



Completing Your Employee's Performance Appraisal

April 2009

This tutorial is designed to provide guidance to supervisors on how to most effectively and efficiently complete employee reviews. As a supervisor, one of your most important roles is to guide employee performance.

Review Cycle

The University remains committed to an employee review process in which each employee receives an evaluation each year.

Rider University employees are reviewed during the same review cycle. All reviews (with the exception of University Advancement) are due to Human Resources no later than the last day of June. (University advancement reviews are due to Human Resources the last day of July.)

HR will notify supervisors every April that their employees' reviews are due. Reviews (with the exception of University Advancement, as noted above) and the appraisal meetings are to be completed between the months of April and June.

Performance Appraisal Form

The Performance Appraisal Form is available on the Human Resources web site.

How To Complete The Form

Step 1: Access the form at:

[http://www.rider.edu/files/Performance Appraisal Form 2009.doc](http://www.rider.edu/files/Performance_Appraisal_Form_2009.doc)

Step 2: Complete Parts 1 (Employee Identification), 2 (Major Job Responsibilities) and 3 (Goals from Past Performance Cycle). This information is available on your employee's last performance appraisal. Please call HR (x5140) if you need help completing these sections. Review the "Major Job Responsibilities Section" and inform HR of any significant changes to job duties.

FOR NEW EMPLOYEES: If you did not establish goals at the time your new employee started, you will need to meet with your employee immediately and mutually determine what goals the employee and you agree were attempted this past year.

Step 3: Copy and save the form and forward it as an attachment to your employee, asking that Part 4 (Employee's Self-Appraisal) be completed. Give the employee a two (2) week deadline to complete this section.

Step 4: Once you receive the employee's self-appraisal, complete Parts 6 (Competency Assessment), 7 (Professional Strengths and Significant

Accomplishments), 8 (Areas for Development) and 9 (Overall Performance Assessment). This part of the review should take you about two weeks. Do not complete Part 11, which establishes the goals for the next review cycle. This section should be completed in partnership with your employee.

- Step 5: Set a mutually convenient time to meet with your employee to discuss the review.
- Step 6: Two days before the meeting, give a copy of the review to your employee to review prior to your meeting.
- Step 7: Meet with the employee to discuss the performance from the past year and to talk about goals for the upcoming year.
- Step 8: Employee and supervisor agree on goals, which employee notes on form in Part 11. If desired, employee completes Part 11 (Employee's Comments.)
- Step 9: Supervisor prints hard copy of the form for the employee to review, sign and date.
- Step 10: Supervisor signs and dates form, delivers a copy to Human Resources and gives a copy to the employee.

The entire review process should take no more than six to eight weeks.

WHY COMPLETE THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL?

One-On-One Time With Your Employee

This is a rare opportunity to have dedicated time to sit down with your employee and discuss at length your assessment of the employee's performance over the past year and the goals that you both have for the coming year. Many of the interactions we have with our employees during the week are in the form of directing work or tasks but not necessarily providing comprehensive and helpful feedback on performance.

Identifies Opportunities

Completing the performance appraisal and meeting with the employee will allow you and the employee to identify training and development needs relative to goal attainment and performance enhancement or correction. It is important that every employee's potential is optimized and aligned with the university's mission and direction.

Provides Documentation

Employee records must include information that is accurate and current regarding employee performance. This is particularly important relative to handling disciplinary actions.

Beneficial/Positive Experience

If done well, the annual performance process can be a beneficial and positive experience for both employee and supervisor. This is a chance for the supervisor to provide recognition for work well done but to also point out where there were problems with the employee's performance over the past year. All employees need feedback – both positive and negative – on their performance.

It is important to remember that the annual performance appraisal is the culminating once-a-year opportunity to review the employee's goals based on accomplishments. It should also be remembered that it is the supervisor's role is to provide employees with feedback throughout the year. The goal of performance appraisals is to guide performance so that good performance is repeated and poor performance is stopped or redirected.

HOW TO PREPARE TO COMPLETE YOUR EMPLOYEE'S REVIEW

- The preparation for completing your employee's next review starts the very first day following the last performance appraisal.
- Throughout the year, keep a file folder or electronic folder on your employee's performance. Whenever you receive a memo from or about your employee updating you on a project, place the memo in the folder. If you receive a commendation from another supervisor about your employee's performance, put this in the file. If you needed to discuss a performance problem with your employee, make a "note to file" and place this in the personal file you are maintaining on this employee. Be sure that your notes include dates and details.
- When it is time to complete the employee's review, you will only need to refer to the contents of this file, which will give you information on the employee's performance reflective of the entire year's review period. You'll be able to specifically note those areas of accomplishment and also those areas where performance was less than satisfactory.
- When completing the review, make sure to give specific examples in support of your evaluation designations. For example, if you give a "Needs Improvement" for "Attitude/Effective Relations," be specific about why. State, for example, that on (date), you observed the employee interacting in a rude manner with another employee. Likewise, if you, for example, give a "Distinguished," under "Leadership," be sure to refer to specific examples to support this grade. You could note that "I received a memo (dated) from a supervisor complementing you on your part in leading the inter-department team to a successful conclusion of the project."
- Remember you are trying to guide performance so you want to let the employee know specifically what behaviors and accomplishments you want repeated and those you do not.
- Employees, even if it's a poor review, will be more accepting if there are specifics and if they know that the supervisor cared enough to put time into the preparation.
- There should be no surprises in the review. Employees may not want to acknowledge what they're told when there are performance problems but it shouldn't be the first time they are hearing about the problem.

- If you note that an area in the “Competency Assessment” section as “Needs Improvement,” or “Unacceptable,” this opportunity for improvement must also be part of the “Areas for Development” and “Goals” sections.

******SPECIAL NOTE******

**OVERALL “NEEDS IMPROVEMENT”
OR “UNACCEPTABLE” RATINGS**

IF YOU ARE GIVING AN OVERALL RATING OF “NEEDS IMPROVEMENT” OR “UNACCEPTABLE”, YOU MUST CONTACT HUMAN RESOURCES BEFORE YOU GIVE THE EMPLOYEE THIS REVIEW.

OVERALL “DISTINGUISHED” RATING

IF YOU ARE GIVING AN OVERALL RATING OF “DISTINGUISHED” YOU WILL NEED TO MEET WITH AND RECEIVE APPROVAL FROM YOUR DIVISION HEAD FIRST BEFORE YOU GIVE THE EMPLOYEE THIS REVIEW.

HELPING YOUR EMPLOYEE SET GOALS

Goals Should Be Based On Job Description

Don't set goals outside of general parameters of the job's requirements; however, "stretch" goals are acceptable.

Tie Goals To Institution and Division Strategic Plans

Be sure that your employees are aware of your division's strategic goals and how these goals align with the university's mission and strategic goals. Supervisors should work with their employees to establish annual goals that, in some way, move the department, division and the university toward fulfilling its strategic mission.

Mutually Agreed Upon

The supervisor and employee should mutually agree on the goals that will be accomplished for the next year. You should encourage employee input so that the employee feels "ownership" of the goals.

Interim Progress Discussions

The supervisor and employee should agree on checkpoints where they can evaluate employee progress. This is a good opportunity to check to see if there has been progress toward goal attainment and if not, why not. Does the employee need more training, more tools, more support?

GOAL SETTING SMART Method

SPECIFIC

Spelled out clearly and in a concise manner

MEASURABLE

Outcome is capable of being appraised, proven or quantified

AGREED UPON

Employee must be aware of your expectations and must have input

REALISTIC

Must be challenging and achievable for the individual according to the person's capabilities

TRACKABLE

Must be able to monitor progress and set a time frame for completion

10 BIGGEST APPRAISAL MISTAKES

10. Halo Effect

Supervisor sees employee as inherently good and ignores evidence that might suggest otherwise. Instead of correcting, the supervisor covers for employee and may even offer excuses for declining performance.

9. Horns Effect

Supervisor has formed an impression that the employee is bad and is unreasonably harsh in assessing the employee. Supervisor may always be ready to criticize and undermine employee.

8. Central Tendency

Supervisor gives middle of the road ratings (satisfactory, adequate, meets all requirements) regardless of actual performance. This often happens if the supervisor is afraid of confrontation and the repercussions in giving a poor, although accurate, assessment.

7. Using Generalities

Supervisor does not utilize documentation gathered over the last review cycle to specifically note accomplishments or areas of improvement. The employee will not have examples as motivation to continue good work or correct poor work.

6. Evaluation Inflation

Supervisor gives an evaluation above what it should be because of a fear of the employee's reaction.

5. Leniency Error

Supervisor wants to be liked and purposely rates very liberally, ignoring or downplaying problem areas.

4. Severity Error

Supervisor follows a set of standards too strict so that goals are not obtainable. Often this supervisor will utilize an authoritarian method of evaluation where there is little or no employee input.

3. Timing or Recency Error

Supervisor bases assessment too heavily on recent events, not taking into account the entire evaluation period. Actions (good or bad) that took place earlier in the review period are ignored or forgotten. The supervisor bases the assessment on events occurring early in the cycle, giving these events (good or bad) unfair weight in comparison to the employee's overall performance during entire cycle.

2. Positive & Negative Stereotyping

Supervisor prejudices the employee without regard to actual performance. It is imperative that employee performance be evaluated relative to work performance and not related to any other factor, such as race, religion, age, gender, or sexual orientation.

AND THE NUMBER 1 BIGGEST MISTAKE THAT SUPERVISORS CAN MAKE WHEN APPRAISING AN EMPLOYEE IS:

1. NOT COMPLETING THE REVIEW

If the supervisor does not complete the annual appraisal or completes a review that indicates that little time, effort or interest was put into it, the employee may assume disinterest.

In the absence of a review, it is unlikely that poor performance will improve. For strong employees, not having a comprehensive and thoughtful review is often demoralizing and may result in a diminishment of previous level of accomplishment, or sadly, the loss of valuable talent for the University.

THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL MEETING

SET THE STAGE

Put the employee at ease

Review the objectives of the meeting

Outline the structure and steps of the process

Emphasize that you want the employee's participation

No interruptions, no phone calls, e-mails; this is the employee's
time

LISTEN

Allow the employee to explain self-evaluation

Do not judge or criticize

Allow/encourage the employee to talk

Rule of thumb: employee talks 80%, you talk 20%

Do not interrupt

Clarify with questions

Ask open-ended questions

RESPOND

Agree or disagree as appropriate, indicating where and why

Compliment good performance

Note poor performance

Present facts and documentation to support comments

Be prepared for defense mechanisms such as anger, crying,
blaming others

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Agree upon a plan

Set time table and establish control points

Outline responsibilities

OVERALL DISTINGUISHED RATING

An overall “Distinguished” rating will be considered for an employee who has:

- Provided a unique contribution during the past year in support of the institutional mission
- Furthered the mission of the department or vision through program development, design or implementation
- Provided exemplary service beyond the high standards already expected of Rider Employees