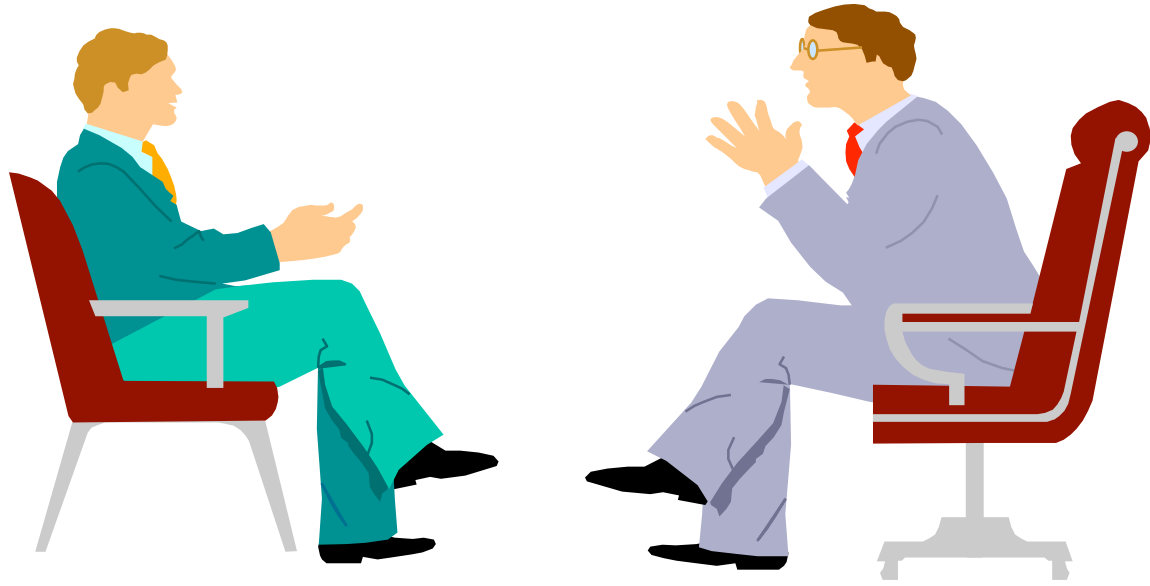




UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD



Performance Appraisal Guide for Supervisors

Introduction

As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to influence the performance of your staff toward a sustained and productive contribution to overall departmental and University goals. Conducting performance appraisals provides you with the opportunity to continue to develop the supervisor-staff member relationship in job performance matters. To provide an effective and thorough assessment of your staff, you must have a strong commitment to helping them reach their full potential. Individual job performance and resulting productivity will reach full potential when the right interaction exists between you and your staff.

Once a year, the University requires you to conduct a formal appraisal for each of your staff. The University's performance appraisal program is called **Dialogue for Direction**. The overall design of the program is to provide a process for facilitating discussion between supervisors and staff as well as planning objectives and direction for the next fiscal year. Dialogue for Direction implies easy two-way communication, clarification of job performance obstacles, surfacing of ideas and sharing of performance needs.

Preparing for the Performance Appraisal Meeting

- Schedule the meeting several days in advance. This will allow the staff member time to prepare to contribute to the discussion.
- Before the meeting, examine your own role as supervisor. Ask yourself, has the staff member received adequate support, clear instructions, sufficient training and routine feedback about his/her job performance?
- Review any relevant documents, especially goals established during the previous year. Carefully define the results you hope to achieve in this meeting.
- Ensure privacy and avoid interruptions.

Conducting the Meeting

- Begin by emphasizing your supportive intentions. Describe your agenda for the meeting in positive terms and invite the staff member to ask questions, express concerns or comment on the process in general.
- Remind the staff member that improving communications and generating a continuing dialogue are central to the process.
- Focus on job performance, not the person.
- Avoid generalizations. Be able to support your comments with specific examples.
- Emphasize strengths and accomplishments as often as possible. Acknowledge the staff member's efforts, skills and talents that have contributed to your department's success.
- Keep the staff member involved in the discussion.

- Listen carefully to your staff member's comments. You might discover skills and interests that can benefit your department and the University.
- Focus on the future. End on a positive note by discussing anticipated achievements for the next year.

Dialogue for Direction Forms

This guide will review each section of the Dialogue for Direction form and should assist you in preparing for the one-on-one meeting with your staff member.

- I. Discussion of Job**
- II. Staff Member's Planning**
- III. Supervisor's Key Performance Objectives**
- IV. Supervisor's Evaluations, Remarks & Recommendations**
- V. Staff Member's Comments**

I. Discussion of Job

This section allows you the opportunity to review key duties and responsibilities with the staff member and to obtain the staff member's understanding of the job. This is an opportunity for you to compare your perceptions of the job with your staff as well as clarify any misinterpretations that may exist.

- Ensure that the staff member understands how his/her job fits in the "big picture" within the department and University as a whole.
- Use the job description as a tool to complete this section. However, do not complete this section by writing "see job description" or by cutting and pasting the job description into this section.
- Do not indicate in this section that the job description should be updated. There is an entirely separate procedure for updating job descriptions. This is not the avenue for initiating that process.

REMEMBER: *Keep in mind that the job description identifies only what the employee should do. You as the supervisor must decide how well it should be done.*

II. Staff Member's Planning

This section should assist you in developing an appreciation for what the staff member believes are ways that he/she can improve performance to assist the department in fulfilling its goals. It also allows the staff member the opportunity to identify his/her objectives for the next fiscal year.

- Ask the staff member about his/her viewpoint regarding objectives and/or improvements.
- Utilize active listening skills. Talk less, don't make hasty judgments, pay attention to the non-verbal communication and don't interrupt.
- Ask what can be done to help the staff member become more effective. Identify what types of assistance you can provide, such as internal or external training and/or special equipment.

III. Supervisor's Key Performance Objectives

In this section, you should outline your expectations for the staff member over the next year. Identify what is to be maintained, improved and/or changed as well as what new assignments are to be accomplished. You should try, whenever possible, to incorporate the staff member's goals (Section II) with the expectations and objectives that you set forth. This section also provides you with the opportunity to correct any misconceptions that relate to what is expected from the staff member.

- Identify responsibilities you feel the staff member should maintain and continue.
- Identify areas for improvement.
- Identify new initiatives and/or projects for the staff member. These should be appropriate to the position and fair in relation to ability.
- Identify ways you plan to measure successful completion of goals. Create benchmarks so that both you and your staff know when success has been achieved.

REMEMBER: *You can't expect that your staff will meet your expectations if you don't accurately and clearly explain what your expectations are. Say what you mean. People will assume their performance is acceptable if no one tells them otherwise.*

IV. Supervisor's Evaluations, Remarks & Recommendations

This is your opportunity to provide both positive and constructive quantitative feedback to your staff. In this section, you should evaluate current levels of performance in comparison to your expectations and standards. The issues to be dealt with include standard factors such as job knowledge, productivity, quality, initiative and teamwork.

- Be honest, accurate and candid. Tell your staff member what you expect. Base your evaluation on actual occurrences and be prepared to give examples. Don't sugar coat what you say. Your staff member has the right to hear what areas of his/her performance need improvement.
- Concentrate on overall performance, not isolated incidents.

- Avoid the “recency effect” – Do not praise the employee because he/she has been performing tremendously for the past month. This section requires evaluation for the entire year.
- Point out gaps between your expectations and the staff member’s performance. Ask for explanations on shortcomings. There may be valid mitigating circumstances. The purpose of the appraisal is to reduce gaps between current performance and expected performance. Stay away from words like “always” and “never”.
- Concentrate your feedback on areas that are within the staff member’s control.
- Do not threaten the staff member’s self-esteem.
- Make sure that your message has been heard and understood.

REMEMBER: *Staff have a right to have their performance fairly and accurately perceived, evaluated and documented. Through this process, staff should be encouraged to develop to their full professional potential.*

V. Staff Member’s Comments

You should encourage your staff to write any comments he/she may have about the review. Let the staff member take the review with him/her. Allow the staff member two or three days to absorb what was discussed and make any appropriate comments.

- **Do not** demand that your staff sign the review immediately.
- If a staff member refuses to sign the form, indicate this in the Comments section. This will verify that the review took place. Be advised that HRD will return all unsigned forms unless noted otherwise.
- If a staff member disagrees with the appraisal, let him/her know that he/she has the right to request another review at a reasonable time interval to re-evaluate performance.
- Forward the original Dialogue for Direction form to HRD. All appraisals are maintained for three years in the staff member’s official personnel file. You may also want to keep a copy for your files.

REMEMBER: *The performance appraisal process is designed as a means to evaluate past performance and, more importantly, to look ahead and provide direction for the future.*

If you have questions on any of the information covered in this packet, please do not hesitate to contact your Human Resource Manager:

Denise Bard, PHR
 Director
 768-4667
dparsons@hartford.edu

Lisa Belanger
 Director
 768-4156
belanger@hartford.edu

Jamie Harlow, PHR
 Assistant Director
 768-4155
harlow@hartford.edu
