6 ways to positively influence staff performance

Staff management theme	How to positively influence staff performance	Example
Objective and outcome	Be clear about your objective upfront and share it with the individual team members who will drive its delivery	You've had some slow payers, delinquent debts, complaints about invoices, etc. so you want to establish a new billing and debtor management process. First decide: what's the objective and outcome you want to achieve? **What will success look like?** Get staff input on details such as payment terms, if needed. **Document the new process and share** with your team.
Strengths and weaknesses	Ensure weaknesses are acknowledged and mitigated in any team you put together to complete a task	Your operations manager 'Jane' has a good sense of which clients will accept a change in payment terms or invoice processing, but lacks understanding of the administrative detail that goes into drafting a new credit application for new customers. **Acknowledge this directly** with Jane and indicate that, because she hasn't got the strength in that area, you've asked an administrator to assist her.
Risks	Work with your team to identify risks and develop pre-emptive strategies	A risk in the new billing system is that payments may go astray because your bank account details will change and customers will be confused about what account to use, negatively impacting cash flow. **Manage and mitigate against these risks by discussing them with your team**, and asking for their input on how to overcome potential issues.

Expectations	Ensure everyone is clear about your expectations for:
	• the job to be done
	• who is to do it
		Make clear who has the lead role, and who is in support:
		  "Jane, as operations manager I expect you to deliver this new debtor management and invoicing process. It's your responsibility because ultimately you're responsible for the overall performance of this business line.
		  "Bob, you have a practical understanding of our financial and accounts system. Your role is to ensure the process runs smoothly and the detail is delivered as part of this new debtor management system."

Question and check	Help your team achieve the outcomes you've articulated by questioning and checking their progress	The new debtor management system includes a number of phases with **timing milestones** established. **Use those milestones as checkpoints** to query and check progress. How often you check in will depend on the risks and issues, strengths and weaknesses of your team. But remember, you've got a responsibility as well, so feel comfortable objectively questioning progress so you can assist in avoiding any log jams. (But **resist the temptation to 'do it yourself'**!)

Monitor and feedback	Once the outcome is delivered, or starts to be delivered, don't leave it too late to monitor the implementation and provide feedback	**Feedback should be two-way:**
		  "Bob, I'm really happy with the result. We've had our first month on the new system and it seems to be working in a practical, commercial way. I know you've had a few hiccups, but are you happy with how it's going?"
		  "Jane, our existing clients seem to be responding well to our new invoicing system. Have you heard of any issues with new clients and the credit application?"