



SUPERVISOR'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

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1. Introduction

Employees are most likely to be successful performers when they know what level of performance is considered acceptable, clearly understand their assignments, and receive continuous feedback. The evaluation of an employee's performance is an ongoing process that involves information from coworkers, customers, the supervisor, and even the employee; it's not a process that is done just once-a-year by a supervisor to an employee. A formal appraisal however, is an important opportunity to summarize the informal evaluations of the employee's performance over a long period of time. Supervisors must conduct performance evaluations for each employee reporting to them annually.

The Office of Human Resources will contact supervisors in late January advising them that it is their responsibility to conduct performance evaluations on their subordinates. Evaluations must be submitted to the Office of Human Resources by March 31 of each year.

2. Duties and Job Descriptions

It is imperative that the employee clearly understands their assigned role within the College. Job descriptions are good tools to help convey this information. In most cases, each position will have its own unique set of duties and responsibilities. For example, not all secretaries perform exactly the same combination of tasks, though much of what they do is similar. An exact description of the duties and responsibilities an employee needs to perform should be provided to them in writing, updated when necessary, and forwarded to the Office of Human Resources for review and file maintenance. The description should be specific to the position in a particular department and should include flexibility to include new but perhaps similar projects, and to accommodate demand changes. For example, the phrase "may be required to" or "other related duties as assigned" to cover unexpected or occasional tasks will reduce the need to update job descriptions quite as often.

3. Supervisor's Role

Supervisors: Supervisors will evaluate employees formally once-a-year, and informally on a periodic basis, and provide continuous feedback in order to achieve the level of performance required to manage a successful program, service or department. The supervisor has final approval over which level of performance they consider highly successful and they must hold the employee accountable for meeting these standards.

A week prior to conducting an employee evaluation, the supervisor should inform the employee of their meeting date, time, and location and suggest that the employee complete a "self-evaluation questionnaire form". Self-evaluations can be beneficial coaching tools and may help with goal setting. Generally, the annual performance evaluation should encompass work performance for an entire year. However, if the employee has not been under your supervision for a full year, you may seek information from the previous supervisor by contacting the Office of Human Resources.

4. Goals & Employee Development

Clarifying duties and responsibilities provides a framework for the crucial activity of setting performance standards. It is important that goals be negotiated and set before the employee starts performing work that will be evaluated. It is also important to update the goals and build in flexibility for performance standards as the work situation changes. Flexibility is important because many factors (staffing levels, workloads, etc.) can affect the fairness of an expectation. The more the employee is involved in setting/updating goals and agrees they are clear and reasonable, the greater the chances for successful performance.

A goal refers to results that must be achieved or to ongoing performance criteria that must be met consistently and/or results that must be achieved in order for the employee to achieve successful performance. Goals refer to such things as the delivery of services at a specified level of quality, attendance level, accuracy rates, response times, behavioral expectations, etc.

By discussing the employee's strengths and areas needing improvement, ideas regarding development should arise. The supervisor and the employee should focus on setting performance and developmental goals to be achieved over the next year. These goals should be documented on the evaluation form. The supervisor must ensure that goals are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time measured).

5. Annual Performance Evaluation Process

Preparation -

Employee Prepares By:

1. Reviewing and updating the job description.
2. Assessing own performance and identifying areas for improvement.
3. Prepares self-evaluation questionnaire identifying specific and measurable goals and reviewing competencies for current position and promotional opportunities.
4. Reviewing prior year's performance evaluation if applicable.

Supervisor Prepares By:

1. Reviewing and updating the job description.
2. Assessing employee's performance and identifying areas for improvement.
3. Reviewing prior year's performance evaluation if applicable.
4. Completing the Performance Evaluation Form (or preparing a letter to the employee) identifying specific and measurable goals.
5. Scheduling uninterrupted meeting time and giving the employee advanced notice of said meeting.

The Performance Appraisal Meeting:

1. Arrange a meeting place free of interruptions, distractions and phone calls.
2. Ask for the employee's self-evaluation and review your evaluation of the employee.
3. Jointly offer/suggest what would help or maintain performance.
4. Mutually agree on a developmental plan for the coming year.

Performance Progress Reviews:

1. Meet periodically to review and update goals. (suggestion: meet every 6 months)
2. Provide encouragement and reinforcement through ongoing coaching/suggestions.
3. Help employee develop relationships necessary to meet goals.
4. Build in flexibility when necessary.

6. The Performance Evaluation Form:

Employee Identification:

The supervisor is to complete the top of each form. Pertinent information is included in a memo to supervisors indicating employees under their supervision.

Performance Categories:

The supervisor will establish a rating of 1-4 for each general performance category. The Professional Staff Evaluation form provides space to evaluate components of the general category if the supervisor wishes. The supervisor is asked to expand upon the individual ratings in the comment sections provided. It is here that the supervisor will identify the employee's strengths, achievements and areas that may need improvement. Specific examples of behaviors should be noted to support the rater's evaluation in each factor. Supervisors must be particularly careful to evaluate performance, not personality traits, and to evaluate each of the performance categories separately.

Summary/Development Plan:

It is in this section, after having discussed the employee's strengths and areas needing improvement, ideas regarding development should arise. The supervisor and employee, focusing on setting performance and developmental goals to be achieved over the next year, should develop a joint plan.

Employee Comments:

After discussion of the performance evaluation, the supervisor should allow the employee to review the appraisal form, and make written comments about any part of the review. The employee should then sign the form. Signing the form does not constitute agreement with the review, but rather acknowledges that the appraisal has been read and discussed.

Signatures:

Once the supervisor completes the form, the form must be reviewed and approved at the vice presidential/dean level. Original forms are then forwarded to the Office of Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's official personnel file.

7. Frequently Asked Questions

Q: It seems like some employees are not staying current in their field, and this may reduce our department's ability to be effective. Is there a way to mandate education and/or training?

A: If staying abreast of specialized knowledge is critical to solid job performance, job knowledge should be identified as being significant during the evaluation process. Demonstration of new knowledge may be evaluated by satisfactory completion of academic classes or training programs.

Q: Do employees really require an annual review?

A: Yes, the College requires an annual evaluation. Failure to complete an annual employee performance evaluation may reflect on the supervisor's performance as a manager. Any merit increase requests will not be considered without the completion of the Performance Evaluation.

Q: What happens if an employee disputes the performance appraisal rating?

A: If the dispute cannot be resolved informally, the employee may attach an addendum to the performance evaluation.

Q: What should we do about employees who become stressed during the annual performance evaluation?

A: Holding only one evaluation session each year may cause unnecessary anxiety for both the supervisor and the employee. There are a couple of options to consider. First, less formal monthly or quarterly feedback sessions can provide valuable input in a less stressful manner. Another option is to ask the employee to create measurable performance goals at the beginning of the evaluation period and to provide periodic progress reports.

8. Tips for Motivating Employees

- Make the time to meet with and listen to your employees on a regular basis.
- Provide specific feedback regarding individual, departmental, and organizational performance.
- Provide information on departmental and College mission, vision and values and on how the individual fits in with the overall plan.
- Involve employees in decisions, especially those that affect them.
- Provide employees with a sense of ownership in their work and the work environment.
- Strive to create an open, trusting, and fun work environment. Encourage new ideas and initiatives.
- Personally thank employees for a good job verbally and in writing (timely, often, and sincerely).
- Celebrate success! Department and individual successes should be celebrated. Take time for team and morale building meetings and activities.

9. The Most Common Appraisal Errors of Performance Appraisals

- “Gut” feeling (subjective)
- Lack of follow-up
- Improper preparation; poor documentation
- Inadequately defined and/or misunderstood standards/goals
- Biases:
 1. Positive leniency - want to give everyone **high** scores
 2. Negative leniency - want to give everyone **low** scores
 3. Halo effect – is performing **well** just before review. This clouds the entire year's review.
 4. Horns effect – the employee is not performing up to standards just before review. This clouds the entire year's review.
 5. Stereotyping contrast effect - contrasting one employee's accomplishments against another
 6. First impression central tendency (forced bell curve) - expecting in any group that there will be some poor employees and some great employees

10. College Mission and Strategic Plan

Utica College educates students for rewarding careers, responsible citizenship, and fulfilling lives by integrating liberal and professional study, by creating a community of learners with diverse experiences and perspectives, by balancing its local heritage with a global perspective, by encouraging lifelong learning, and by promoting scholarship in the belief that the discovery and application of knowledge enrich teaching and learning.

Utica College's mission rests upon a foundation of values that guide the College community's decisions and actions. These values include the following:

- commitment to individual attention for our students
- commitment to lifelong learning
- commitment to pragmatic approaches to teaching and learning
- commitment to continual improvement in our educational quality
- commitment to fostering diversity of perspective, background, and experience for education in an increasingly global society
- commitment to community and professional service
- dedication to highest ethical standards and integrity in all that we do
- dedication to freedom of expression and to open sharing of ideas and creativity
- dedication to open, honest, and collegial communication
- dedication to the well being of others