

Polk State College

Performance Evaluation Guide for Supervisors

A. INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to help you, the supervisor, to better evaluate and counsel those who work directly for you. It is to be used in the evaluation of Polk State College personnel.

B. OVERALL OBJECTIVES FOR A PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

One of the best tools to aid management in satisfying the development needs of their employees is through regularly scheduled performance evaluations. Of course, judging the worth of employees goes on all the time. We hope you will use this opportunity to act as a counselor, not a judge. Remember that goals can be achieved only within the resources available to your employees.

If you recognize the worth of systematic performance evaluation and you convey this feeling to your employees, both you and they will benefit in these ways and realize the following objectives:

1. A two-way channel of communication will be established.
2. Your employees will be more effective and more efficient.
3. You will be a better supervisor.
4. You will be able to arrive at an unbiased rating of your employee.
5. Morale will be better – yours and your employees

C. AS A SUPERVISOR WHAT YOU SHOULD TRY TO ACCOMPLISH:

1. Build a better working relationship by getting to know your employees better, by letting them know you respect them and are sincerely interested in their progress and their opinions.
2. Let your employees know what is expected of them. Review the job duties and the standards by which they are measured. Tell them of your personal preferences about the way they perform their job.

3. Give your employees recognition and praise for good performance or abilities. This will build up self-confidence and the desire for continued good performance.
4. Point out tactfully those areas in which performance falls short of the job requirements or your expectations.
5. Work with them in developing a program for their self-improvement for future progress.
6. Find out how you are doing as a supervisor in terms of availability, understanding, organizing, delegating and the like.
7. Explain salary and other budgetary matters that affect your employees and their job while you continue to retain objectivity regarding job performance.

D. THIS WILL ENABLE YOUR EMPLOYEES TO:

1. Express opinions freely, discuss problems and aspirations and the reasons for their actions. Get help in solving any special problems encountered on the job.
2. Benefit by a realistic re-evaluation, if necessary, of the job requirements, the importance of their contribution, etc.
3. Make more effective use of special abilities and be encouraged to suggest improvements in the job.
4. Tell you the reasons why it is difficult or impossible to do the job as you want it done.
5. Have your help and encouragement in overcoming limitations and improving abilities so that they can qualify for future increases in pay and responsibilities.
6. Point out the barriers to doing a good job imposed by your methods of supervision.
7. Have a clearer understanding of their overall potential within their present salary range as well as their opportunities for advancement.

E. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING AN EMPLOYEE EVALUATION

1. Consider each factor separately, taking into account only that particular factor which you are rating. Do not be influenced by your general opinion of the employee's overall performance. Do not consider performance for any factor which does not relate to the one being rated.

- Be a fair, impartial and an objective judge in evaluating this employee so that your evaluation will accurately describe performance in the particular area considered.
- a. The usefulness of any performance review depends almost entirely upon the understanding, impartiality, and objectivity with which ratings are made.
 - b. Care and skill used by supervisors in rating Employees and measures of supervisory ability in directing the work of subordinates.
2. Do not be influenced by one or two unusual incidents, but rate in terms of the employee's regular day-to-day average performance during all of the period. Similarly, do not go back prior to the period covered by the rating report in your consideration.
 3. Consider your evaluation in terms of the employee's present duties, not in terms of the duties of a different, higher or lower position.
 4. In rating individual factors, remember that it is entirely possible for the ratings to differ among factors. In most cases, an employee's performance in certain areas is better than it is in others. The overall rating should be a true measure of the employee's whole performance of duty in relation to the position requirements.
 5. Remember that in rating employees you should not expect them to meet standards of performance unless you have instructed them in all the job requirements.
 - a. You cannot hold an employee responsible for work accomplishment if understandable assignments and instructions have not been given by you. If an employee has an area of difficulty, what have you, as a supervisor, done to help your employee solve the problems which hinder performance?
 - b. You, the supervisor, have a direct responsibility to develop your employee with respect to the employee's relationship to the performance standards of the job.
 - c. If the employee is not performing satisfactorily, the employee should be told how and in what respect the employee is failing and how to improve performance. That is one of the supervisor's fundamental responsibilities.
 6. Remember that the factors listed are for your convenience and to help you in thinking about an employee; however, the most important part of the evaluation form is the area for supervisory comments. Use this area wisely and avoid general statements which mean little to the employee.

7. The actual rating given an employee is a matter of judgment on the part of the supervisor, and is not strictly governed by the factors listed on the evaluation form. However, common sense dictates that if other factors are considered in the overall evaluation, the employee has a right to know what they are.

F. THE ACTUAL EVALUATION PROCESS

The following suggestions should be kept in mind by all rating supervisors.

1. Each factor listed must be rated for every employee or the report will be returned. To show a value rating for a particular factor, circle the number in the desired column of the form.
2. Complete the review form without the employee being present.
3. Guard against committing the following common errors which can cause problems in rating employees.
 - a. Central Tendency: Rating all employees as average.
 - b. Halo Effect: Allowing one aspect of an employee's performance to influence the entire evaluation.
 - c. Over-evaluation or Under-evaluation: The tendency of a rater to over-value or under-value a given factor.
4. Do not consider potential value or personal abilities of the employee, except as they are actually revealed in and used on present work assignments. Your rating should reveal what the employee actually does in the current position.
5. Any performance rating of other than "Satisfactory" **must be explained in detail**, either on the rating form or in an attached statement.
6. The immediate supervisor should discuss with the employee any rating of "Unsatisfactory" or "Conditional."
 - a. Together you should determine what should be done to improve the employee's performance on the job. Once the "corrective action" has been agreed upon, it is up to the employee to apply it and it is your responsibility to observe individual performance for the desired results.
 - b. Be careful that you do not "over-commit" yourself or the employee. Give the employee every opportunity to start "on the right foot." Assist whenever possible. Be sure the corrective actions are the best method of eliminating the employee's deficiencies.

7. Be sure you observe the employee's progress during the period of "corrective action." Talk with your employee, compliment performance, offer constructive criticism in areas where it is needed. Go over the results of the corrective performance review.
 - a. If the employee has successfully carried out the corrective action, the employee should be rated higher.
 - b. Failure to carry out the required obligations constitutes unsatisfactory performance and may be grounds for dismissal.
8. Remember rating employees' performance is a continuing process of day-to-day observance and counseling..not just an activity to be performed every few months.
9. There is no disgrace in being rated satisfactory, and over use of higher ratings is unfair to those who truly deserve the higher rating.

G. THE ACTUAL RATING PROCESS

1. The supervisor rates the employee high so that the employee will not challenge the rating.
2. The supervisor rates an employee high and justifies it by saying, "I had to rate high so I could give a salary increase."
3. The supervisor evaluates the employee in such general terms that the rating is meaningless.
4. The immediate supervisor does not sign the evaluation, or worse yet, does not even prepare it.
5. The evaluation of the immediate supervisor is changed by a higher level supervisor.
6. The immediate supervisor blames a higher level supervisor for a low rating when discussing it with the employee.
7. The supervisor hands the evaluation to the employee and says, "Sign it and return it to me when you get a chance."
8. The supervisor does not understand the evaluation system and treats it as an inconvenience rather than a tool.

9. When a poor evaluation is given, a supervisor will bring in an army of witnesses.
10. Supervisors often forget that the evaluation process is an ongoing process and they are simply unprepared for the evaluation.

H. THE ACTUAL REVIEW PROCESS

If anything worthwhile is to be accomplished by a performance evaluation program, it is vitally important that a private discussion between you and your employee takes place. This should occur after you have carefully evaluated your employee's performance of duties and personal characteristics as they affect performance and assigned rating categories. Your employee should receive advance notice of this discussion so the employee may have the same chance to prepare as you have had.

There are no easy steps to conducting a successful performance evaluation interview. Regardless of how cut and dried evaluation systems may seem, judging another person's worth is never simple. Many supervisors would not have been selected as leaders if they had not been considered good people. Nevertheless, these noble sentiments can produce disastrous effects. The first to be learned is that evaluation is not the same as criticism. **You are doing your employee a favor when you make a fair evaluation of performance and discuss this evaluation with the employee in a developmental manner. BETTER EMPLOYEES CAN BE DEVELOPED THAN CAN BE HIRED.** It is your responsibility as a supervisor to help your employees during the developmental stage of their employment and afterwards.

There are several general suggestions that may be of help in conducting a successful interview.

1. Put your employee at ease before you begin discussing performance. Let the employee that you respect the employee as another human being and are interested in the employee's welfare. After the employee has been put at ease and you are sure the employee understands performance evaluation, you are ready to discuss the individual rating. **THIS IS THE MEAT OF THE WHOLE DISCUSSION.**
2. Use the "sandwich" technique. That means simply sandwiching unfavorable remarks between favorable remarks. Compliment the employee at the beginning and at the end of the discussion.
3. Explain the purpose of the performance evaluation program and indicate to your employee that the program has your backing and you consider it beneficial to the employee as well as yourself.

4. Remember that you are discussing your employee's performance, not personally. You will gain more results if you help your employee gain self-respect and increase pride in work.
5. When you begin discussing your employee's performance, review strengths first. Compliment good performance and let the employee know you are aware of improvements since the last evaluation.
6. In discussing weaknesses, be tactful but truthful. Remember the purpose of the interview. This should be a constructive discussion, not a belaboring account of past failures. Do not overlook the possibility that you may be partially at fault for some of your employee's shortcomings, and be willing to take some of the blame yourself. Strive to reach agreement with your employee on a definite program for self-improvement.
7. Emphasize the reason why the rating was given. Cite specific instances of performance, so the ratings become grounded in fact. They are then more acceptable to the employee and leave the employee knowing they are fair.
8. Don't be vague about personality shortcomings. Such faults are hard to tie in with ability and skill. They have much more meaning when they can be related to production efficiency – either in the individual or in the effect on others.
9. Show a sincere interest in the employee's work and problems.
10. Be sure criticism is positive. When you point out weaknesses, be prepared to offer means of correcting them.
11. Allow the employee to express reaction to the ratings. The employee should have an opportunity to state what obstacles might stand in the way of doing a good job. Here you may find the underlying cause of unsatisfactory performance. If you are asked for advice on a personal problem, do not be too hasty in giving your opinion. Let the employee talk and ask questions. Often the first problem mentioned by the employee is not the basic problem. The employee might be much more concerned about something else.
12. Give your employee plenty of opportunity to speak freely. Listen carefully to what the employee has to say. Maintain a calm attitude and an open mind. If the employee wants to talk, don't interrupt. Do not show anger or hostility, regardless of the remarks the employee may make.
13. Do not be too anxious to prove the employee is wrong. Help the employee save face and maintain self-respect. Confidence in you and the rating program will be increased if the employee realizes that it is not arbitrary and that incorrect ratings are subject to change.

14. Take your time. Acceptance of your criticisms or suggestion may not come immediately. It may be quite a while before the employee will admit errors.
15. Don't expect to convince the employee of anything while the employee is angry.
16. Do indicate you are willing to change a rating, but only when there are facts to substantiate such a change. Don't be soft. Be fair and willing, but firm.
17. Be sure the employee knows what you expect in work performance. Often the employee is confused. The employee actually believes the employee has been doing what you want, but in reality the employee has not.
18. Do not hesitate to recognize the employee who is rated high. Recognition of good performance perpetuates it. Failure to recognize it will leave an attitude of, "What's the use of doing a good job – nobody cares."
19. End the discussion by summarizing strengths and weaknesses. Assure the employee that you will give special attention to noted weaknesses and do all you can to help the individual correct them.
20. In concluding the interview, summarize the major points discussed to assure understanding by both you and your employee. Reassure the employee of your interest and willingness to work with the individual to improve. Then take the initiative to end the interview immediately. Lapsing into small talk diminishes the purpose of the interview.

I. SUMMARY OF STEPS TO BETTER EVALUATION DISCUSSIONS

1. How, when, and where to discuss
 - a. Strict privacy.
 - b. Select a time when you and the employee are not under great pressure.
 - c. Have information at hand.
2. Predetermine how the employee will react.
 - a. Cooperative, contractive employees.
 - b. Skeptical, antagonistic, and destructive.
 - c. Surly and uncooperative.
 - d. Quiet, non-responsive employees.

3. Put the employee at ease.
 - a. Create a friendly, constructive atmosphere
 - b. Inform how the program works.
4. Explain the purposes of performance evaluation.
 - a. To provide periodically reviews of performance.
 - b. To point out strengths and weaknesses so the former can be cultivated and the latter corrected.
 - c. To provide a fair and unbiased means of determining qualifications for promotions, transfers, demotions, and salary increases.
 - d. To recognize those who have outstanding ability and potential, and deserve training for higher positions of more responsibility.
 - e. To eliminate all those who are not qualified for the type of work to be done and who cannot contribute to the productive efforts of the organization.
5. Inform the employee of the rating.

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