

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PLANNING 2009 (Supervisors)

Introduction

As the value in organizations increasingly shifts from tangible to intangible resources in an ever-changing economy, it becomes even more important to focus on how we manage and communicate with our people. According to the Gallup Organization, one of the most important factors affecting employees' engagement – and, thus, employees' productivity and effectiveness – is knowing what is expected from them at work. Performance evaluations are a big part of communicating these expectations. Accurately measuring performance at an individual level is important because these intangible assets – the knowledge, skills and abilities of an organization's workforce – are increasingly driving organizational value.

Prior to Completing the Evaluation

Employees are scheduled to submit to their supervisor the completed Performance and Development Summary by **March 27, 2009**. In addition, employees should provide their supervisor with last year's agreed upon performance objectives/standards and current job description. To enhance the value of the performance evaluation process, it is recommended that the employee and supervisor meet to discuss these documents prior to the supervisor completing the performance evaluation.

Completing the Performance Evaluation

While completing the evaluation, it's helpful for the supervisor to keep the following in mind:

- Base the evaluation on **observed performance** during the rating period, not on what is expected in the future.
- Evaluate employees against both **results and the way they achieve them**. For example, if an employee achieves good results but does it in such a way as to anger or demoralize co-workers, then that must be taken into account. Results achieved by counterproductive methods are not sustainable for organizational success. On the other hand, an employee can be extremely helpful, considerate and interpersonally effective, yet never achieve any important results.
- Evaluate overall performance throughout the entire rating period. Do not base ratings only on significant successes and failures. These should be considered in context with the **total performance**.

- Avoid overrating a poor performer as a motivation tool because that rating will stand as a record of what the organization is willing to accept from the employee in the future.
- Consider various aspects of the employee's performance that you want to discuss with the employee. The evaluation process should serve as a stimulus for **better communication** between the supervisor and the employee.
- Do not rush through the evaluation. Take time to record accurate information that truly reflects the individual's performance.

Meeting with Employees

In preparation for the performance evaluation meeting, it's helpful for the supervisor to consider the following:

- Allow adequate time for the meeting.
- Choose a quiet, private location with as few interruptions as possible.
- Discussion of the evaluation
 - ✓ Create a positive environment and help the employee feel at ease.
 - ✓ Give balanced feedback, both positive and negative, but start with the positive.
 - ✓ Focus on the job, not the person.
 - ✓ Ask questions and allow the employee to provide feedback.
 - ✓ When discussing areas for improvement, discuss methods and objectives for improving.
- Conclusion
 - ✓ Summarize and review the important points of the discussion.
 - ✓ Restate the action steps that have been recommended and provide a time frame for completion.
 - ✓ Make sure employee reviews the evaluation and has the opportunity to provide comments.
 - ✓ Answer questions and clarify any confusion the employee may have with regard to performance expectations.
 - ✓ Have employee sign evaluation to acknowledge that he or she has read it (does not signify agreement with the content).
- Follow-up
 - ✓ Follow-up with the employee at least every three months to see how plans are proceeding with the given time frames.
 - ✓ Offer the employee assistance in achieving performance objectives/

standards and encourage discussion of successes and obstacles.

Feedback

It is important as supervisors to track performance towards specific goals and constantly review employee performance through ongoing coaching and feedback. When providing feedback, it's important that it be given in a timely and balanced manner by explaining what an employee did well and what he/she might have done better. The feedback should focus on the performance rather than the individual and should provide specific and accurate information that will enable the employee to better perform his/her duties. ([Providing Effective Feedback Word Document](#))

Record of Employee Performance

As effective supervisors, it is helpful to maintain an ongoing record of each employee's performance. Keeping thorough, detailed records is critical to offering specific, constructive feedback. No one can construct the whole year with accuracy. Performance evaluation should be a continuous process and recordkeeping will prove to be extremely valuable when completing future performance evaluations. What should supervisors record? Brief examples of incidents and key milestones help justify or support the evaluation. It helps to think of performance in terms of categories: day-to-day responsibilities, projects, key initiatives and behavior. ([Providing Effective Feedback Word Document](#))

Poor Performance & Disciplinary Actions

Performance evaluations are a tool to provide feedback to an employee based on performance over the last evaluation period. Evaluation forms should not be used to initially address a performance problem or initiate a disciplinary action. When a performance problem arises it should be addressed immediately; not put off until evaluation time. In the event of a performance problem, specific performance/behavior problems should be identified and steps clearly outlined for improvement. Please contact Nikki Lemley, HR & Compensation, to assist you in developing a performance development plan.

Identify Training Needs

It is important to be attentive to the training and development needs of your employees. Try to outline during each evaluation period the areas in which you feel your employee would benefit from training and development. ([HR Training Schedule and Development Tools Web page](#))

Following individual training, it is important that new knowledge is shared with relevant co-workers. Information should be disseminated and presented, if appropriate, by the person who attended the training. Supervisors should note specific changes in performance attributed to training and reinforce the use of newly gained knowledge and skills through feedback and coaching.

Rating Scale

The purpose of assigning a number to a performance level is to communicate to the employee how he/she is doing relative to expectations. When rating an employee on a scale of 1-4, it is important to keep in mind that with the assignment of a 1 or a 2, some type of performance

plan should be in place. A rating of 3 indicates that the employee is performing at the expected level of performance. It's important to convey to the employee that a rating of 3 is a desirable rating to achieve.

A person who receives a rating of 4 should exceed expectations on an ongoing basis. The supervisor will need to provide **specific examples** of how the employee consistently exceeds performance expectations and position requirements and contributes at a very high level over the duration of the rating period.

Questions?

Contact Nikki Lemley, HR & Compensation Manager, with any questions about the Performance Evaluation Process. Nikki can be reached at nlemley@wustl.edu or (314) 935-5019.