

Staff Performance Appraisal Guidelines

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

These guidelines are intended to assist you in understanding and conducting the Staff Performance Appraisal Guidelines.

The University's departments should use the information and suggestions as guidelines to carry out the steps in the performance appraisal process as intended.

Please contact Human Resources if you have any questions about the information in this guidance.

B. Objectives

The primary objectives of the Staff Performance Appraisal Guidelines:

- ✓ Provide a uniform system for rating employee performance over a determined review period.
- ✓ Documented job-related information to be considered in making employee-related decisions about compensation, promotions, transfers, staff reductions, demotions or dismissals; and
- ✓ Encourage communications between employees and supervisors that focus on rating performance based on key job related factors, identifying strengths and areas of improvement, and establishing mutually agreed future performance objectives to accomplish.

C. Target Group

The program is applicable to staff classifications of employees of the University. This includes: administrative directors, professional, administrative support, service and maintenance, skilled crafts and technical classifications.

It is not applicable to the University's faculty members, academic administrative or administrative officers.

II. Employee and Supervisor Understanding

The underlying premise of an employee performance appraisal process is to improve the quality and quantity of an employee's job performance and thereby increase productivity or efficiency ... doing things right. The overall result is to increase the departments effectiveness which plays a role in ultimately the university's effectiveness ... doing the right things.

- Ensuring a mutual understanding of job responsibilities and work assignments;
- Setting clear performance expectations for the next performance period;

- Providing a reference point for ongoing monitoring of progress during the performance period;
- Serving as a focal point to discuss performance results and any areas needing improvement at the end of the performance period;
- Identifying development needs and opportunities; and
- Determining potential for advancement to greater responsibilities.

The annual performance appraisal period in accordance with university policy should provide planned, scheduled opportunities to discuss each employee's accomplishments and development needs.

Good day-to-day supervision ensures that formal performance appraisal will provide no surprises. Where communication is good and the employee is reasonably experienced, performance appraisal is a mere formality ... putting on paper something about which both participants already understand and agree. Where job content is changing, a new employee is learning a job or performance problems are encountered, performance appraisal will be both more difficult and more important.

Performance appraisal is a way to satisfy employees' needs to be informed about how well they are performing the job, how much they are contributing to the University's goals and what can be done to advance their career objectives/interests. Performance appraisal is of interest and use to employees, supervisors and the University:

A. For employees, the performance appraisal is intended to:

- Help them better understand their job responsibilities and requirements,
- Measure their level of performance,
- Identify opportunities for them to improve and be promoted, and
- Help them develop career goals;

B. For supervisors, the formal performance appraisal should:

- Allow them to explain their performance expectations to their employees,
- Provide opportunities for them to establish and evaluate employees' work objectives,
- Help them understand employees' personal aspirations and goals, and
- Provide time to design specific plans for performance improvements or career advancements; and

C. For the University, the formal performance appraisal is designed to:

- Improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of its operations,
- Support personnel actions, such as promotions, transfers and terminations,

- Provide information to design specific plans for performance improvements or career advancements, and
- Provide a basis for making the most of its salary budget.

D. To Be Successful

For the employee and supervisor performance appraisal interaction to be successful the following should occur:

- The supervisor looks first at each employee's job, identifies its major duties and responsibilities and uses these as a basis for setting work-related performance expectations;
- Supervisors and employees then develop specific, measurable and objective expectations against which performance results can be measured;
- Employees are informed by their supervisors, at the beginning of the performance period, of the level of performance that is expected;
- Employees' progress toward performance expectations is monitored throughout the performance period and supervisory assistance / coaching is provided as necessary to keep the employee "on track";
- Supervisors measure employees' performance results against expectations in preparation for performance appraisal discussions with their employees; and
- Supervisors and employees engage in a discussion about performance results for the performance period just completed and identify performance expectations for the next performance period.

The approach described above will provide direct benefits in that it promotes improved understanding and communication between supervisors and employees. The requirement to describe performance expectations up-front makes ongoing, performance-centered dialogue between supervisors and employees a "must do" situation. Realistic and measurable performance expectations assist both supervisors and employees in assessing the quality and quantity of job performance because they provide a standard against which results can be measured and success identified.

E. Related Benefits

Related benefits of a common understanding by the employee and supervisor in the performance appraisal process include:

- Better job definitions... This performance appraisal process will result in a better definition and understanding about the job responsibilities of individuals throughout the University. Employees and supervisors will have a clearer mutual understanding about job content and will have similar expectations about results;
- Greater initiative and self-direction... When performance expectations are clearly defined and expressed, employees can better manage themselves. There is less time needed for detailed supervision and review, and more time is available to supervisors for planning, goal-setting and more effective leadership;

- Greater consistency among raters ... Written performance expectations that are developed at the beginning of a performance period provide higher-level management with an opportunity to better understand what first-line supervisors expect of their employees and what constitutes the basis of the appraisal. This provides an opportunity to achieve greater consistency in expectations and results in the performance appraisals throughout the University; and
- Improved documentation ... One of the key elements in improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency is management's willingness to take prompt and decisive action when such action is clearly in the best interest of the University. This willingness depends to a degree on the confidence that supervisors have in their ability to properly document what are sound human resource management decisions.

A reluctance to act or recommend action sometimes results from a supervisor's uncertainty about procedural requirements. The University's performance appraisal process provides structure and guidance to develop confidence in and improve the ability of supervisors to support their recommendations/decisions in legal or administrative proceedings.

III. Staff Performance Appraisal Instrument

The Staff Performance Appraisal Instrument provides all the necessary information to properly document and record a staff employee's performance results.

A. Explanation of Benefits

There is an explanation of ratings along with a definition of each rating criterion.

- ✓ Below Expectancy (Substandard) which equates to an unsatisfactory or marginal standard
- ✓ Meets Expectancy (Acceptable) which indicates anywhere from minimally satisfied to fully satisfied
- ✓ Above Expectancy (Exceeds) which indicates above average to exceptional

B. General Performance Factors

The performance factors being evaluated consist of the following:

- ✓ Technical Competency-demonstrated knowledge and understanding of aspects of the job.
- ✓ Quantity of Work-Volume of work performed in relation to job requirements.
- ✓ Quality of Work-Accuracy and thoroughness of work performed.
- ✓ Work Planning-Ability to analyze assignments and establish priorities for achievement of job duties.
- ✓ Cooperation-Relationship with co-workers and customers in performing assignments and ability to interact in an acceptable manner.
- ✓ Communication-Effectiveness of written and oral communication skills with co-workers, supervisor and/or customers in the performance of duties.

C. Supervisor Performance Factors

There is also a list of Supervisor Performance Factors applicable if employee supervises other subordinates.

D. Attendance/Tardiness

There is an Attendance/Tardiness category that reflects acceptable, needs improvement or unacceptable categories. An explanation would be needed if the performance falls within the latter two categories.

E. Summary Comments

The overall appraisal is then summarized in the Summary Comments section, which includes:
Employee strengths,
Areas of improvement,
Professional development,
Upcoming performance objectives to accomplish, and
Overall assessment of the employee's performance.

F. Employee Comments

This section provides an employee the opportunity to acknowledge the appraisal and the contents discussed with the supervisor and to agree or disagree and provide a written commentary.

G. Signatures

The form concludes with signatures of the employee, supervisor and department reviewer (if applicable) along with dates. Once the form is completed with all signatories, a copy should be given to the employee, one maintained by the supervisor and one forwarded to the Human Resource Office. The Staff Performance Appraisal Form will be maintained in the employee's personnel file.