



GOAL SETTING AND EVALUATION GUIDE
FOR MANAGER AND SUPPORT STAFF
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INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of the performance assessment process is communication between supervisors and employees, rather than on administrative requirements. It is a process that provides opportunities for discussions and feedback between employees and supervisors on performance goals and expectations. It is an interactive process.

Administered properly, a performance assessment produces a number of benefits.

- It coordinates employees' performance with the unit plan goals, HCC's mission, and strategic goals.
- It fosters improved and ongoing communications between supervisors and employees about performance expectations and progress.
- It provides a tool for supervisors and employees to plan and measure performance.
- It enables supervisors to assist employees in developing skills related to their jobs and improving performance.
- It assists management in compensation planning and administration.
- It assists HCC in determining training and professional development needs.

The Performance Assessment process includes:

- *Performance Planning.* This involves employees planning with their supervisors to mutually develop goals that are consistent with the overall goals of the unit and HCC. In fact, the goals that were established during the unit planning meeting should be the basis in developing employees' professional goals.
- *Ongoing Performance Discussions and Feedback.* This involves open and frequent performance discussions between employees and supervisors. These discussions may be both informal and formal.
- *Annual Performance Discussions and Written Assessments.* This involves a formal performance discussion and a written assessment for each employee at least once a year.

GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

1. Performance Goals – What are they?

The goals that are mutually developed between the supervisor and the employee are fundamental to the performance assessment process.

Goals should be consistent with the overall unit goals and HCC's goals.

Goals should be discussed and written for each employee at the beginning of the assessment period. This usually occurs at the time of the employee's annual performance assessment, or at the time when an employee enters a new position. These goals are used as the basis for the supervisor to guide and assess the employee's performance over the performance assessment period and should be discussed frequently. Goals should be revised during the performance assessment period as priorities and business strategies change. These revisions should be discussed as they occur and documented during the assessment period if the revisions are significant.

Goals are statements of what an employee should accomplish during the performance assessment period. There should be no more than ten (10) goals during any performance assessment period. More than ten (10) goals may cause an undue burden on the employee and may unnecessarily contribute to the employee's failure to meet the supervisor's expectations. Goals should cover at least 80% of an employee's job and should fall into following categories:

- ongoing or sustaining work activities, including professional development activities, and
- special projects or assignments.

Goals should be listed in order of priority or importance. They should be stated in terms that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-determined.

2. Categories of Goals

- **Ongoing or sustaining and developmental goals** cover the core part of a job, involve the day-to-day duties and responsibilities, and may not change from year to year. Developmental goals should be geared toward assisting or supporting performance in the current position or professional development path. Developmental activities may occur on the job or through more formal training or professional development programs.

Examples of development activities:

- Cross-training
- Ad hoc committee assignments, or appointment to a governance committee
- Training other employees
- Preparing and making presentations
- One-on-one coaching or mentoring
- External training programs, workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Course work toward a degree, certification, and license or to develop additional skills related to the job.
- In-house training programs, professional development days, lunch and learn sessions
- New job assignments
- **Special project goals** cover one-time special projects that the employee is expected to accomplish during the assessment period.

1. Goal Setting – How to write goals

Supervisors are accountable for implementing the performance assessment process according to policies, procedures, and established deadlines and for other management activities such as developing staff, managing unit budgets, etc.

The supervisor and the employee should mutually develop goals, if at all possible. Supervisors have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that goals are set, and they have the flexibility to set different goals for employees who perform the same job but differ in experience or capability. A number of different approaches can be taken to set an employee's goals. The approach that is used with a particular employee depends on the management style of the employee's supervisor.

- One approach might be for a supervisor to take the lead in drafting a set of goals to use as the basis for a discussion with an employee about the employee's job. This approach is particularly useful when the employee is new to the job, or is uncertain how to write goals.
- Another approach might be for the supervisor to ask the employee to take the lead in drafting a set of goals to use as the basis of a discussion. This approach is particularly useful when the employee has been in the job for at least two or more years, or when the supervisor is new in his or her job.
- Other approaches fall somewhere between these two. For example, a supervisor and an employee may draft a set of goals together; or the supervisor may draft goals covering certain duties related to the day-to-day operation of the department (refer to the unit plan) and that are broad in scope, while the employee may draft other goals that are more specific to daily tasks and professional development.

Whichever approach is taken, it should involve a participative, "give-and-take" discussion between the supervisor and the employee about the details of the goals. However, the supervisor has the ultimate responsibility for setting the goals. This is to make sure that they are consistent with the overall unit goals defined during the unit planning process and HCC strategic goals. Sometimes the goals of one department may need to be coordinated with the goals of another department.

Goals should answer the basic question "What" should the employee accomplish in the job during the next assessment period?" They should be listed in order of priority or importance in order to ensure the successful performance of the job.

Goals should be established and they should be SMART.

S = ***Specific***: Clearly articulate expected behaviors.

M = ***Measurable***: Quantifiable

A = ***Achievable***: Realistic and factors in learning-curve time.

R = ***Relevant***: Relates to the overall goals of the unit and HCC.

T = ***Time-Determined***: States dates for successful completion.

Goals should be attainable within the employee's control. Some may be ongoing or sustaining and subject to few changes, while others will represent a challenge to the employee. Resources should be made available for the attainment of the goals.

An employee's written goals should be reviewed and discussed, if needed, with the next level of management before they are finalized with the employee. The final set of goals should be discussed with the employee, signed by the employee, the immediate supervisor, and the appropriate levels of management up to the area Dean/Vice President/President, and then sent to Human Resources for placement into the employee's file. The employee and the supervisor should retain reference copies.

4. Supervisor Role – Providing Ongoing Performance Discussions and Feedback

There are two kinds of ongoing performance discussions that the immediate supervisor should provide to direct reports. They are:

Informal Discussions - A supervisor should provide an employee with informal feedback regarding performance on a timely basis. This allows for the supervisor and employee to observe and measure progress toward goals, identify problem areas, and determine what assistance may be needed to perform more effectively.

Formal Discussions - In addition to informal feedback, a supervisor should hold at least one formal interim performance discussion with each employee. Formal discussions on a quarterly basis are recommended, and more frequent formal discussions should be held if an employee is having performance problems. Formal discussions involve reviewing goals and discussing progress being made toward meeting them.

Discussions are also appropriate for setting new and revising existing performance goals during the assessment period as changes occur in priorities and/or responsibilities.

As a result of both informal and formal discussions, an employee should know how well he or she is performing most of the time. This should help to **avoid any major “surprises” at the time of the employee's written annual performance assessment.**

5. Employee's Participation

A performance assessment is intended to be a participative process for both employees and supervisors. Therefore, employees will be asked to participate in all aspects of the performance assessment process. Part of this participation involves completion of the employees self assessment.

When an employee's assessment is due, a supervisor should ask the employee to prepare for a formal performance discussion to include review of the employee self assessment document. The purpose of this discussion is to give an employee the opportunity to self-evaluate progress during the review period and to inform the supervisor of significant accomplishments as well as obstacles that may have prevented the accomplishment of certain goals. It also allows employees to discuss future goals and suggestions concerning their jobs or professional development. In

addition, the supervisor will be expected to discuss the employee's performance and development needs.

A number of different approaches may be taken regarding employee participation and preparation for this discussion.

- One approach might be for a supervisor to ask an employee to assess his/her performance for the year relative to each of the established goals. This assessment may be done in writing that is shared before or during the performance discussion between the supervisor and employee.
- Another approach might be for the supervisor to ask the employee for a list of accomplishments during the assessment period and areas that need improvement. This list could be used as a basis for the performance discussion between the employee and supervisor.

Whichever approach is taken, it should result in a performance discussion with the employee before the supervisor's written annual performance assessment of the employee is finalized.

6. Supervisor's Written Annual Performance Assessment

The supervisor is responsible for writing the employee's formal annual performance assessment. The supervisor should take into account the information gathered during informal and formal discussions with the employee about his or her performance as well as information gathered during the review period through observation, reports or conversations on work accomplishments, and assessments gathered from direct reports, if applicable.

The written annual performance assessment should:

- Assess the employee's performance relative to each of the established goals. The assessments should be stated in terms of "Attained," "In Progress" or "Did Not Meet" to include comments that support each assessment.
- State an overall assessment of performance. Provide a detailed rationale for the overall assessment. This rationale should include specific examples of results obtained, methods used, and/or effectiveness achieved. It should address both positive and negative aspects of performance relative to goals and expectations. It should consider accomplishments and special assignments or projects that fell outside of the employee's established goals.
- Address any specific performance areas that require improvement by the employee. These areas should be identified and, if necessary, a performance improvement plan should be developed for the employee that may include on-the-job coaching; counseling; formal training; closer supervision and review; a developmental assignment; and a change in job scope, duties, and priorities.
- If, as a result of the performance assessment process an employee's overall performance does not meet standard job requirements or the employee is deemed unsatisfactory a

performance improvement plan is required. In this situation the supervisor should notify the appropriate level of management up to the area Dean, Vice President, or President to coordinate next steps. Human Resources should also be notified to insure the required documentation is housed in the employee file.

- Note any formal training and development that the employee received during the assessment period. This includes a list of development activities such as cross-training, ad hoc committee or governance committee assignments, and any outside and in-house training programs.

A written annual review may be reviewed and discussed with the next level of management above the supervisor before it is finalized with the employee. Each supervisor should check with the area Dean or Vice President for further guidance. The final written review should be discussed with the employee, signed by the employee and appropriate levels of management up to the area Dean, Vice President, or President, and sent to Human Resources for placement in the employee's file. Reference copies may be retained by the employee and the supervisor.

7. *Employee's Comments*

The employee should participate in the formal annual performance assessment by providing the supervisor with information about performance activities during the assessment period and by discussing performance with the supervisor. In addition, an employee may choose to complete the employee's comments section of the annual assessment.

Areas that employees may want to address in this section include: the assessment of performance relative to goals and expectations; a list of accomplishments during the assessment period; the type of assistance, guidance, or support needed in order to improve performance or achieve goals; and comments/concerns about the performance assessment process.

8. *Performance Factors*

In assessing overall performance, supervisors should consider how effectively an employee performed the *total* responsibilities of the position—special projects as well as ongoing responsibilities. The following definitions are offered to assist supervisors in arriving at performance ratings of employees.

Definitions of Performance Assessment Factors

- **Exceptional** – Highest level of performance. Employee demonstrates extraordinary work and/or behavior, which is significantly **above and beyond** what is expected from day-to-day, or outlined in the employee's annual goals. Generally, this employee is an exemplary role model for other employees.
- **Commendable** –Has detailed knowledge of job and exceeds standard job requirements. Employee demonstrates an **expertise in the level of work performed** or demonstrates considerable confidence in the manner that he/she conducts him/herself with others.
- **Solid Performer** –Has mastered knowledge of job and meets standard job requirements. Employee **meets established departmental performance expectations.** Demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and abilities that result in the effective performance of the position requirements.

- **Satisfactory-Needs Improvement** – Has some knowledge of job but does not meet standard job requirements. Employee **demonstrates work or behavior that is somewhat below standard or employee is at the beginning level of performance and needs continued development.** Employee must work with their supervisor to take immediate steps to improve. Failure to do so may result in a formal performance improvement plan.
- **Unsatisfactory** – Consistently fails to perform the job or demonstrates behavior that is totally unacceptable. **Employee consistently fails to perform the job or demonstrates behavior that is unacceptable.** Documentation should support such an extreme rating. A performance improvement plan is required.

9. Performance Evaluation Forms

- Manager of Employees/Projects Goal Packet
- Manager of Employees/Projects Performance Assessment Packet
- Support Staff Goal Packet
- Support Staff Performance Assessment Packet

Please contact your Human Resources Office if you have any questions regarding the annual performance assessment process.