

**Performance Management Guide for Supervisors**

Performance management is the process of coaching, developing, managing and evaluating employees. It is a consistent process for assessing and developing individual performance. The process provides ongoing feedback and coaching for success and developing talent while providing a tool for measuring what individuals achieve and how they achieve it. The process closely relates and ties into other components of an employee’s career while at UTFI including compensation, career paths and, as needed, improvement plans.

Performance management is an ongoing process. During the Onboarding of a new staff member and throughout the year, let your staff know what is expected of them. Discuss goals and expected outcomes based on the job they were hired to do. For an understanding of the process and factors reviewed in the performance management process, refer to the [Performance Management Review Guidelines](http://www.utfi.org/wp-content/uploads/Performance-Management-Review-Guidelines.pdf).

The objectives of this guide in the performance management process are:

* Understand the need of reviews;
* To define a rating standard across the Foundation for an understanding and consistency of the process;
* Identify steps for effectively documenting performance;
* Provide direction for communication between supervisors and staff;
* Offer tips for difficult conversations; and,
* Manage employee feedback.

**THE REVIEW**

The review is a formal documentation of the ongoing process of performance management. The annual review allows for a mutual understanding of ongoing work results, goals and expectations for both the supervisor and staff. Reviews are used to support requests of retention offers, career path proposals, promotions, improvement plans, and discipline situations.

**RATING STANDARDIZATION**

 For consistency in reviews of staff across the Foundation, the rating of 3, Solid Performer, should be used as the standard rating. A Solid Performer is one who is dependable to consistently do a good job, accomplish the expected work duties, has regular, reliable attendance and exhibits a team attitude. Strive to be fair, distinguish the standout performers from those who may not be the top. The outcomes expected from defining a standard are:

* Consistent, accurate and honest assessments;
* Identification of growth opportunities and goals to incorporate in career paths; and,
* Document work in support of performance that exceeds expectations or work that falls short of a solid performer.

**DOCUMENTATION - The good and the bad**

The [Employee Performance Self-Evaluation Form](http://www.utfi.org/wp-content/uploads/perf-self-111205.docx) allows for the employee to document self performance. This form will assist in determining if the staff has a realistic view and understanding of their own performance and abilities. Supervisors should receive and review self evaluations in advance to prepare their comments for the formal review. The [Performance Management Form](http://www.utfi.org/wp-content/uploads/Performance-Review-Form.docx) is designed for supervisors to record the results of the employee’s overall performance through written comments and in person discussions. The information on the form allows all to have a clear understanding and acceptance regarding current performance, continued expectations, and areas of improvement if needed.

**Journaling** information throughout the year based on individual performance will assist when preparing for the overall performance review. Include detail that identifies successes, items for improvement or critical incidents. Through discussion and coaching during the year, an employee should not be surprised by something on the review. **Do not wait until review time to address an area of concern or a discipline situation.** This information may be kept in a departmental file, not in the official personnel file.

It is important to document the actual performance on the review form. Review the overall requirements and job responsibilities. Review the objectives and goals set during the previous year review.

The Performance Review Form allows selection of ratings on applicable details to a staff’s performance in particular categories. Use of the comment section is strongly encouraged for support of the ratings assigned. Be honest and list specific examples of performance. Include areas that the employee exceeds and, if needed, areas for improvement. This will assist you and the staff member to know how they are doing. It will enable goals of performance to be set. This documentation will be an asset to you during the upcoming year to coach and give feedback.

Documentation is essential and reviewed in situations impacting the employment status. When external offers are made and retention is critical, it helps if the evaluation shows that the employee is outstanding and evidences a valued member of the team. When working to improve performance of those not meeting expectations, documentation helps identify the issues and will allow goals to be set for successful improvement of performance.

**Metric Expectations** – If metrics are expectations of a position, they should be included when reviewing responsibilities with staff. When submitting the performance review form for any staff member with metric expectations, please include those metrics with the review form. In career path plans, the metrics are support of where the staff member succeeded in the past and reflect goals for movement to the next career path position.

**COMMUNICATION**

No one wants a meaningless process of paperwork. Let staff know where they stand and what areas need to improve.

* Be fair and honest in discussions encouraging the employee to talk. Be objective and use examples for discussions based on quality, consistency, productivity, timeliness of tasks or projects, accuracy, customer feedback, and measurable data such as errors.
* Listen to what the employee says. Ask open-ended questions to solicit their input.
* Discuss the employee’s self evaluation and compare to your review of them. Determine if they believe your rating is a fair assessment, if not, discuss the differences and identify the reason of disagreement. If the employee disagrees with a rating it may be a frustration and diminish motivation. They may not have had a clear understanding of the expectations.
* Keep the focus on the performance not the who of the situation. Show that you are interested and care about their career.
* Base the review documentation on observable behaviors and not general opinions or rumors. Critique the behavior keeping the discussion professional. Be constructive in criticism encouraging the employee all the while avoiding confrontation.
* Make sure there is a mutual understanding of overall performance, goals that have been set and objectives to accomplish.

**DIFFICULT REVIEWS**

When dealing with difficult subjects on a review, do so consistently. If a problem occurs through the year it should be discussed at the time of occurrence and listed on the review form. If an issue was discussed during the previous year’s review, mention it on the review form. Omission may let the employee believe the issue is resolved. Discuss improvement made or concerns for the continued behavior or issue.

Absenteeism or tardiness should be addressed at the time it happens. If it is a habitual behavior, it can be addressed during the review. If it appears there is a family or personal cause, refer the employee to Human Resources for assistance.

**Deal with the issue -** Performance issues or behaviors that need improvement should be outlined as specifically as possible. Address areas the employee has control over. Provide the documentation from throughout the past year that supports the history. Give facts as to how the employee did not meet the expectations of performance.

**Have a plan -** Have an action plan outlined to suggest steps for improvement. Be solution oriented to provide actions for improvement. Encourage the employee to make suggestions as to how they believe the behavior or performance may be improved through their own actions. Provide resources for training or development when appropriate. Set measurable, specific goals with realistic timelines for improvement. Those may be short term and long term goals with achievable outcomes. Let the employee know what is expected to make positive steps towards improvement. Be positive in your support to encourage the employee that you know they can improve.

**Follow up meeting -** A follow up meeting should be scheduled within 30 to 60 days to assess the progress. Be honest as to the observed improvement or lack thereof. Provide specific improvement expected and what consequences of if the performance does not change.

As a reminder, if the overall performance rating is “Needs Improvement” or “Unacceptable,” a **Performance Improvement Plan** must be completed and submitted with the Performance Management Form. For assistance creating a work improvement plan, please contact UTFI Human Resources.

**Emotional Situations** – An employee may react very strongly to a presented review. Crying, becoming silent or irate, being quick to agree or walking away may be reactions. Your reaction to the situation can smooth the situation. Empathize with the employee to let them know you care about them. Speak in low, even tones in an attempt to calm the employee. Suggest meeting at a later time once the employee has had time to compose themselves. If the employee has become silent do not push an issue. Ask questions that require an answer from them. If they won’t respond, request that they talk to resolve the situation. Reschedule the meeting at a time when attitudes may be different to have productive results. If the employee walks away, that may not be a bad reaction. Let them have time to calm and attempt to meet again. Shouting or becoming violent should not be tolerated. Speak calmly and firmly to the employee while not reacting through appearance of fear or agitation. Ask another supervisor to join the meeting.

**MANAGING FEEDBACK**

**Respect** the feedback the employee may present. Be a good listener. Follow-up on questions asked to get answers. Present the information back to the employee.

Developing a relationship of trust will enable all parties to confidently and effectively participate in the performance review process.

**CONCLUSION**

Open honest communication, fair assessments, employee participation, mutual cooperation and trust will achieve a successful performance management program. Without these components, performance won’t necessarily change and overall goals of the unit will be impacted.

Through the ongoing process, management on your part can make all a success. Coach throughout the year making sure expectations are clear and understood. Journal behaviors for performance management support. Document discussions and meetings held to reference for reviews or behavior issues which need addressing.

Consult Human Resources for assistance with any topics related to performance management. Assistance can be provided with the following:

* Completion of forms and wording prior to the performance review meetings;
* Resources for training and development for all staff;
* Guidance for addressing difficult situations related to habits and performance;
* Assistance in preparation and monitoring a Performance Improvement Plan; and,
* Assistance in initiating and managing a disciplinary plan as needed.

Additional information and resources may be found on line at [Performance Management](http://www.utfi.org/staff-resources/human-resources/performance-management/) or by contacting UTFI Human Resources at hr@utfi.org