

Successful Practices for Conducting Performance Appraisals

NO SURPRISES!

The Keys:

- Continuous performance monitoring
- Communication
- Documentation
- Follow-up

**Why Are Performance
Evaluations Important?**

WHY ARE EVALUATIONS IMPORTANT?

- Avoids the appearance, let alone the reality, of favoritism and discrimination
- Provides management an opportunity to assess the diverse range of employee strengths and needs
- Gives employees necessary feedback (positive or negative)
- Establishes a forum for documenting and discussing weak AND strong performance

WHAT IS A PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL?

- One of the most important responsibilities of a manager
- An ongoing process, not a one-time event
- A culmination of mini-meetings between manager and employee during the entire performance period
- An objective way of determining the quality of an employee's performance in accordance with predetermined expectations

WHAT IS A PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL?

- A tool for clarifying expectations, setting new goals and developing new skills and behaviors
- Part of an ENTIRE Performance Management Process

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS TO EMPLOYEES

- Employees want to know, and have a right to know how they are doing in their work
- Institution doesn't get full benefit of evaluation unless it is discussed with the employee
- Employee cannot make improvements when he/she is unaware of them
- Unless evaluation is discussed with the employee, he/she will probably have an inflated opinion of his/her performance
- Provides employee with an opportunity to ask questions
- Clears up any misunderstandings about what is expected of employee
- Helps build strong relationships based on mutual respect and confidence

SETTING STANDARDS

- Employees should be able to answer “yes” to the following questions about reviews:
 1. Do you know the standards by which your supervisor evaluates your performance and the expected results?
 2. Do you feel your contribution and performance are measured fairly?
 3. Has your supervisor assisted you in evaluating strengths and opportunities for future improvement?

COMMON RATER ERRORS

- Letting length of service affect the performance aspect of the evaluation
- **The “Halo” effect:**
 - letting one factor you like affect your overall assessment of performance
- **The “Horn” effect:**
 - letting one work factor or behavior you dislike taint your opinion of the others
- **Central Tendency:**
 - clustering everyone in the middle performance categories to avoid extremes of good or bad performance

COMMON RATER ERRORS (cont)

- **Recency**: rating only recent performance, good or bad. Data should be representative of the entire review period
- **Favoritism**: overlooking the flaws of favored or “nice” employees, especially those whom everyone likes
- **Bias**: allowing bias to influence rating; bias can come from attitudes and opinions. Consideration of non-job related factors that could be discriminatory
- **Grouping**: excusing below standard performance because it is widespread (i.e. everyone does it)

COMMON RATER ERRORS (cont)

- **Guilt by Association**: rating someone on the basis of the company they keep, rather than on the work they do. Also watch out for the 'halo' version of this error
- **Holding a Grudge**: a dangerous luxury that may result in your ending up in court. Never try to make employees pay for past behavior
- **The Sunflower Effect**: rating everyone high, regardless of performance, to make yourself look good or to be able to give more compensation

LEGAL IMPACT OF EVALUATIONS

- Written reviews are often used in litigation to show performance deficiencies.
- Inaccurate reviews or vague reviews can lead to litigation disputes later

Who is your primary audience?

What is your ultimate goal?

Think about litigation?

What message will your review send?

HOW DO YOU COACH FOR SUCCESS

1. Delegate
2. Encourage employees to teach others
3. Provide training
4. Stretch and challenge
5. Celebrate successes
6. Spend quality time with employees
7. Opportunities for promotion

HOW DO YOU COACH FOR SUCCESS

8. Acknowledge accomplishments
9. Give timely and frequent feedback
10. Provide multiple examples
11. Describe behavior (not labels or opinions)
12. Build confidence by increases in responsibility
13. Consider pairing with a mentor
14. Be available

HOW DO YOU COACH FALLING STARS

1. Honest and fair
2. Eye towards defense
3. No Surprises!!!

To Be Continued . . .

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Prepare

- Job description
 - Tailor evaluation to job
 - Avoid vague criteria
- Previous evaluations
- Personnel file
- General impression/examples
- Obtain all important opinions

Write

- Evaluate performance . . . NOT Employee
- Objective NOT subjective
- Specific examples
- Positives + negatives

PART 1: WRITTEN EVALUATION

- Avoid contradictions
- Create a positive action plan for improvement

DO NOT:

- Use conclusions without specific examples:
 - Attitude
 - Unsatisfactory
 - Unproductive
 - Not a team player
 - Doesn't care
 - Not motivated
- Get personal

DO NOT:

- Make assumptions
- Prepare evaluation cold
- Apply the “horn”, “halo” or other rater errors
- Make every evaluation the same

AFTER WRITING BUT BEFORE MEETING

- Prepare outline for meeting
- Top 2-3 points which must get conveyed
- For problem employees, anticipate trouble areas

PART II: MEETING

- Location/Private
 - Round table
 - Not at Desk
- Select Appropriate Time
 - Not on employee time
 - Enough time allotted?

PART II: MEETING

- Avoid Interruptions
 - Employee is an asset, treat him/her as such
- Is Meeting Timely?

DO

- Start positive and end positive
- Be specific
 - No generalizations
- Coach
 - Goal is to improve, not discourage
- Motivate
- Discuss!
 - 2-way communications

DO NOT:

- Let seniority dictate
- Generalize
- Dictate
- Get personal

ROADMAP FOR MEETING

- Ask employee about performance
- Start with positives of performance
- Discuss areas of improvement
 - How can we help you improve?
- Share action plan
- Reserve time for employee questions/issues
- **DON'T GET SIDETRACKED BY CRAFTY EMPLOYEES!!!**
 - Allegation of alleged wrongful treatment?

- Follow-Up (Goals Plan)
 - Follow plan
 - Be timely
- Performance Monitoring (generally)
 - Happening everyday
 - No Surprises!
 - Quarterly Meetings/Forms

GENERALLY:

- Do not let personal feelings bias evaluation
- Do not let emotions bias evaluation

AVOID TRAPS

- Lack of knowledge
- Using vague, subjective and general language
- Lack of preparation
- Avoiding conflicts
 - Problem employees
 - Protected categories
- Avoiding meeting
- Avoiding process

Please remember as you are setting goals for next year to include opportunities for Professional Development