

# Supervisor TIPS for Completing the Performance Evaluation

- 1. Have the employee complete a self-assessment.** Having the employee complete a self-assessment in advance of you completing the performance review can be invaluable. Supervisors are often surprised when employees rate themselves more critically than is deserved. Conversely, some employee's self-assessments may be overly inflated and highlight a disconnect between the employee and supervisor's perceptions of performance. In either case, a supervisor being aware of perceived differences in actual employee performance will be better prepared to navigate the annual evaluation meeting. Last, a self-assessment sometimes serves as a reminder of accomplishments the supervisor might have missed; and provide the employee an additional sense of fairness regarding the evaluation process. A self-assessment can occur in a number of ways. Supervisors may choose to use the [self-assessment](#) form located on [HR's website](#). Supervisors may also choose to have the employee use the annual performance evaluation form itself or another format of their own choosing.
- 2. A performance evaluation should motivate an employee to want to improve.** The performance evaluation process should strike a balance that leaves an employee feeling both appreciated for their accomplishments and motivated to improve any areas of opportunity. For this to happen, it is important that supervisors appropriately recognize employee's successes and their contributions to the organization. It is equally important that employees sense a sincere commitment to being supported in addressing any performance deficiencies, to include being allocated appropriate time and resources to make necessary improvements.
- 3. There should be no surprises.** The evaluation should be a review of the employee's performance for the prior year in its entirety. The supervisor should not focus on a single or recent situation or incident. Through previous counseling and other communications, the employee should be aware of any concerns the supervisor might have regarding their job performance. The annual evaluation should never be the first time the employee learns of performance concerns.
- 4. Be consistent in your approach.** The supervisor should establish clear expectations and criteria for employee ratings. These criteria should be applied consistently amongst similarly situated employees.
- 5. Be realistic.** Do not inflate ratings. Inflation of ratings only inflates the employee's expectations. It is not realistic that every employee will receive an "exceeds expectations" evaluation. If they do, the supervisor should reexamine their level of expectations.
- 6. Rate the employee's performance, not the employee's "attitude."** Keep comments job-related and based on the employee's actual performance of their job. Avoid phrases like "bad attitude," "they are not a team player," and other subjective phrases. Instead, clearly explain the specific behavior exhibited and its impact on accomplishing the department's mission.
- 7. Provide your comments.** For many individual performance factors, a rating without additional detail does little to communicate what the employee is or is not doing well. Comments are required for any ranking other than a "meets expectations." Remember, comments should be objective, specific, observable and factual.

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- 8. Make your comments consistent with the ratings.** Be sure to double check your ratings and associated comments. Do not give the employee a "meets expectations" rating if the comment describes something different, such as substandard performance.
- 9. Comments on comments.**
- *Is the comment appropriate and legal?* Performance must be measured on criteria that is not discriminatory. As an example, it would not be appropriate to hold an employee accountable for missed deadlines when time away is due to Family and Medical Leave or an approved military leave is a contributing factor. Additionally, it would be inappropriate to address an employee missing work for religious reasons. If you have questions about what is or is not appropriate, contact your [HR Business Partner](#).
  - *Is the comment specific?* Comments such as “does a good job” on an evaluation provide little constructive feedback. Comments should clearly articulate the contribution in a manner that even those outside the department could clearly understand.
  - *Is the comment actionable?* The point of the evaluation is to provide constructive feedback, particularly as it relates to addressing areas of improvement. The language in the evaluation should clearly articulate both expectations and a path towards success. Making an observation, such as “does not interact well with coworkers,” is only half of the equation. The other half is providing a clear picture of what exceptional performance actually looks like.
- 10. Set goals with the employee.** Following the performance evaluation, take the opportunity to set goals for the coming year. Doing so will set the right tone for the coming year and make all the difference in the world when it comes time to complete your next annual performance evaluation. When setting goals, be sure to use [SMART](#) goals.

## Additional Resources:

[UA Performance Evaluation Guidelines](#)

[10 Steps for Conducting Successful Performance Evaluations](#)

[Coach to Improve Performance: Providing Constructive Feedback](#)

[Setting SMART Goals](#)