

Performance Review

Documents: Checklists and forms to help employers conduct effective performance appraisals

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Preparing for Performance Reviews

- *Recording Employee Performance Checklist*
- *Anticipating the Review Checklist*

Recording Employee Performance

Relying on memory to make informed performance reviews can lead to inaccurate, incomplete assessments. Instead, establish a tracking system that captures relevant information throughout the review period. Check yourself on the following:

	Yes	No	Not Sure
1. A performance log is maintained on the employee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The performance log includes a copy of the employee's job description.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Entries reflect behavior associated with job requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

You may include observations regarding non-job-related behavior, but you should evaluate them in light of job requirements. For example, the fact that Ruth can use a computer graphics program could be noted; but if computer graphics is not part of her responsibility, her frequent use of the program may be a cause for concern.

4. Examples of positive and negative employee behavior are regularly recorded in the employee log.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Every entry is supported by factual observations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Employee logs are updated at least once a week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recording only negative incidents will unfairly bias your evaluation. Make a point to note instances of satisfactory and superlative performance as well. One way to ensure balanced reporting is to update employee logs on a regular basis, rather than waiting for a specific incident to happen.

7. Each entry in the employee log is dated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Details such as time, date and day can help you detect patterns that may indicate an underlying problem before it becomes entrenched.

8. Only observations are recorded in employee logs. I don't write down judgments, opinions or guesses about the cause of behavior or include second-hand information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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9. No references to gender, age, race, ethnicity,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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physical ability or health are included in the employee log.

10. Employee logs are kept secure in a locked drawer or password-encoded computer file.



Employee logs can be subpoenaed in the event an employee challenges a personal decision. Any information that might suggest discrimination could be used against you. Likewise, employee logs should be treated as confidential and restricted from access by unauthorized personnel.

Anticipating the Review

How you approach the review session will affect your success in communicating your assessment of employee performance. The right attitude and careful planning can make the review less stressful and much more productive. To gauge your preparedness, respond to the following statements:

	Yes	No	Not Sure
1. I look forward to performance evaluations as an opportunity to sit down with my employees, discuss performance problems, make improvements and set new goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having a positive attitude will make the review important and productive.			
2. I prepare an agenda and bring all of the necessary materials to the review.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparing for the review helps reduce stress and ensures the discussion will flow smoothly.			
3. I schedule the review well in advance, at a time convenient for both of us.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I allow at least two hours to conduct each review.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Interruptions are kept to a minimum.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Reviews are held in a neutral location, such as a conference room.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The timing, setting and duration of the interview affect your concentration and the employee's ability to stay focused. Reviews should be conducted in a neutral environment, without distraction or pressure to finish too quickly. Your employees will appreciate your efforts, and you'll notice that reviews are much less stressful when conducted in a business-like manner.

Conducting Performance Reviews

- *Model Performance Appraisal Form*
- *Discussing Performance Problems Checklist*

Model Performance Appraisal

Date:

Employee:

Department:

Position:

Period covered by this review: From: To:

Manager:

Purpose of This Evaluation & Development Review

Evaluating The Past

Part I is the general evaluation OF PAST PERFORMANCE section; its focus is the past performance of the employee (the time period covered by this appraisal). Performance is evaluated on both specific and general job performance areas.

Assessing Employee Performance Potential

Part II is the DEVELOPMENT section; its focus is on job accomplishments and on how well the employee met performance goals from the previous appraisal period. The achievement of past goals and job accomplishments (or lack thereof) indicates the employee's current strengths and development needs.

Summarizing Overall Performance

Part III is the OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING section; its focus is on looking at each segment of the employee's performance and reaching an overall performance rating. This section allows both the employee and the manager to make comments about both individual assessments area, as well as the overall assessment rating.

Setting Future Performance Goals

Part IV is the FUTURE GOALS section; its focus is on setting goals to be achieved before the next review, including the strategies to be implemented for the future development of the employee, as well as any corrective actions needed.

PART I — GENERAL EVALUATION OF PAST PERFORMANCE

Instructions: Select and define the job performance areas (JPAs) that are critical to the successful performance of the job. There may be only a few key ones, or as many as 10. These should be both job-specific areas and general performance areas. Tailor JPAs to your organization's job standards and requirements. (**Note:** Five general JPAs are provided. You can use them as is, tailor them to your needs, or subtract and add others.)

Give each JPA a weighted percent number indicating its importance in achieving job success. **Note:** The total of all JPA percentages, both specific and general, must equal 100%. Next, use a rating scale (5 = highest; 1 = lowest) to rate each employee on each JPA. In order to explain the reasoning behind each specific job area rating, define the performance level required to reach each rating level. Then, multiply the JPA weight by the employee rating. (**Example:** Initiative weight 30% x rating 3 = points 90.) The total will give you a benchmark to evaluate and compare employees. The maximum number of points an employee can achieve with 10 JPAs is 500.

JPA	Weight	x Rating	= Points
<p>Specific</p> <p>1.</p> <p>A. Outstanding = 5 and defined as:</p> <p>B. Above average = 4 and defined as:</p> <p>C. Average = 3 and defined as:</p> <p>D. Below average = 2 and defined as:</p> <p>E. Unacceptable = 1 and defined as:</p>			
<p>2.</p> <p>A. Outstanding = 5 and defined as:</p> <p>B. Above average = 4 and defined as:</p> <p>C. Average = 3 and defined as:</p> <p>D. Below average = 2 and defined as:</p> <p>E. Unacceptable = 1 and defined as:</p>			
<p>3.</p> <p>A. Outstanding = 5 and defined as:</p> <p>B. Above average = 4 and defined as:</p> <p>C. Average = 3 and defined as:</p> <p>D. Below average = 2 and defined as:</p> <p>E. Unacceptable = 1 and defined as:</p>			
<p>4.</p> <p>A. Outstanding = 5 and defined as:</p> <p>B. Above average = 4 and defined as:</p>			

JPA	Weight	x Rating	= Points
C. Average = 3 and defined as: D. Below average = 2 and defined as: E. Unacceptable = 1 and defined as:			
5. A. Outstanding = 5 and defined as: B. Above average = 4 and defined as: C. Average = 3 and defined as: D. Below average = 2 and defined as: E. Unacceptable = 1 and defined as:			
Total for Specific JPAs:			
<p>General</p> <p>For each of the five categories below, use the following rating scale:</p> <p>Outstanding = 5</p> <p>Above average = 4</p> <p>Average = 3</p> <p>Below average = 2</p> <p>Unacceptable = 1</p>			
<p>6. Job knowledge</p> <p>Defined as:</p> <p>Comments:</p>			

JPA	Weight	x Rating	= Points
<p>7. Dependability</p> <p>Defined as:</p> <p>Comments:</p>			
<p>8. Initiative</p> <p>Defined as:</p> <p>Comments:</p>			
<p>9. Adaptability</p> <p>Defined as:</p> <p>Comments:</p>			
<p>10. Cooperation</p> <p>Defined as:</p> <p>Comments:</p>			
Total for General JPAs:			
Total for Both Specific and General JPAs:			

PART II — DEVELOPMENT

1. List important **job accomplishments** since the last performance appraisal. Each success suggests what key performance strengths?

A.

Strength(s):

B.

Strength(s):

C.

Strength(s):

D.

Strength(s):

E.

Strength(s):

*Overall **job accomplishment** rating:*

Outstanding Above Average Average Marginal Unacceptable

2. List the **performance goals** agreed upon at the last review. After the goal, indicate whether the employee surpassed, met or failed to meet the goal.

A.

Surpassed Met Failed to meet

B.

Surpassed Met Failed to meet

C.

Surpassed Met Failed to meet

D.

Surpassed Met Failed to meet

E.

Surpassed Met Failed to meet

Overall achievement of **performance goal** rating:

Outstanding Above Average Average Marginal Unacceptable

Part III — Overall Performance Rating

1. Total points from **both Specific and General JPAs** in Part I:

- Outstanding: 500-400 points
- Above Average: 399-300 points
- Average: 299-200 points
- Marginal: 199-100 points
- Unacceptable: 99 points and below

2. Overall **job accomplishment** rating (as indicated in Part II):

Outstanding Above Average Average Marginal Unacceptable

3. Overall achievement of **performance goal** rating (as indicated in Part II):

Outstanding Above Average Average Marginal Unacceptable

4. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

After reviewing both specific and general job performance areas, job accomplishments, and the achievement of past performance goals, the employee's overall performance is rated as:

Outstanding Above Average Average Marginal Unacceptable

Manager comments:

Employee comments:

Part IV — Future Goals

1. For any previously agreed upon goals the employee failed to meet by this appraisal period, outline the necessary corrective actions. (If the employee is already on a performance improvement plan, insert the mandatory actions from the plan itself into the chart below.)

Failed Goal	Corrective Action	Progress Will Be Reviewed On	Improvement Must Be Seen By	Employee Role	Manager Role

2. During the next appraisal period, the employee will aim to meet these goals.

Goal	Implementation Method	Employee Role	Manager Role

Manager signature:

Date:

Employee signature:

Discussing Performance Problems

How you approach a discussion of performance problems will influence the employee's reactions. Employees are far more likely to accept your assessment and commit to an improvement plan if you present the problems fairly, cite specific examples and suggest a means of bringing performance back in line. Answer the following:

	Yes	No	Not Sure
1. Performance problems are acknowledged openly, without window dressing or acrimony.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Problems are illustrated with specific examples of employee behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The discussion focuses on the results desired from the employee's efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The employee is not blamed for poor performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The employee is given the opportunity to respond to charges of unsatisfactory performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. For every problem identified, an improvement plan is presented and discussed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Specific, realistic goals for improvement are set according to a reasonable timetable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The employee is provided with the resources necessary to improve performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Through words and actions, you communicate your faith in the employee's ability to improve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. You commit to assisting the employee in every way necessary to improve performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Following up After Performance Reviews

- *Problem Analysis and Corrective Action Plan*
- *Performance Appraisal Follow-Up Form*

Problem Analysis and Corrective Action Plan

1) Is it a training problem?

What training was received?

Was employee asked if training was adequate?

Was same training given as in previous situations?

COURSE OF ACTION:

2) Is it a selection/recruitment problem?

What were requirements for selection?

Methods of recruitment?

Is present selection process adequate for current needs?

If not, what changes are necessary to improve the process?

COURSE OF ACTION:

3) Is it a clarity problem, e.g., job description, job expectations?

Does job description accurately cover day-to-day job responsibilities?

Is employee kept informed about what expectations are?

If employee is not meeting expectations, is there a clear route to help him/her get on track?

COURSE OF ACTION:

4) Does the employee understand the policy?

Is policy clearly communicated to all employees?

Is there a way to check to make sure policy is being followed in all workplace situations?

Does the policy adequately cover all areas of the business?

COURSE OF ACTION:

5) Is it a personal problem?

Could there be an off-the-job reason for the problem?

Have there been any reports of such problems?

Does employee show any signs of stress?

COURSE OF ACTION:

6) Am I the problem?

Have I treated the employee differently from others?

Do I expect too much from the employee?

COURSE OF ACTION:

Performance Appraisal Follow-Up

Employee:

Manager:

Today's date:

Date last appraised:

Part I – Progress Since Last Appraisal

Area(s) employee agreed to improve on:

Progress made:

Reason(s) for any difficulties:

Part II – Plan For Further Progress

Area(s) employee should continue to work on:

Specific steps employee can take:

Specific steps manager can take to assist employee progress:

Bonus: *Performance Appraisal Checklist*

Performance Appraisal Checklist

Before The Appraisal Interview

- Prepare for the interview by filling out the appraisal form and setting objectives for the interview, including areas you think the employee should improve.
- Check the appraisal form for accuracy and completeness. Don't leave comment sections blank. Write something meaningful and specific to the employee's performance. Be wary, though, of making the comments too vague or too specific or writing something from which the employee could draw an erroneous conclusion.
- If you've skipped certain criteria on the appraisal form, check that you have a solid business reason for doing so. For example, not evaluating an employee who works by himself on teamwork skills.
- Find a private place to conduct the interview where interruptions and phone calls are unlikely.
- Select a seating arrangement that will encourage discussion by presenting you as a helpful counselor, rather than an authority figure.
- Choose a time that will facilitate a proper interview. Generally, mid-morning is the ideal time.

During The Appraisal Interview

- Keep the interview focused on comparing the employee's performance with the standards and goals previously established.
- Review performance standards early in the meeting.
- Discuss disagreements, and take legitimate mitigating circumstances into account when making your final evaluation.
- Make your final decision and explain how you reached it. Tell the employee how to appeal your judgment if he/she disagrees.
- Review expected corrections to performance problems in detail, making sure the employee knows exactly what to expect.
- Make a note of corrections on the appraisal form and have the employee sign it.

- Listen to employees who have an inclination to talk and attempt to draw out conversation in employees who are not as forthcoming.
- Use the silent treatment to inspire employees to speak, and keep the conversation directed to the appraisal process.
- Ask open-ended questions that require thoughtful responses.
- Offer reticent employees a choice when asking questions in an attempt to elicit extended responses.
- Restate what the employee has told you to get the employee to expand on a complaint, to show that you care and have been listening to what the employee has to say, and to make sure you have heard the problem correctly.
- Link employee performance goals directly to company goals.

After The Appraisal Interview

- Provide a steady stream of feedback outside the annual performance appraisal interview.
- Empower employees to set their own performance goals through the year.
- Give employees the direction and guidance they need to correct performance weaknesses, but don't dwell on them.
- Keep track of feedback concerning the employee's performance that comes from co-workers, subordinates, and customers.
- Connect results to rewards to show the tie between improved performance and personal satisfaction.
- Provide employees with the tools and skills needed to succeed, e.g., training, equipment.
- Solicit specific feedback by asking employees how they will complete new projects and incorporate them into their other responsibilities.
- Communicate on regular basis what the employee has done wrong, as well as mention what the employee has done right.
- Give examples of both positive and negative performance results.
- Conduct formal performance interviews on a regular basis.

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