

**GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

- A. Briefly review general background information. The more the evaluator knows about an employee, the easier it is to understand and discuss work performance and behavior. Some time prior to the appraisal discussion, the evaluator should review the employee's past history, work experience, education, and previous performance appraisals.
- B. Arrange for the Interview.
1. Set a time and place for the discussion and avoid postponement. Arrange for appropriate privacy and time for the discussion. It is important to prevent interruption if at all possible. A private office or conference room creates a setting in which the evaluator and the employee can communicate effectively.
  2. Notify the employee in writing several days beforehand, so that the employee has enough time to prepare for the performance review. One good method of preparation is for the employee to evaluate himself. Ask the employee to fill out an appraisal form for discussion and comparison with the evaluator's during the interview.
- C. Conduct the Interview. Evaluations should be approached in a helpful and non-judgmental way. Too often performance appraisal discussions are viewed as a time when the supervisor is the "judge". This is a difficult role, which often prevents positive discussion. The evaluation should be viewed as a time when the evaluator and the employee can look at job performance and find and discuss ways to improve it.

Although "rating" performance involves judgments, the discussion should focus on specific ways to improve performance.

- D. Structure and Format of the Evaluation. The interview should have some structure to it, varying with individual circumstances. The evaluator should:
1. Create a relaxed climate.
  2. Outline the purpose and objectives of the review.
  3. Explain the benefits of positive two-way communications about performance.
  4. Follow a comfortable sequence during the discussion, for example:
    - a. Review past performance on each relevant job performance factor.
    - b. Identify major strong and weak points.
    3. Specify developmental steps to be taken to improve performance.
    4. Set performance goals.

5. Encourage the employee to participate. The more an employee discusses performance, the better the review. Listen and gather information. Active listening is very important.
  - a. Use open-ended questions (who, what, when, why and how), which encourage discussion rather than simple "yes/no" responses.
  - b. Tell the employee you are receiving information, not judging.
  - c. Use restatement or reflection. This is a clarification process and feeds back what you are hearing to the employee.
6. Discuss areas of good performance first. This is easier if you have asked the employee to appraise performance in preparation for the review.
7. Focus on areas of performance the employee identifies as not fully satisfactory. Determine what corrective action should be taken, and by whom. Collaborate on the action steps. Do you agree on areas of strengths and weaknesses? The more the employee participates in the plans for improvement, the greater will be the commitment to those plans. Offer usable criticism tactfully and constructively in the context of a discussion of strengths.
8. Use specific and realistic improvement targets. Don't try to eliminate all areas of weakness in one session. Concentrate on the most important ones. A development plan with two or three steps is often accomplished. One with eight or nine may cause the employee to give up.
9. Discuss personal goals and interests.
10. Close the discussion by summarizing what has been covered and reviewing the specific steps to be taken by supervisors and the employee. If appropriate, set a follow-up date to discuss progress towards performance improvement.

E. Follow-Up. During the evaluation, specific steps to improve performance may have been identified. Action required of the evaluator should be taken.

If specific training has been recommended, it is important that it be undertaken. If parts of the job description have become obsolete, the evaluator should see that it is rewritten.