10 Steps for Conducting Successful Performance Evaluations

1 Understand UA's performance evaluation process and forms.

- Sign-up and attend HR's Performance Evaluation training;
- Review form(s) and guidelines on HR's website;
- Contact your HR Business Partner to discuss any questions about the process.

2 Notify the employee and help them prepare for a meeting.

- Notify the employee that the performance evaluation process is beginning;
- Communicate the review cycle dates (April 1 – March 31);
- Encourage the employee to think about:
  - What were their accomplishments throughout the year;
  - What lessons did they learn, what could they have done better or differently;
  - What coaching or support do they need;
  - What progress has been made on their goals/objectives;
  - What professional development was completed;
  - What professional development opportunities are they interested in?
- Instruct the employee to complete a self-assessment and return it within a designated timeframe (if applicable).

3 Begin thinking about what you should consider and include on the evaluation form.

- Make sure the employee's position description is current. If not, update before proceeding;
- Review last year's evaluation, goals and objectives. Notate any areas that needed improvement from the prior year;
- Review documentation compiled throughout the year on the employee, e.g. employee's file, one-on-one meeting notes, accomplishments, areas needing improvement, progress toward goals and objectives;
- Review the employee's completed self-assessment (if applicable);
- Decide which evaluation form will be used, e.g. short or comprehensive. Some areas designate what forms supervisors must use;
- Be consistent in what form is used. If the short form is used for exempt employee, it should be used for all exempt. The same is true for the comprehensive form.

4 Begin drafting the performance evaluation.

- Review your notes and information from Step 3;
- Ensure the evaluation is job-related, honest and fair;
- Provide comments and examples to support the ratings:
  - Comments are required for ratings of unacceptable, needs improvement, exceeds expectations;
  - Comments should be objective, specific, observable and factual;
  - Leave out personal opinions and assumptions;
- Rate the employee's performance, not their "attitude";
- There should be no surprises on the evaluation, if there are performance concerns conversations should have already taken place;
- Be realistic. An evaluation should reflect actual performance and not be over inflated;
- Protected or approved absences (to include but not limited to those under FMLA or Military Leave) should not be a consideration or commented on in the evaluation.
- See "Supervisor TIPS for Completing the Performance Evaluation"

5 Finalize the evaluation form.

- Review the draft document to ensure the completeness and accuracy of content;
- Ensure ratings are consistent with comments and are job-related;
- Discuss the evaluation with your supervisor to ensure agreement with the evaluation and the overall rating.

6 Schedule the meeting with the employee.

- Make sure the employee is given sufficient notice of the meeting time and location;
- Ask the employee to bring any documentation they want to share as well as questions they want discussed;
- Find a time and place that works for both you and your employee. If possible, have the meeting in a neutral location;
  - Use a meeting space that allows for privacy;
  - Schedule enough time for the meeting that is free from interruption;
- Meet with the employee face-to-face.

Additional Resources:
UA Performance Evaluation Guidelines
Supervisor TIPS for Completing the Performance Evaluation
Coach to Improve Performance: Providing Constructive Feedback
Setting SMART Goals

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Before meeting with the employee.

- Set the stage for an effective review – be prepared;
- Create an agenda or bullet-point list of items to discuss;
- Plan to be an active listener;
- Anticipate questions and emotions. Determine how you will respond;
- Make a copy of the finalized evaluation to provide to the employee.

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Meet with the employee.

- Provide a copy of the evaluation to the employee (this can be done at the beginning of the meeting or at the end);
- Cover the specifics of the evaluation;
- Stay on task/point;
- Remember an evaluation should motivate an employee to want to improve or continue good performance;
- Be an active listener. Listen to and address concerns or areas of disagreement;
- Invite questions and comments;
- Ask for feedback on your performance as a supervisor (what do they need/expect from you);
- Allow ample opportunity for the employee to respond to comments;
- Work on problem-solving together rather than blaming;
- If there is a point of disagreement, try not to respond defensively;
- If the staff member has an angry or emotional response remember to:
  - Listen. Pause. Breathe.
  - Think about the emotions you are both experiencing and where they may be coming from;
  - Respond by reflecting back what you think the employee is feeling. Be curious, ask questions. Kindly restate your point.

Remember Do's and Don'ts

Do's:

- **Problem Solve;**
- **Focus on the entire year;**
- **Be specific;**
- **Ask for their opinions, suggestions, accomplishments, goals and needs;**
- **Take an interest in your employee's professional development.**

Don'ts:

- **Blame;**
- **Consider only recent performance;**
- **Generalize;**
- **Focus on actions, goals and objectives that are not job-related;**
- **Do all of the talking.**

- Have the employee sign to acknowledge receipt of the evaluation;
  - If the employee wants to take the evaluation with them to review further allow them to do so; however, the employee should return the document signed within five business days of the meeting;
  - If the employee wants to add comments or submit a rebuttal they may do so; and a deadline given of five business days to return. If comments/rebuttal is submitted attach the document to the evaluation;
  - If the employee refuses to sign the evaluation document – write on the employee signature line "Refused to sign", initial, and date;
- The original evaluation should be sent to Human Resources: Box 870126, HR Business Partner.

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Collaborate on solutions and goal setting.

Note: Set up a separate meeting, if needed, to establish and discuss goals, objectives, special assignments for the coming year.

Look at last year's goals.

- Did the employee meet their goals? Let the employee tell you what they think;
- Provide your feedback;
- Celebrate accomplished goals;
- For unmet goals, talk about contributing factors:
  - Was it a personal obstacle or something within the employee's control? If so, how can you encourage and support success?
  - Was it an external obstacle or something beyond the employee's control? If so, is there something you can do to remove or mitigate the obstacle?

Set goals for the coming year.

- Encourage your employee to identify goals that they want to work on, especially those that align with UA and departmental goals;
- Ask the employee to create a draft copy for your review;
- Ask that goals be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timebound).

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Coach to improve performance.

See "Coach to Improve Performance: Providing Constructive Feedback"

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