The Performance, Expectation, Gap Model.

You might find it helpful to use the Problem, Expectation, Gap model to frame when discussing under performance with an individual team member.

Performance – Letting the person know that there is a problem.
- Let the person know that you have a problem with their performance.
- Make a general performance statement – focusing on the performance not the person and own what you are saying ‘what I saw was, what I felt was...’
- Then be specific – What exactly is the issue? Give an example (s)/evidence.
- Be factual, and direct, don’t be vague.

Making a general performance statement
‘I have to tell you that I am not happy with a certain aspect of your performance. It seems to me that it takes you a lot longer to complete work than I would expect.’

‘I am worried about one aspect of your performance. My impression is that you are not planning your client sessions as thoroughly as I would expect’.

Once you have set the scene you then need to go into a bit more factual and specific detail.
“Take the month end accounts last month. What I had expected was that you would complete the accounts within 5 working days of the month end and that you would go on to analyse the directorate costs, with a view to suggesting where savings could be made. What I saw was that it took you a whole month to complete the month end accounts and so you had no time to analyse costs.”

“I recently asked you to prepare a session on using the new hoists. What I had hoped for was a complete plan of the session, including identifying which clients were using the old equipment, when it was going to be delivered to them, printed instructions to take away and the chance to try out the equipment in the workshop session. What I saw instead was that there was no plan for the session, that you were unaware of who was attending and their needs, no printed instructions and no opportunity for them to actually try out the equipment”.

After you have explained your concerns you then offer the individual the chance to respond, for example

“Is this a fair description of what I saw?”
“What is your reaction to this?”
“Tell me what it was like from your perspective”

Expectation – Exploring the expectations that you both have for the results of their work.
Many performance problems are as a result of differences in expectation. The manager expects one thing, but has not communicated this effectively to the other person, who then delivers another.

You need to ask the other person to explain to you how they see your expectations for their work. You need to:
- Get them to tell you what they think is required of them;
- Ask open questions;
- Probe;
Listen out for the differences in emphasis/expectation; and Challenge only when you have got a complete view of what the person is saying.

“Tell me what do you think the standards are that we expect from you”? “You tell me how you see your role in terms of producing the cost saving analysis versus producing the month end return”

**Gap – Making it clear what your expectations are, clarifying that there is a gap and agreeing how you will resolve it.**

Once you have listened to the other person explaining how they see their job and what they think your expectations are, you need to make it clear what your expectations actually are. It is important that you:

- Are assertive;
- Focus on observable outcomes; and
- Explain clearly and succinctly what your expectations are.

Once you have explained this, the gap between what you expect and what the other person is delivering should be clear and it should be possible for you to agree what the gap is.

“What I need is for the month-end accounts to be produced within 5 working days and the cost saving analysis to be produced within 5 working days of you completing the month end accounts”.

“What I would expect is that for every client session you would have identified who was attending, what their needs were, have a plan for the day which would include a mixture of theory and practical application and always have hand-outs or information sheets available that clients can take away with them”.

The final point to make is ensure you monitor and review the agreed. Plan regular one to one meetings to review work activity and timescales. Once the expectation has been met, recognise this by saying thankyou!