

Performance review reminder email template

Launch the review cycle and remind managers of deadlines, expectations, and fairness checks.

Updated October 15, 2026. Written and reviewed by the HRTally Research Team.

When to use this template

Review cycles slip when managers forget deadlines or leave reviews to the last weekend. A clear kickoff and a couple of well-timed reminders keep the cycle on schedule and improve quality. Use the manager version to launch the cycle and the shorter version as a reminder for anyone behind.

Include what good looks like, not just the deadline. Remind managers to use specific examples from the whole review period, not just the last month, and to check their ratings for consistency. Our performance review guide covers how to run reviews well, and performance management software automates reminders and calibration.

Version 1: Cycle kickoff to managers

SUBJECT [Period] performance reviews: what to do and when

Hi managers,

Our [Period] performance review cycle starts today. Here is the timeline:

- [Date]: employees complete self-reviews
- [Date]: managers complete reviews in [Tool]
- [Date]: calibration meetings
- [Date]: review conversations with employees
- [Date]: reviews signed and closed

What makes a good review:

- Specific examples from the whole period, not only recent weeks
- Clear ratings that match the written comments
- One or two development goals the employee can act on
- No surprises. Anything serious should already have been discussed.

Before you submit, look across your team. Are similar results getting similar ratings? Are you rating people on results and behaviors, not personality?

Guide and training: [\[Link\]](#)

[HR contact]

Version 2: Reminder to managers behind schedule

SUBJECT Reviews due [Date]: [Number] still open

Hi [Manager first name],

A quick reminder that manager reviews are due in [Tool] by [Date]. You have [Number] reviews still open.

If you need help, [HR contact] has office hours on [Days]: [Link]. Even a rough draft by the deadline helps keep calibration on track.

[HR contact]

Subject lines to try

- [Period] performance reviews: what to do and when
- Reviews due [Date]: [Number] still open
- Performance review cycle starts today
- Reminder: manager reviews due [Date]
- Before calibration: finish your reviews

How to personalize it

- Put the full timeline in the first email.
- Describe what a good review includes.
- Send reminders only to managers who are behind.
- Offer office hours or templates for first-time managers.

Mistakes to avoid

- Kickoffs with deadlines but no guidance.
- Changing the timeline mid-cycle without notice.
- Rating language that hints at protected characteristics.
- Letting reviews surprise employees with problems never raised before.

Legal and compliance notes

Performance reviews are often key evidence in discrimination and retaliation claims. Inflated reviews followed by termination, or comments about age, family, health, or other protected characteristics, create

risk. Ratings should be consistent with written comments and with how others in similar roles were rated. Avoid terms like energetic or a good culture fit, which can be read as code for bias.

| When to send it

Kick off two to four weeks before manager reviews are due. Send reminders one week and two days before the deadline.

| Before you hit send

- Feedback is tied to specific examples and dates, not personality.
- Deadlines avoid peak workload periods and holidays.
- Nonexempt employees can complete the task during paid time.
- HR reviewed anything formal, such as a PIP, for timing and consistency.
- Employees know how their input will be used.

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