


IV. Conducting the Performance Assessment Meeting

You'll enjoy a highly productive meeting when you and your employee come to it well-prepared. The discussion is an opportunity to build a strong relationship between you and your employee, where both of you feel free to talk about the job, how it is being done, and what improvements can be made. When both of you are prepared, the meeting will be more relaxed and constructive.

Prepare the employee...

1. Tell the employee approximately when the assessment meeting will be so s/he can also prepare.
2. Explain that the purpose of the Performance Assessment is to review the employee's past performance and plan for future performance.
3. Let the employee know that the meeting will involve a dialogue and that you welcome and expect his or her active participation.
4. Give the employee a packet that includes the following:
 - The Instructions for Employee Performance Assessment
 - The blank Employee Self-Assessment (Part 1)
 - A copy of the blank Employee Performance Assessment (Part 2) that you will complete
 - A copy of the current job description for the employee's position.
5. Ask the employee to complete the Employee Self-Assessment (Part 1). Ask professional employees to return it to you a week or more before the meeting to assist you in developing the final assessment. Ask classified employees to choose whether to give it to you a week before the meeting or bring it with them to the meeting.

Prepare yourself...

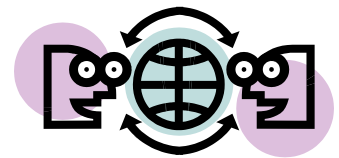
1. Review any documentation you have of the employee's performance during the assessment period. It is helpful to keep an ongoing file of notes and examples of the employee's work throughout the year so that you have this information readily available when it is time to complete the annual Performance Assessment.
2. If you plan to request input from other sources – such as co-workers in the employee's or other departments, or other staff for whom the employee provides support services – do it in a consistent manner.
3. Review the job description.

4. Review the employee's last performance assessment. Have last year's goals been met?
5. Identify some specific examples of duties and responsibilities that the employee performed well.
6. Identify specific areas where the employee could do better, and think through the question, "What can the employee do to make a greater contribution in these areas?"
7. Prepare some draft performance goals for the next review period based on the employee's strengths as well as areas needing development, and based on department needs. Think about what you can do to help the employee meet these goals.
8. Draft your ratings and comments on Sections I and II of the Employee Performance Assessment form.
9. Schedule a specific time for the performance assessment meeting, assuring a private place to meet without interruptions.

Conduct the assessment meeting...

Set the climate:

1. Be sure the employee understands the purpose of the Performance Assessment discussion.
2. Let the employee know that the discussion is to be a dialogue about his or her performance. Encourage participation.
3. Review the discussion format you will use. Explain that the discussion will include:
 - Things the employee does well (areas of strength)
 - Things the employee can improve (areas for further development)
 - Development of goals for the coming year.



Discuss performance: As you discuss the employee's performance (Sections I and II of the form), keep in mind that:

1. The discussion is a summary of the employee's performance over the *entire* review period, not just the most recent performance.
2. The employee should not be hearing about performance problems for the first time at this meeting. Previous discussions should have occurred when performance concerns arose.
3. The annual Performance Assessment discussion is *not* a step in the disciplinary process. This is the time to acknowledge the employee for



his or her accomplishments and contributions, and to coach/counsel/plan for improved performance. (“If you don’t, then I will....” statements are inappropriate in this discussion.)

4. If you are relying on negative performance information provided by third parties, discuss it with the employee well before the Performance Assessment meeting. It is unfair to treat feedback from others as “fact” without hearing the employee’s point of view on the feedback.

Tips for an Effective Meeting

- ✓ Be as specific as possible about performance activities; give examples and explain the “why” of the rating.
- ✓ Don’t get sidetracked or bogged down in details.
- ✓ Be positive where possible, but also be candid.
- ✓ Provide both positive feedback and constructive criticism.
- ✓ Close with a summary that leaves the employee with a clear understanding of where s/he stands, what is necessary to meet performance expectations, and how and when you will provide assistance.
- ✓ Reassure the employee of your interest in his or her progress and willingness to have continued communication.
- ✓ Listen as much as you talk.

Develop Goals Together: Involve the employee in setting goals and target dates for the coming year. For information about setting goals, [CLICK HERE](#). Goals must be appropriate to the employee’s job classification, unless they reflect the employee’s own goals for personal or professional enrichment.



Develop a Performance Improvement Plan: A written Performance Improvement Plan should be developed and included on the Employee Performance Assessment form for any employee who receives one or more ratings of “Needs Improvement” or “Unsatisfactory.” If the employee is willing, ask him or her to contribute suggestions for the Improvement Plan. The Performance Improvement Plan should identify:

1. The particular areas of performance in need of improvement;
2. Specific steps the employee should take to improve performance, including ways that you as the supervisor will assist or support the employee;
3. The timeframe by which improvement is expected; and

4. Date of an interim evaluation to discuss and assess progress on the Performance Improvement Plan. **Do not wait until the next regularly scheduled annual Performance Assessment** to determine whether progress is being made.