between employees and employers about their rights and obligations in the business. Each company has a different set of circumstances, and so develops an individual set of human resource policies

Human resource policies are normally divided into 4 main areas:

1. Staffing & Development
2. Employee Relations
3. Terms & Conditions
4. Equality of Opportunity

Links between HR policies, procedures and strategy

HR policies should flow from HR strategies, and complement HR procedures.

- **HR strategy** is a statement or framework determining how HR can support business or organisational objectives, focusing on longer-term people issues and macro-concerns about structure, values, commitment and matching resources to future need. For more information on strategic HRM, visit our factsheet.
- **HR policies** provide more general and practical advice and guidance for managers and others on a range of employment issues.
- **HR procedures** support and supplement HR policies, where appropriate, by giving a step-by-step account of specific arrangements that apply in particular circumstances (for example, particular time limits within which meetings must take place).

2.Recruitment

Having qualified, professional and caring staff is key to creating a caring and quality environment for the children in an early years' service. Recruiting and retaining the right people is critical to the success of your setting. However, this is often one of the most challenging tasks for early years' owners and managers. Recruitment processes must be fair, professional, and legal. If in doubt seek independent legal advice.

The Basics

1. *Identify what you require:* even if you are replacing an existing position, review the job description to make sure it will still meet all your needs.
2. *Advertise:* ensure that when you advertise, you avoid all types of discrimination. Remember that when you advertise, you are providing key messages about the type of setting and employer that you are.
3. *Deal professionally with all enquiries:* have a log of all enquiries and application forms sent out so that you can monitor the process and review the success of your advertisement strategy.
4. *Select interviewees:* choose who you would like to interview based on who meets the criteria that you set in the job description you provided for the position.
5. *Plan the interview:*
   a. Plan sufficient time for each interview
   b. Prepare and agree your questions in advance with any others who are assisting you in conducting the interviews
   c. Make sure the environment is quiet and free from disruptions and distractions

Ten Stages of Recruitment Process

- Stage 1. Authorisation
- Stage 2. Job Analysis- Job Description- Person Specification
- Stage3. Agreeing Terms and Conditions
- Stage 4. In-House and and External Recruitment
- Stage 5. Decide Target Group
- Stage 6. Decide On Appropriate Recruitment Method
- Stage7. Design of Advertisement
- Stage 8. Responding to the Applicants
- Stage 9. Shortlisting
- Stage 10. Evaluation

d. Allow and encourage the interviewee to ask questions and be prepared for possible questions on conditions of employment

e. Thank candidates for their time and advise them when and how they will hear about the outcome

f. Write up notes after each interview and before you proceed to the next interview

6. *Make a decision:* decide objectively based on the information provided by applicants in their application form, CV and interview. Take the time to review and discuss all the candidate's suitability and even if one stands out, think about all the criteria against this applicant.

7. *Inform candidates:* about both success and failure and be prepared to give feedback if the applicants ask for it.

8. *Record:* ensure that all records of the interview process, decisions and communications are kept, even where the applicants have not been successful. The Data Commissioner considers a retention period of one full year to be appropriate in situations like this.

Recruitment Question Bank

See Appendix 1 for questions that you may find useful for your interviews.

3.Effective Communication

What is Communication?

Communication is the transfer of information from the sender to the receiver with the information being understood by both the sender and the receiver.

Role of Communication

Communication is needed:

- To establish and disseminate goals of an organisation
- To develop plans for their achievement
- To organise human and other resources in the most effective and efficient way
- To select, develop and appraise members of the organisation
- To lead, direct and motivate people
- To control performance.

The Communication Process

Sender of the message: Communication begins with the sender who has a thought or an idea which is then encoded in a way that can be understood by both the sender and the receiver.

Transmission of message: The information is transmitted over a channel that links the sender with the receiver. The message may be oral, written or visual.

Receiver of the message: The receiver has to be ready for the message so that it can be decoded. Accurate communication can only occur when both the sender and the receiver attach the same meaning to the message.

Noise and Feedback: We can never be sure whether or not a message has been effectively encoded, transmitted, decoded and understood until it is confirmed by feedback.

The communication process is a guide toward realizing effective communication. Effective communication leads to understanding.
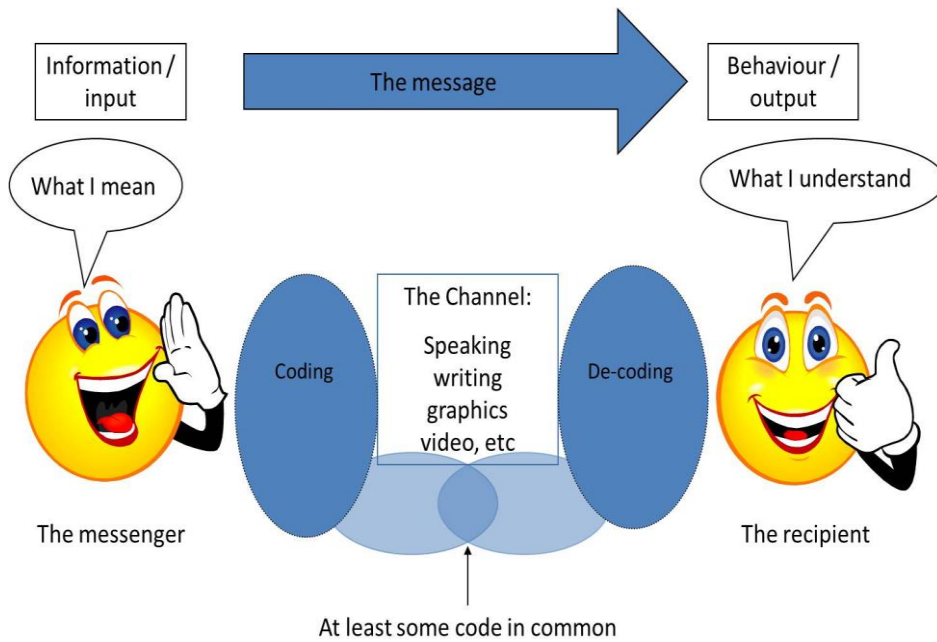
Barriers to Effective Communication

Communicating is straightforward. What makes it complex, difficult, and frustrating are the barriers we put in the way.

Top Barriers include:

• Loud Noise	• Conflict Avoidance (Chaos)
• Environment	• Exclusion
• Expectations	• Boundary or Barrier
• Avoidance	• Information Overload
• Fixing	• Trust and Credibility
• Scapegoating	• Time
• Probing	• Emotions
• Speaking in code	• Message congruency
• Control	
• Blaming	

Importance of Communication in the Workplace

Communication is important in a workplace setting because people must interact with one another in ways that will get the job done quickly and effectively.

"*Communication is really all anyone ever gets paid for ultimately...and if you cannot effectively communicate...you will PAY...not get paid...*" -- Doug Firebaugh

Importance of Communication in Leadership

It is simply impossible to become a great leader without being a great communicator.

"*The art of communication is the language of leadership*." — James Humes, *Good Leaders, Good Communicators*.

Significance of Communication in Relationships

Definitely, communication plays the main role in establishing relationships. Communication is important in relationships as it allows us to share interests, aspirations and concerns, to support each other, to organize our lives and make decisions, and to work together.   People communicate with each other in a number of ways that depend upon the message and the context in which it is being sent. Choice of communication channel and your style of communicating also affect communication. So, there are a variety of types of communication.

Types of communication based on the communication channels used are:

- *Verbal Communication*
- *Nonverbal Communication*

Verbal communication refers to the form of communication in which a message is transmitted verbally; communication is done by word of mouth and a piece of writing. The objective of every communication is to have people understand what we are trying to convey. **In verbal communication remember the acronym KISS** (keep it short and simple).

Verbal Communication is further divided into:

Oral Communication

In oral communication, Spoken words are used. It includes face-to-face conversations, speech, radio etc.
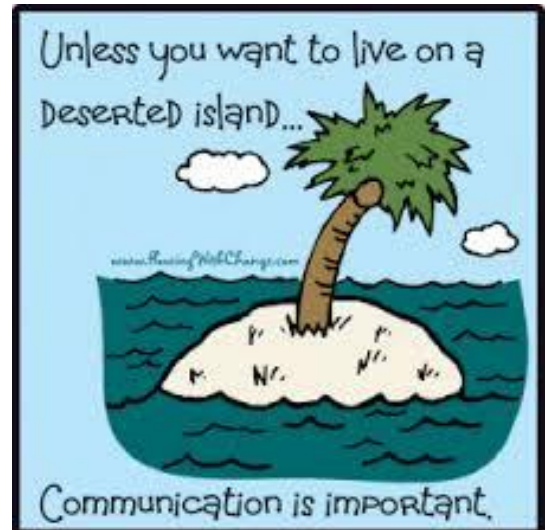
- Written Communication

  In written communication, written signs or symbols are used to communicate. A written message may be printed or hand written.

Nonverbal communication is the sending or receiving of wordless messages. We can say that communication other than oral and written, such as **gesture**, **body language**, **posture**, **tone of voice** or **facial expressions**, is called nonverbal communication. **Nonverbal communication is all about the body language of speaker.**

Nonverbal communication has the following three elements:

1. Appearance of Speaker and Surroundings: clothing, hairstyle, neatness, use of cosmetics, room size, lighting, decorations, furnishings
2. Body Language: facial expressions, gestures, postures
3. Sounds: Voice Tone, Volume, Speech rate
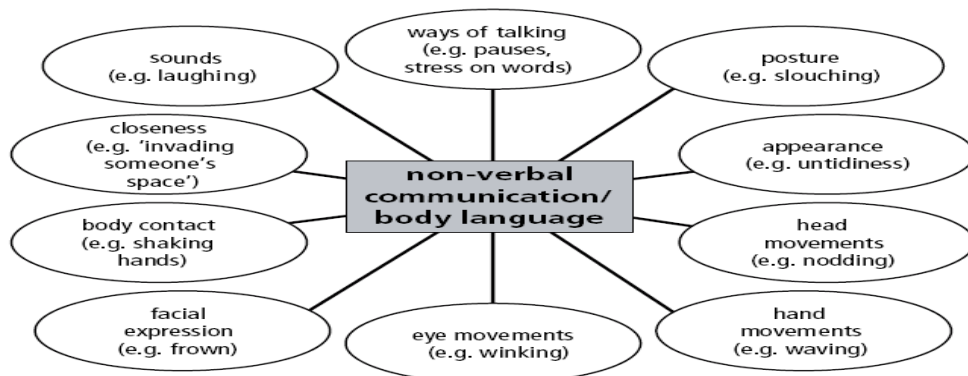
Why nonverbal communication matters

The way you listen, look, move, and react tells the other person whether or not you care, if you're being truthful, and how well you're listening. When your nonverbal signals match up with the words you're saying they increase trust, clarity, and rapport. When they don't they generate tension, mistrust, and confusion.

If you want to become a better communicator, it's important to become more sensitive not only to the body language and nonverbal cues of others, but also to your own.

Nonverbal communication cues can play five roles:

- **Repetition:** they can repeat the message the person is making verbally.
- **Contradiction:** they can contradict a message the individual is trying to convey.
- **Substitution:** they can substitute for a verbal message. For example, a person's eyes can often convey a far more vivid message than words do.
- **Complementing:** they may add to or complement a verbal message. A boss who pats a person on the back in addition to giving praise can increase the impact of the message.
- **Accenting:** they may accent or underline a verbal message. Pounding the table, for example, can underline a message.

Source: *The Importance of Effective Communication*, Edward G. Wertheim, Ph.D.

Can nonverbal communication be faked?

You may be familiar with advice on how to sit a certain way, steeple your fingers, or shake hands just so, in order to appear confident or assert dominance. But the truth is that such tricks aren't likely to work (unless you truly feel confident and in charge). That's because you can't control all of the signals you're constantly sending off about what you're really thinking and feeling. And the harder you try, the more unnatural your signals are likely to come across.

Setting the stage for effective nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication is a rapidly flowing back-and-forth process requiring your full concentration and attention. If you are planning what you're going to say next, daydreaming, or thinking about something else, you are almost certain to miss nonverbal cues and other subtleties in the conversation. You need to stay focused on the moment-to-moment experience in order to fully understand what's going on.

To improve nonverbal communication, learn to manage stress

Learning how to manage stress in the heat of the moment is one of the most important things you can do to improve your nonverbal communication. Stress compromises your ability to communicate. When you're stressed out, you're more likely to misread other people, send confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals, and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behaviour. Furthermore, emotions are contagious. You being upset is very likely to trigger others to be upset, making a bad situation worse. If you're feeling overwhelmed by stress, it's best to take a time out. Take a moment to calm down before you jump back into the conversation. Once you've regained your emotional equilibrium, you'll be better equipped to deal with the situation in a positive way.

How emotional awareness strengthens nonverbal communication

In order to send accurate nonverbal cues, you need to be aware of your emotions and how they influence you. You also need to be able to recognize the emotions of others and the true feelings behind the cues they are sending. This is where **emotional awareness** comes in.

Emotional awareness enables you to:

- Accurately read other people, including the emotions they're feeling and the unspoken messages they're sending.
- Create trust in relationships by sending nonverbal signals that match up with your words.
- Respond in ways that show others that you understand, notice, and care.
- Know if the relationship is meeting your emotional needs, giving you the option to either repair the relationship or move on.

Tips for reading body language and nonverbal communication

Once you've developed your abilities to manage stress and recognize emotions, you'll naturally become better at reading the nonverbal signals sent by others.

Pay attention to inconsistencies. Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said. Is the person saying one thing, and their body language something else? For example, are they telling you "yes" while shaking their head no?

Look at nonverbal communication signals as a group.

Don't read too much into a single gesture or nonverbal cue.

Consider all of the nonverbal signals you are receiving, from eye contact to tone of voice and body language. Taken together, are their nonverbal cues consistent—or inconsistent—with what their words are saying?

Trust your instincts. Don't dismiss your gut feelings. If you get the sense that someone isn't being honest or that something isn't adding up, you may be picking up on a mismatch between verbal and nonverbal cues.

Evaluating nonverbal signals

Eye contact	Is eye contact being made? If so, is it overly intense or just right?
Facial expression	What is their face showing? Is it mask-like and unexpressive, or emotionally present and filled with interest?
Tone of voice	Does their voice project warmth, confidence, and interest, or is it strained and blocked?
Posture and gesture	Are their bodies relaxed or stiff and immobile? Are shoulders tense and raised, or slightly sloped?
Touch	Is there any physical contact? Is it appropriate to the situation? Does it make you feel uncomfortable?
Intensity	Do they seem flat, cool, and disinterested, or over-the-top and melodramatic?
Timing and pace	Is there an easy flow of information back and forth? Do nonverbal responses come too quickly or too slowly?
Sounds	Do you hear sounds that indicate caring or concern?

As you continue to pay attention to the nonverbal cues and signals you send and receive, your ability to communicate will improve.

Sources:

- http://www.dineshbakshi.com/igcse-business-studies/people-at-work/revision-notes/842-process-of-effective-communication
- http://www.bizzuka.com/company-blog/4-step-process-essential-to-effective-communication
- http://www.hsc.csu.edu.au/retail/compulsory/customer/communicate/3868/effective_communication.htm
- http://wikieducator.org/VUSSC/Content/Tourism/Applying_Effective_Communication_Skills/The_process_of_communication
- http://mcardo14-organizationalbehavior.blogspot.ie/2011/05/comunication-and-virtual-team.html
- http://appliedalliance.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/nonverbal-communication.gif
- http://www.helpguide.org/mental/eq6_nonverbal_communication.htm

4.Performance Management

Creating a supporting and nurturing setting and culture is essential to the growth of your staff as well as the children you look after. It is crucial to think about the sort of employer you wish to be. Successful early years services will foster development and encourage their staff and will prioritise, plan and monitor staff development.

Staff development and training needs should be examined and discussed regularly and any measures and outputs from these discussions should be documented in a development plan.

Key questions to ask yourself when reviewing your people management strategy:

1. Creating performance requirements – do you ensure that people understand what tasks, quality working standards, goals and aims they are expected to achieve.
2. Monitoring performance: do you take time to watch and study how people are performing on a daily/weekly basis?
3. Feedback and support: do you give continuous feedback, motivation and support to your team when you observe good practice or when people are experiencing difficulties?

Formal Performance Management System

It is essential to have a formal performance management system in place so that you can review, monitor and develop staff on a continuous basis.

Successful performance management strategies involve regular staff meetings, support and supervision sessions, performance reviews and performance improvement plans. All of these tools need to be supported by strong and effective communication skills.

Staff Meetings

Organising regular staff meetings facilitates two-way communication and information sharing between staff and management. Staff meetings provide valuable time for reflection and training, coupled with the opportunity for management to pass on any important information. It is crucial that staff meetings are held regularly to ensure staff knowledge and practice is up to date and consistent throughout the setting. Effective and regular staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to share any ideas or concerns they have about their job roles and responsibilities. Proving this mechanism for two-way communication enables staff to feel valued and respected as a member of a team. The time available in staff meetings should be capitalised to build on staff morale. Meetings are a great way to celebrate and praise staff for their achievements and hard work.

While organising staff meetings can be difficult in early years' services, services can find ways to overcome these challenges, such as paid time after hours, cover staff, incorporating early closures into your programme, calendar and daily schedule. Margie Carter in her article, Planning Staff Meetings, identifies, "Large or small, the programs most successful in carving out regular meeting time for staff set their calendars for the year and have persuasive rationales and policies for parents, along with clear expectations for staff attendance".

Article Links
Planning Effective Staff Meeting for Child Care Employees
http://www.childcarelounge.com/director-articles/staff-meeting.php

Suggested Code of Conduct for Staff Meetings
http://www.childcarelounge.com/director-articles/code-conduct.php

Staff Meetings
http://www.aspenpitkin.com/Portals/0/docs/City/KidsFirst/Staff%20meetings%20-%20how.pdf

Enhancing Staff Morale - More Than Pizza and Donuts
http://www.childcarelounge.com/director-articles/staff-morale.php

Support and Supervision Sessions

The Early Years Services Regulations (2016) requires managers to provide their staff teams with regular support and supervision and requires an active policy on support and supervision within the service.

"Supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. Its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives." Safeguarding in Education - Supervision Guidance Kent County Council 2013

An effective support and supervision schedule allows you to provide sessions with individual staff at regular intervals to discuss and provide them with assistance they may need to perform their duties. Providing these opportunities empowers staff and helps to ensure that they feel prepared and happy to accomplish their job successfully.

The key elements of supervision are coaching, training, personal development and the focus on children and their well-being. The process should be two-way, enabling both parties involved to build a positive and equally supportive discussion and ongoing development plan. Thus, meeting the need to foster a culture of open discussion where staff have the time to discuss any concerns, worries and challenges within their role and the setting as a whole.

Not all supervision needs to be planned. Spontaneous supervision must occur in the event of concerns or safeguarding issues arising. An 'open door' culture should be highlighted and encouraged when applying a system for supervision.

Before you can develop and implement a support and supervision system, you need to stop and think about how you will conduct the sessions and develop a relevant and meaningful policy and procedure to support them. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 states that a "Supervision policy", in relation to a pre-school service,

means a policy specifying the manner in which employees, unpaid workers and contractors are supervised and supported in the service in relation to their work practices.

Support and Supervision Policy and Procedure – Sample
http://www4.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20076/children_and_families_practitioners_and_providers_information/353/support_for_early_years_and_childcare_providers/8

Staff Supervision in Early Years and Childcare Model Supervision Agreement – Sample
http://www4.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20076/children_and_families_practitioners_and_providers_information/353/support_for_early_years_and_childcare_providers/8

Leicester County Council Early Learning and Childcare Service Supervision Toolkit

Model Form for Recording Supervision Meetings
http://www4.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20076/children_and_families_practitioners_and_providers_information/353/support_for_early_years_and_childcare_providers/8

Article Links

Supervision Guidance for Early Years and Childcare Settings
http://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/redbridge/fsd/files/supervision_guidance_2013_1.pdf

Tips on How to Handle Conflict in the Workplace
http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Roberta_Matuson

Performance Reviews

A PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL can be described as a formal TWO-WAY system that aims to DEVELOP, MOTIVATE, and IMPROVE PERFORMANCE of individuals through:

- Assessment and feedback on previous performance

- Consideration of current roles and responsibilities

- Agreement on future development

A performance appraisal (PA), also referred to as a performance review, performance evaluation, (career) development discussion, or employee appraisal is a method by which the job performance of an employee is documented and evaluated. Performance appraisals

are a part of career development and consist of regular reviews of employee performance within organizations.

Companies use performance appraisals for evaluation and developmental purposes. A properly executed appraisal acts as a basis for hiring new employees, training and development of current employees, restructuring of workflow and employee motivation. Performance appraisals offer evidence for pay increases or for terminations. Well-designed performance appraisals can start dialogue between supervisors, direct reports and co-workers that may result in positive outcomes for the individuals and the business.

Considerations for Performance Reviews

- Role requirements – is it worth reviewing the role and requirements, have they changed or developed since the original job description.
- Personal objectives – how would the individual like their career to develop and can you help achieve these goals?
- Monitoring Performance – are their areas that need to be improved, and how can you support improving them.
- Providing feedback – give praise to good performance and if possible reward achievements. The key characteristics of providing feedback are:
  - Timely – do not wait for a formal review to acknowledge when someone is performing well, tell them as soon as you notice.
  - Clear - be specific about what impressed or didn't impress you.
  - Constructive – focus on how to support the person to build on the feedback and improve further.

- Collaborative – encourage and provide opportunities for the individual to comment and think about their own strengths and weaknesses.

Sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Performance_appraisal

http://learningmodels.wordpress.com/2011/03/23/performance-appraisal-model/

http://smallbusiness.chron.com/purpose-performance-appraisal-systems-1921.html

Employee Performance Appraisal – Samples

See Appendix 2 **&** Appendix 3

Also http://www.childcarelounge.com/director-articles/performance-appraisal.php

Performance Improvement Plans

How to Develop a Performance Improvement Plan

A standard course of action for assisting employees who are underperforming is to put together a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). Having a written record of how a worker is expected to correct deficiencies will protect the worker and the employer and avoid any confusion about expectations. The purpose of a Performance Improvement Plan is to help an employee address and correct any issues in their work that may be affecting the business. Develop a Performance Improvement Plan before taking other disciplinary actions in order to include the employee in the strategizing of his or her performance improvement.

Define the performance issue. Put the problem in writing. Specify if the employee is lacking in a particular skill, or if it is a behavioural problem that needs to be addressed. Be specific about any incidents or problems that have occurred because of the skill deficiency or behavioural problem.

Establish expectations. Define the areas of performance or behaviour that need to be improved. List the changes or skills that are required from the employee. Have the end result clearly established in writing.

Establish timelines. The Performance Improvement Plan must include deadlines and a schedule of priorities. Identify the time periods in which actions are to be taken and changes are to be made. Communicate how these deadlines will be enforced, and what the consequences will be if they are missed.

Develop an action plan that includes goals and objectives. Assign specific tasks to both the supervisor and the employee to make the improvements outlined in the expectations. Ask the employee for input as to whether the action items are reasonable and fair. Make sure the employee has the tools he or she needs to improve performance, including support from other staff or supervisors.

Decide on a method of evaluation. Include plans for how the employee's improvement will be reviewed, and how frequently evaluations will occur. Schedule periodic meetings or conferences to review the challenges and successes in the employee's work.

Review the Performance Improvement Plan with the employee. Make sure the employee understands all the elements of the PIP, and is prepared to accept the consequences that are laid out if satisfactory employee performance is not achieved. Have the employee and his or her supervisor sign the plan to acknowledge its review and receipt.

Sources:

•http://www.wikihow.com/Develop-a-Performance-Improvement-Plan

•http://www.google.ie/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=5&sqi=2&ved=0CDkQFj AE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.hr.emory.edu%2Feu%2Fdocs%2Fperformance-improvement-letter.pdf&ei=ntMWVN6eIMfA7Aa46oGwDA&usg=AFQjCNFjxe4CTlTxWLPcTf6EVNoS21ah5Q

Performance Improvement Plan Sample, see Appendix 4

5.Learning and Development

The Importance of Learning, Training & Development in the Workplace

Training presents a prime opportunity to expand the knowledge base of all employees, but many employers find the development opportunities expensive. Employees also miss out on work time while attending training sessions, which may delay the completion of projects. Despite the potential drawbacks, training and development provides both the company as a whole and the individual employees with benefits that make the cost and time a worthwhile investment.

Some Events that may prompt a Training Needs Analysis

Addressing Weaknesses

Most employees have some weaknesses in their workplace skills. A training program allows you to strengthen those skills that each employee needs to improve. A development program brings all employees to a higher level so they all have similar skills and knowledge. This helps reduce any weak links within the company who rely heavily on others to complete basic work tasks. Providing the necessary training creates an overall knowledgeable staff with employees who can take over for one another as needed, work in teams or work independently without constant help and supervision from others.

Improved Employee Performance

An employee who receives the necessary training is better able to perform her job. She becomes more aware of safety practices and proper procedures for basic tasks. The training may also build the employee's confidence because she has a stronger understanding of the industry and the responsibilities of her job. This confidence may push her to perform even better and think of new ideas that help her excel. Continuous training also keeps your employees on the cutting edge of industry developments. Employees who are competent

and on top of changing industry standards help your company hold a position as a leader and strong competitor within the industry.

Consistency

A structured training and development program ensures that employees have a consistent experience and background knowledge. The consistency is particularly relevant for the company's basic policies and procedures. All employees need to be aware of the expectations and procedures within the company. This includes safety, discrimination and administrative tasks. Putting all employees through regular training in these areas ensures that all staff members at least have exposure to the information.

Employee Satisfaction

Employees with access to training and development programs have the advantage over employees in other companies who are left to seek out training opportunities on their own. The investment in training that a company makes shows the employees they are valued. The training creates a supportive workplace. Employees may gain access to training they wouldn't have otherwise known about or sought out themselves. Employees who feel appreciated and challenged through training opportunities may feel more satisfaction toward their jobs.

What is Continuing Professional Development?

CPD embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional skills and knowledge, beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job.

Continuing professional development is a life- long process of learning. Every early childhood professional and service have a responsibility to develop and maintain their knowledge and skills to ensure professional competence throughout their careers.

The Key Principles of CPD are:

1. Individual and centre commitment to improve and learn -
   Continuing professional development is both an individual responsibility and the responsibility of the employer. Every child care educator has a professional responsibility to maintain a sufficiently high standard of professional competence and to be current in their knowledge and skill base in order to provide the best care and development programmes for young children. Every centre needs to commit to on-going efforts to upgrade its early year's staff.

2. CPD opportunities include both formal and informal training and development activities -
   Continuing professional development opportunities should be relevant to the educator's work and teaching responsibilities and child care personnel should be able to participate in continuing professional development opportunities.

Types of Professional Development

The term professional development refers to different types of facilitated learning experiences that are designed to support the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and disposition as well as the application of this knowledge to practice.

- **Knowledge-** consists of facts, concepts, ideas, vocabulary, and related aspects of educational culture and best practice.
- **Skills –** refer to the observable units of action that occur in a relatively discrete period of time. These are learned through direct instruction, modelling and imitation, application of theory to practice, discovery, or other methods, and are modified or improved through feedback, guidance, practice, repetition, drill, and continuous use.
- **Dispositions**- are prevailing tendencies to exhibit a pattern of behaviour frequently, consciously, and voluntarily. Dispositions are distinguished from skills in being broader in scope and include motivation to be applied and put to use- in contrast, one can have a skill but no desire to use it.

Professional development includes a wide range of learning activities, including higher education that results in awarding credits, and informal training activities delivered to in-service early child care providers in the form of training workshops and activities, in-house training and even professional reflection and writing.

As training needs differ according to the developmental stage of the early year's professional, it is useful to select the appropriate types of CPD activities that cater to the different needs and experience of each early year's professional.
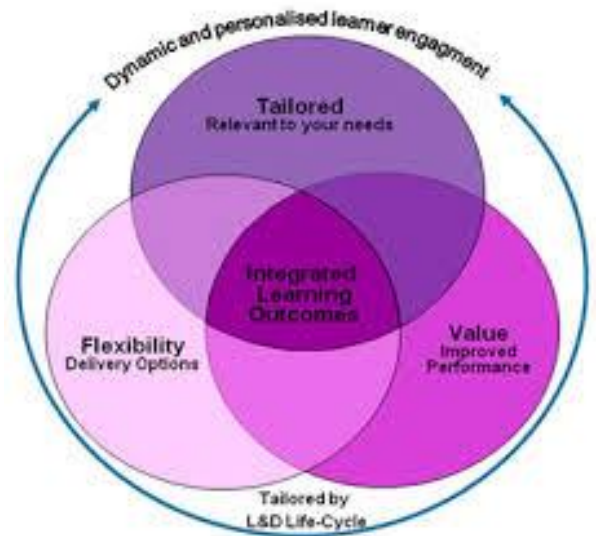
How does CPD benefit me?

Early years professionals and childcare services play a key role in ensuring quality in child care programmes. A key factor that is positively associated with early year's professional quality is participation in professional development.

CPD involves the process of regularly assessing the current and future skills and knowledge requirements that are relevant to an early year's professional's responsibilities, as well as planning and implementing an ongoing programme of training and development to address these needs. When adopted and embraced, the process allows you to:

1. Foster excellence in your teaching and leadership practice
2. Be accountable for remaining current in your practice, thus improving the profession's credibility with the public
3. Enhance professional image
4. Progress your career

5. Reflect on personal achievements and invest in future development

6. Learn from others and exchange knowledge and ideas

7. Benchmark your performance

8. Plan and design your own professional development

9. Develop the skills you need to do your job more effectively

10. Learn in a flexible style, identifying and making the most of available developmental opportunities.

Sources:

http://smallbusiness.chron.com/importance-training-development-workplace-10321.html

https://www.childcarelink.gov.sg/ccls/uploads/**CPD**_Guide_5_FA.pdf

http://management-class-global.com/staffindex.htm

6.Human Resource Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are the best way of outlining the organisation's regulations on all areas of employment, extending from recruitment and selection to evaluation of performance, from health and safety to dismissals.

HR policies and procedures provide guidelines on the employer-employee relationship providing information on the rights, duties and responsibilities of employees, which in turn create a suitable working environment and promotes healthy workplace relationships. Policies and procedures support several important purposes:

- Communicating values and expectations for how things are done at your early years setting.
- Keeping you, as the employer, compliant with legislation and provide protection against employment disputes and claims.
- Document and implement best human resource practices appropriate to the setting.
- Supporting consistent treatment of staff, fairness and transparency.
- Helps management to make decisions that are consistent, uniform, and predictable.

-Click here for information on **Developing and Using Policies and Procedures**
http://www.kccc.ie/Business-Development/Policies-Procedures
-Click here for **Recommended Human Resources Policies and Procedures** http://www.kccc.ie/Business-Development/Setting-Up-a-Quality-Childcare-Service/Policies-Procedures/Human-Resources

Employee Handbook

Develop an employee handbook to provide your employees with information about their working conditions, benefits, and policies that affect their employment. Ensure that all staff

are aware of the policies and procedures in the employee handbook. Have all staff 'sign off' to confirm that they have received, read, and understood the contents of the handbook.

The following are examples of what you might include in the employee handbook: Welcome and introduction

- Background information on organisation
- Representing the organisation
- Code of conduct
- Personal appearance/uniforms
- Smoking and smoking breaks
- Timekeeping and recording of time worked
- Payment of salary, expenses etc.
- Pensions
- Detailed information about all types of applicable leave
- Training and development
- Support, supervisions, and appraisals
- Health and safety
- Information and communications technology (email, internet, mobile phones etc.)
- Disciplinary/dismissals and grievance procedures
- Personnel files
- Confidentiality
- Administration procedures and record keeping requirements
- Complaints
- Copies of all organisations policies and procedures
- Bullying and harassment policy
- Conflict resolution policy
- Maternity, adoptive, parental leave
- Lieu time and overtime
- Resignation
- Force majeure Leave

7.Employment Law

Even if your early years' service has only one staff member, nearly every element of employment law applies in full. It is vital that you get this part of business management correct. Even the smallest employer organisations need to have a simple knowledge of the basics of:

- Recruitment and Selection

- Health and Safety

- Sickness/Absence Policy

- Disciplinary Policy/Procedure

- Grievance Procedure

- Minimum Wage

- Equal Opportunities

- Employment Contracts, Terms & Conditions of Employment (pay, annual leave etc.)

- Performance Management

- Employment Rights, e.g. dismissal, redundancy

If you do not have these skills in your early years setting, you should consider securing a consultant to advise on these areas.

There are also various sources of information, advice and support in these areas for both private and not-for-profit settings, such as:

Information and Customer Service – Workplace Relations

Workplace Relations provides information on industrial relations & rights and obligations under Irish employment and equality legislation. Visit their website at the link below:

https://www.workplacerelations.ie/en/Workplace_Relations_Services/Info_Cust_Serv/

The **Workplace Relations Commission** has also developed guides for supporting employers to help them through the maze of employment law.

Please click on the links below

Workplace Relations Commission. Guide to Employment, Labour and Equality Law.

Workplace Relations Commission. Employment Law Explained

If you are a member of a national organisation such as **IBEC, SFA**, or **ECI** you will also have access to guides, support and legal advice.

https://www.ibec.ie/

https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/

www.sfa.ie

Appendix 1

Interview Question Bank

Questions for Interviews

CV and Experience with Children
- Talk through CV highlighting experience with pre-school aged children
- What are your responsibilities in your current position? In previous positions?
- What skills has the candidate gained from her work experience?
- Could you explain how you feel your training and experience to date will benefit this service?
- What aspects of your personality do you feel suit this position?
- What do you feel are your strengths/weaknesses?

Qualifications
- Ask about qualifications
- How relevant is your qualification to position on offer?
- What was the most important thing you learned on your course?

Leadership Skills
- What skills are needed to make a good team leader?
- Describe your leadership approach?
- How would you deal with conflict among staff?
- What is your experience of managing/supervising staff?
- How would you as team leader make decisions in the service/How would the team leader keep staff motivated?

Experience of Financial Management in Childcare/After School Setting
- How would the candidate approach keeping financial records for the service and what records would the candidate think important to keep?
- Is the candidate familiar with Pobal and their reporting procedures e.g. quarterly returns, impact stats etc.?
- Experience with Government Funded Programmes requirements e.g. Paperwork, compliance etc.?

Knowledge of Programme/ Activity Planning for this age group
- What is your experience of planning activities for this age group?
- If you were to plan a week's activities for the service, what would you include?
- What do you think a typical day in the service would be like?
- How would you include children/families from difference cultures/children with special needs?
- Do you think it's important to involve parents in their children's learning and development? How would you do this?

Knowledge of Child Protection
Scenario Questions-

1. Child discloses sensitive personal information about his family to you what would you do?
2. Child continually comes to the service inappropriately dressed i.e. shorts in November, what do you do?

Teamwork
- What does teamwork mean in a childcare service and why is it important to work as a team?
- If you felt that one person was not pulling their weight how would you react?
- If you thought one of your colleagues was singling out a child for preferential treatment what would you do?
- What role do you think parents should have in the childcare setting?

Knowledge of Community Childcare/ After School Care services
- Tell me what you know about Childcare/ After School Care Services in …
- What is the difference between Community run and privately run Childcare/ After School care services?

Overall suitability for the position
- Why did you apply for this position?
- How would you deal with difficult children?
- How would you respond to accidents/incidents involving children?
- How would you know if the service was providing a good service?
- What in your opinion is a good quality service?

Working Conditions?
- Flexibility- Explain what a flexible approach to work is?
- Meeting with parents to discuss the progress of a child outside the normal hours – would you be available to attend?
- Salary expectation?
- Housekeeping questions
- Availability: How soon can you start work if you were to be successful?
- References: Seek permission to check references and to get Garda clearance.

Appendix 2

Sample Performance Appraisal Template 1

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Performance Management Process is designed to align individual performance objectives with the strategy and objectives of the business and to direct individual effort to the achievement of company results. Performance Management helps to strengthen the communication between employees and supervisors; it should provide employees with a clear understanding of what is expected of them and how their performance contributions are being assessed and recognised.

The Performance Management Process consists of the following four steps:

1. *Annual Performance Planning*
   - Objective setting and alignment
   - Job responsibilities
   - Individual Development Objectives

2. *Ongoing Progress Review & Feedback*
   - Adjust Performance Objectives as business requires
   - Conduct informal discussions regarding progress, improvement, etc.
   - Mid-Year Progress Review

3. *Year-End Performance Review*
   - Joint Review

Employee	**I.D. Number**
Position	**In Position Since**
Functional Unit	**Location**
Supervisor	**Review Period**

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Objectives *Determined by main deliverables and results of the job that are directly or indirectly supportive of key business objectives*	Measures *"What does success look like?"* *Reports and other indicators you will refer to as evidence that the objectives have been met*	Weighting *Relative weight of importance of the objective (optional)*	Results/Status *Identify the date accomplished, target achieved/not achieved, or other indicators that the objectives were met during the year*
Performance Review: Summary Comments *(To be completed by Manager)*			

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The Manager and Employee should identify development areas and actions to enhance capabilities (training, external educational programs, special assignments, etc.). Development Objectives progress should be monitored throughout the year and documented on this form.

Development Objective	Measures	Results/Status
Performance Review: Summary Comments *(To be completed by Manager)*		

MID-YEAR PROGRESS REVIEW NOTES

PERFORMANCE REVIEW: OVERALL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Narrative summary of overall performance including strengths and development needs to be completed by the Manager.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW: OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING *(Check One)*

☐ Outstanding   Results clearly and consistently exceed expectations for all performance objectives and job responsibilities.

☐ Exceeds Expectations   Results frequently exceed expectations for performance objectives and job responsibilities.

☐ Meets Expectations   Results usually meet, and in some cases may even exceed performance objectives and job responsibilities.

☐ Needs Improvement   Results do not consistently meet performance objectives and/or job responsibilities; employee and supervisor should plan specific actions to improve performance.

☐ Unacceptable   Results do not meet performance objectives and job responsibilities; immediate action must be taken to address performance deficiencies

PERFORMANCE REVIEW: EMPLOYEE COMMENTS *(To be completed by the Employee)*

PERFORMANCE REVIEW: SIGNATURES

employee signature*	Date	reviewer's signature	Date	next level signature	date
print name		print name		print name	

*__*Employee's signature indicates neither agreement nor disagreement, but that the evaluation has been discussed with the employee.*__

Appendix 3

Sample Performance Appraisal Template 2

ABC Playschool Appraisal Form

Name of Staff Member:

This form should be completed before any appraisal meeting and is intended to help you:

- to identify areas of the job description in which the member of staff is succeeding
- to focus on any areas in which the required standard is not being achieved
- to agree with the member of staff targets for future development in these areas
- to assist the member of staff to develop their skills, knowledge and expertise

Listed below are the main functions of the job description, in the same way as they have been identified on the form given to the staff member. Indicate beside each whether the required standard has been achieved and make any additional comment which you feel relevant.

Main tasks from job description	Achieved required Standard? Yes/No	Comments
Liaising with manager on decisions on a regular basis		
Advise the Manager of any concerns about a child or equipment		
Help plan, provide, take part in & evaluate and ensure variety of playgroup activities		
Attend team meetings & help prepare a forward plan for the group		
Take part in special events, fundraising, outings & visits		
Communicate with parents and encourage parental involvement		
Listen to, encourage, stimulate & ensure safekeeping and wellbeing of the children		
Attend relevant evening meetings/courses as directed by the Manager		
Maintain the cleanliness and order of the playroom		
Keep information about the children, families & staff confidential		

Assist with regular observations of children and activities		
Act as a Keyworker, conducting regular observations, building up developmental records & working in close partnership with the children's parents/carers		
Awareness and adherence to Pre-School policies & routines		
Supporting other staff and volunteers		

1.   Steps to be taken to improve performance in specific areas:

2.   What activities/practical help would support the member of staff in developing further skills, knowledge and expertise?

Any other comments?

Signed _____   Date _____

Appendix 4

Sample: Performance Improvement Plan

Date Employee name Supervisor name Dates of PIP   Although name has demonstrated some of the skills and abilities required to perform the duties of position title, s/he does not meet department performance expectations consistently. S/he has not demonstrated the knowledge/ job awareness/commitment at the level this position requires. Immediate and sustained improvement is needed.

The following Performance Improvement Plan is designed to clarify performance expectations. It is a supplement to, not a replacement for, the position title job description, which is attached at the end of this document. Name is expected to implement immediately the performance expectations that are listed below. (optional: attach department procedures and protocols if appropriate)

To facilitate sustained improvement, name's performance will be evaluated in writing on a monthly/biweekly/other basis for the next ##(90) days, with an overall assessment on date. This plan may be modified as necessary during this period, depending on name's progress.

(samples of areas needing improvement)

Time Management and Organization   Improved organization and minimization of distractions will help you complete tasks accurately and in a timely fashion.

Limit personal, non-emergency phone calls, emails and internet use to your break and lunch times.

Develop a system for organizing, tracking and completing tasks and requests. Create a notebook or calendar that will enable you to keep track of all assignments and requests. Before deleting emails that contain important information regarding assignments, make sure this information is transferred into your organization system. Follow through on all requests to completion. If the completion of a task requires you to request information from a 3rd party,

document your requests and follow up on a regular basis until you receive the needed response. Make use of checklists for multi-step procedures and complex projects.

Create an agenda for the weekly meeting with your supervisor Review your calendar or notebook as well as the agenda from the previous week's meeting. Make a list of projects and requests completed during the previous week. Make a prioritized list of ongoing, unfinished projects and requests and be prepared to explain what you have done and when you expect to complete the task. Make a list of upcoming deadlines, anticipated projects and ideas for improving processes and procedures.

Productivity and efficiency If you do not have specific projects/requests to work on, or while waiting for others to respond to your questions, review your notebook or calendar. Make sure all of your responsibilities are up to date. Solicit new assignments from XXXX.

Work independently Note that working independently does not mean asking no questions – it means that you are completing required tasks and assignments without needing to be reminded. Use the resources provided during your training and others available to you such as procedures, protocols and safety documents, websites, instructional memos, etc.

Attention to Detail Listen to and/or read all instructions carefully, more than once if necessary. If you have questions, find the answers before proceeding. Consult written instructions and protocols often, particularly when working with sensitive materials or beginning projects that will use considerable time and resources.

Check and double-check numbers and data, spelling and grammar, and procedural steps before submitting documents, reports, presentations, relaying information, etc.

Customer Service Greet every person who walks through the door and offer to provide assistance. Look up, make eye contact, offer a personable welcome, and ask if you can help. Speak loudly enough to be easily heard and enunciate clearly. If you are on the telephone and a person enters the office, acknowledge her/him with eye contact and a head not and indicate that you will be right with her/him. You are the frontline face of the office - often the first contact faculty, staff, students and guests from outside the University have with our department.

Maintain a courteous, positive attitude toward faculty, staff and students at all times. Listen attentively. Do not interrupt. Enunciate clearly and speak loudly enough to be easily heard. Do not assume a person has understood what you say, but look for a response back. If you do not get a response, politely solicit one such as, "Was that clear?" If someone in the office needs assistance with the photocopier or the fax machine, stop what you are doing, stand up and offer to help.

Respond to all faculty requests for basic office support immediately. Basic office support includes, but is not limited to, photocopying, mailing and shipping, faxing, finding office supplies, problems with main office equipment (photocopier, fax machine, printers, and shredder), computer support, and requests related to classrooms and classroom equipment. Respond affirmatively to requests. Indicate that you have understood the request, or ask for details to clarify the scope and urgency of the request. Give a clear indication of when you expect to

complete the request. If you are in the middle of a project when another faculty member makes a request, carefully record the request and tell the faculty member that you will address it at your earliest possible convenience. If you are faced with competing priorities of faculty members, discuss the situation with your supervisor.

Maintain a functioning front office. Attached, you will find a checklist of tasks for office operations. Follow it carefully.

Turn on the photocopier when you arrive each morning.   Fill photocopier, fax machine, and networked printers with paper before you leave at the end of each day. Keep several extra reams of paper under the counter at all times. Keep replacement toner/printer cartridges for front office machines on hand at all times. Twice a day, remove print outs from the fax machine, as well as papers left on the printers and the counter, and place them in the appropriate faculty mailbox. If you cannot identify the papers, place them in the basket on the counter. Review the contents of the basket at the end of each week; recycle any papers that cannot be identified. Empty the shredder once a week.   Sort and distribute the mail as soon as it arrives. If a parcel arrives that does not fit in an individual mailbox, place it in the respective faculty office. If a mailbox is full, remove the contents and place them in the respective faculty office.

Teamwork Show respect and consideration for your colleagues at all times. Use polite language and tone. Offer assistance. If asked to assist and you cannot at that moment, apologize and tell the person that you will come as soon as possible. Refrain from criticizing other staff members in a derogatory way. If s/he is doing something wrong, find a positive

way to call it to her/his attention such as, "That happened to me once. I found that if I did xxxxxx, it worked really well." Or, "I may be confused, but my numbers came out this way xxxxxxx. Are we using the same formulas?" Or, "Can we discuss changing this process? Right now, when anyone is out of the office, the handoff of that report is delayed and I don't have time to complete it by the deadline. What could we do to avoid this?"

I have read this Performance Improvement Plan, discussed it with my supervisor, and understand the performance expectations it includes.

_____ _____ Employee   Date

_____ _____