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CASE STUDY

# How SARRC established a continuous performance management culture

Larry Hillwig, Chief HR & Administrative Officer





**Client**

Southwest Autism Research  
& Resource Center (SARRC)

**Industry**

Non-Profit

**Project**

Performance & Talent

## Introduction

Established in 1997, the Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC) is an internationally recognised nonprofit organisation dedicated to autism research, education, evidence-based treatment, and community outreach.

# The Challenge

When the leadership team at Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC) announced they were scrapping their annual appraisal model during a company all-staff meeting, it was met with a spontaneous round of applause! Despite having an established core-value focussed culture, the yearly approach inhibited rather than supported performance and personal development. It was clear that the nature of the primary job roles at SARRC required a regular and agile approach to truly engage talent and improve performance.

Another significant challenge was SARRC employees needing to pull together several fragmented spreadsheet-based systems. With objectives and personal development conversations happening annually, tasked based check-ins happening weekly or monthly, and feedback happening in an ad-hoc and sporadic way, there was desperate need to clarify what kind of conversations should be happening when and to implement a cohesive platform to bring it all together.

The current processes also yielded a vast amount of unnecessary HR administration and there was no way to provide visibility of performance management and core value metrics to the leadership team.





# The Solution & Why Performance & Talent

Initially, Larry and the SARRC leadership team were simply looking to automate their existing appraisal process. After exploring the market, it became clear that really it was a shift to a continuous performance management approach that was needed.

Larry explains:

**“As we contemplated cloud-based solutions for performance management, it became apparent that a continuous approach would be invaluable. As we reviewed several vendors, Performance & Talent quickly rose as the best solution – fitting well with our culture of check-ins, an emphasis on core-values and the need for varying objective criteria. It was easily implemented and has been a huge success for our organisation!”**

The challenge of bringing multiple requirements together while maintaining a simple user experience was critical.

[Performance & Talent’s](#) ability to combine performance objectives, check-ins, feedback, organisational goals and values made the choice easy. This cohesion also meant the relevant reports and insights could be drawn out to help understand and improve these various aspects.

Being a not-for-profit organisation, pricing was always going to be important to SARRC. Performance & Talent’s simple and highly competitive commercial model meant that not only did Larry and the team feel it was the right solution, but it was also at a price that worked for the allocated budget.



# The Results

Although in its early stages, the support and adoption for the change project has been hugely positive and SARRC is now underway with a true continuous performance management culture. 82% of the employee base have received feedback in the last month with **an astonishing 98% engagement in quarterly check-in conversations**. The leadership team have been involved all the way through the launch which has been invaluable and Performance & Talent's implementation resources helped with the roll out by providing clarity around what the benefits and expectations were for both managers and employees.

The response to the simplicity and intuitive nature of Performance & Talent has been overwhelmingly positive and the nature of the system has helped support the vision of the initiative which is that regular performance conversations are paramount to employee engagement.

And finally, for the HR team, gone are the days of disconnected systems and manual processes. All the relevant data being up to date and easily accessible has helped the HR team obtain visibility of where performance and development conversations are, and aren't, happening. This, in turn, has freed them to get out from behind the spreadsheets and engaging more meaningfully in developing their talent.




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