

Getting a Poor Performance Review:

1. Read your review very carefully. Don't respond immediately.
2. Take time to determine if the negative review is really unjust or if you're just taking offense at being criticized. If you still feel the review is unjust go to Step 3. If you realize the review is correct go to Step 6.
3. If you can honestly say that you've received an unfair review, make an appointment to meet with the person who wrote it.
4. First, acknowledge any points that are correct.
5. Then use clear examples to contradict those points you feel are untrue. Use a paper trail to back yourself up.
6. You've realized your reviewer was fair. The truth hurts, but you can use a bad review as a learning experience.
7. Make an appointment to meet with your boss so you can find out how to improve your performance.
8. Keep a paper trail of everything you do, beginning with that meeting. You'll want to have evidence of the effort you've made to improve your performance.
9. If you follow your boss's suggestions, next year's review should be much better.

Tips:

1. You must be very objective in determining whether your evaluation is unjust. Take some time to think things through.
2. Give yourself at least a day to calm down. Nothing gets handled well in the heat of the moment.
3. Keep in mind that the boss usually wins. It may be worth a shot, but your next step may be job hunting.

Preparing for Review:

- **Become familiar with the review process:** Sometimes fear of the unknown is the worst fear of all. You should understand why some employers use performance reviews as a way to evaluate their employees. They hope to provide feedback, clearly communicate their expectations and open up a dialogue with employees.
- **Prepare for an upcoming review:** Document your achievements and list anything you want to discuss at the review. If you haven't kept track of your achievements, you may have to spend some time figuring out what you have accomplished since your last review, and most importantly, how your employer has benefited, i.e. increased profits, grown the client roster, maintained older clients, etc.
- **What should you do if you get a poor review?:** If you feel you have received an [unfair review](#), you should consider responding to it. You should first try to discuss the review with the person who did it. Heed this warning, however. Wait until you can look at the review objectively. Was the criticism you received really that off the mark or are you just offended that you were criticized in the first place? If you eventually reach the conclusion that the review was truly unjust, then set an appointment to meet with your reviewer. If there are any points that were correct, acknowledge those. Use clear examples that counteract the criticisms made. A paper trail is always helpful. Present anything you have in writing that can back you up. If you didn't leave a paper trail, remember to do this in the future.
- **What should you take away from a performance review?:** Ultimately, you should regard your review as a learning opportunity. You should be able to take away valuable information, whether it is about yourself or your reviewer.