

Performance Pro defines success for commercial wallcovering distributor

A company redefines itself—One team, one goal



Who would have predicted that what began as a company sponsored employee survey would completely transform a company in just 6 months time? Steven Goldfeder, that's who.

Mr. Goldfeder is the Director of Operations at Wolf-Gordon, a leading distributor of commercial wall coverings. Wolf-Gordon has been in business for 40 years, and in addition to their corporate headquarters in New York, operate from offices in Manhattan, Chicago and Los Angeles.

In mid 2005, Wolf-Gordon conducted an internal survey of their 100 employees focused on job performance and department objectives. What they found out—and more importantly what they did about it—has since changed the company.

Mr. Goldfeder recalls, “The survey data presented two significant findings. One is that our employees as a whole did not understand how their performance was measured. And two, our employees didn't feel connected to the goals of their department or of the company.”

As a result of the survey, Mr. Goldfeder began to research employee performance management (EPM) solutions geared for small businesses. Over the course of the next few months, Wolf-Gordon evaluated several EPM products. A system called Performance Pro stood out from the very beginning.

Mr. Goldfeder added, “What initially attracted us to Performance Pro was that it is structured upon a framework of communication and achievement that

meshed well with our objectives. More specifically, it involves employees in the process and provides the ability to tie individual performance with overall company goals.”

Wolf-Gordon's requirements in a performance management system were:

- Ease of use—user friendly
- Customizable to meet specific needs
- Align employee, department and company goals
- Employee involvement/accountability

Take a Test Drive

In the process of evaluating Performance Pro, Wolf-Gordon attended an online demonstration and received a full-access 30-day free trial. During the trial period, they set up a pilot implementation with a small core group of employees.

Mr. Goldfeder gave HRN high marks for the level of customer support and sales engagement he received.

“HRN's sales and customer support teams were extremely friendly, knowledgeable, and responsive! Of the five or six competitors we considered and contacted, HRN was the most responsive and enjoyable to collaborate with. I don't know how HRN can afford to offer such exceptional customer support when the cost of Performance Pro is so low.”

Within 24 hours of receiving access to their trial account, Wolf-Gordon set up a pilot implementation and was ready to present to senior management. Initially Mr. Goldfeder was proposing a limited

implementation, but when his boss saw the potential of Performance Pro, his response was that if we are going to do this, we are going to do it across the entire organization.

“It really is incredible what has taken place in such a short time. Communication between managers, employees, and departments has completely opened up. The entire company is abuzz . . . Performance Pro absolutely changed this company.”

Steven Goldfeder, Director of Operations
Wolf-Gordon

Up and Running...Quickly

Following the decision to go with Performance Pro, all employees were informed of the change to a new system. Goal-setting meetings then took place between managers and staff. Within two weeks Performance Pro was fully implemented.

In recalling the implementation process, Mr. Goldfeder stated, “While the actual program is effortless to learn and use, initially setting up the system did take some time and thought. Our industry, company, and culture are unique. That needed to be reflected in our system. We utilized the extensive library of built-in positions and factors that come with Performance Pro. Some we used as is and some we customized specifically

to fit our needs. We looked at each position and defined the most important performance requirements.”

Next, Wolf-Gordon defined corporate and departmental goals that were cascaded to appropriate staff. Now each employee understands specifically what they are expected to accomplish individually, and as a member of a team.

Mr. Goldfeder points out, “It really is incredible what has taken place in such a short time. Communication between managers, employees, and departments has completely opened up. The entire company is abuzz. We are looking ahead. We now have something to achieve together and we know what we need to do to accomplish the goal.”

Involved and Accountable

The key benefit Performance Pro has brought to Wolf-Gordon is that employees are now involved and

accountable in the performance evaluation process. As a result, productive, informative communication takes place between departments, managers and employees. Staff members now see tangible opportunity which improves morale and retention.

Each employee completes their own self assessment¹. Employees who regularly interact with other departments utilize the multi-appraiser feature² to evaluate the performance of cross-departmental staff. For example sales people can serve as multi-appraisers for customer support and visa versa.

But most of all Performance Pro has lived up to its fundamental promise of being easy to learn and use. Mr. Goldfeder stated, “As an administrative user, I have access to more screens and functions than our staff, and I find Performance Pro very easy to use. For appraisers and employees it is even easier. Much of what we implemented was ready to go right out of the box.

Some things required customization, but even that was relatively simple and based on pre-defined content that was already 90% there.”

Adding to the overall Performance Pro value proposition is expert and knowledgeable customer support at no additional cost.

Since conducting an employee survey less than a year ago, Wolf-Gordon has transformed the way they measure performance, develop employees, and define success. In just three months since implementing Performance Pro, Wolf-Gordon revitalized its workforce and their commitment to service and growth—for the customer, each employee, and for the company.

Mr. Goldfeder summarized everything into a few words by stating, “Performance Pro absolutely changed this company.”

Performance Pro Customer Benefit Summary

Customer requirement	Performance Pro capability	Result	Customer benefit
1. Ease of use – user friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, uncluttered interface • Individual employee home screen • Secure online access • Complete performance history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast implementation and deployment • Minimal training required • Employee buy-in and acceptance • Focus on performance and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved management efficiency and reduced administrative cost • Improved communication • Confidence and trust in system
2. Customizable to meet specific needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-loaded with hundreds of position templates and factors • Rich set of administration functions • Built in HR Forms builder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique-to-you system set up • Content relevant to positions and culture • Create, link, and route, customized HR form library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased relevance • Use ‘as is’ or easily customize • Set it and forget it • Access to all—use only what you need
3. Align employee, department and company goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascade goal(s) to multiple employees • Consistent rating definitions • Individually weighted goals/factors • Rating comparison and reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent rating scale across all job functions • Overall employee rating scale • Improved communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance and consistency in rating scales and criteria • Usage and rating report data • Increased understanding
4. Employee involvement and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee self-appraisal function • Optional multi-appraiser feature • Integrated electronic HR forms • Manager tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee involved in process • Employee home screen and performance history • Cross departmental feedback • Improved communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address gaps in perception • Increased accessibility • Increased moral and employee retention

¹ Self appraisal feature is standard with Performance Pro.

² Multi-appraiser feature is optional with Performance Pro.



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