

APSU

*Conducting Effective  
Performance Appraisals*

*A Leadership Responsibility*

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Presented by

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## **Objective for Today:**

To explore the components of performance management at APSU in an effort to enable and encourage greater mutual understanding of this important responsibility, its risks, and its benefits to the organization

*Is performance management important or necessary at APSU?*

## **Getting Started . . .**

1. When we think of performance management, what generally comes to mind?
2. What exactly is performance management?
3. How can performance management benefit employees?
4. How can it benefit you, as a manager or supervisor?
5. How can it benefit APSU?
6. Why do performance management initiatives fail?
7. As a leadership team, how much priority should be placed on performance management?
8. As a member of the leadership team at APSU what are the greatest performance management challenges that you face?

## **The Value of Employee Appraisal:**

1. Motivational – recognition for work performed, challenging goals set which will give the employee an opportunity to achieve, building a strong relationship based on mutual confidence, and providing opportunity to give praise, strokes, and recognition.
2. Administrative – provide objective data for salary decisions, promotion, transfer, terminations, etc.
3. Informative – discussion of mutual expectations, past performance and goals achievement, recognition of an individual's needs and value system, feedback on supervisory style.
4. Developmental – identification of strengths and weaknesses, development goals and strategies determined, help employees improve their performance.

## **It's true! People *really* work better when they know:**

- What they are suppose to do
- What authority they have
- What their relationships with other people are
- What the performance standards and objectives are
- What they are doing exceptionally well
- What their major weaknesses are
- That there are equitable rewards for good work
- That what they are doing is of value
- That the supervisor has an interest in and concern for them
- That the supervisor wants to have the employee succeed and progress

*In which of the areas above might you need to provide clarity with anyone who reports directly to you?*

# **Fundamentals of Effective Performance Appraisals**

## **Definitions of a Performance Review/Appraisal:**

-A team meeting scheduled to review commonly agreed upon goals, discuss employee's contribution, explore necessary work performance adjustments, agree upon short- and long-range goals, actions and support, and to communicate salary decisions

-An evaluator's opinion of an employee's performance – BUT it is an opinion that is supported by fact. Effective performance evaluations provide specific details and explanations to support an evaluator's conclusions.

*In order for performance evaluations to be considered objective and legal, they must be based on measurable and observable behaviors.*

## **2 Types of Performance Expectations:**

1. Performance standards (such as standards of conduct) – These are general statements that communicate actions or behaviors that are acceptable, that typically apply to everyone, and that serve as minimum requirements. Examples would include: attendance and punctuality, proper attire, teamwork, etc. These expectations will not likely change.
2. Performance objectives – These define expectations that are relevant to specific job functions, that are more closely related to results, and that are more linked to the goals of the department and/or the organization. These expectations may change at least annually.

*Not all performance appraisal models incorporate both types of performance expectations, but the most sophisticated and comprehensive models incorporate both types.*

## **Different Types of Rating Systems:**

- Nonmathematical
  - Use phrases to describe performance
- Mathematical
  - Non-weighted
  - Weighted
- Essay
- 360-Degree or Multi-rater Appraisals
- Performance-based Pay Models
- Others

## **Tools for Performance Appraisal (all written and dated):**

- Job Description
- Performance standards and/or objectives
- Goals (measurable and dated)
- Incident file (feedback file – letters, reports, documentation of events and actions)

## **Skills Practice**

### ***Preparing to Evaluate***

- What should we be evaluating?
- What are the general expectations or performance standards at APSU?
- How do I define performance objectives for each individual?

## ***Performance management is a process, not an event!***

There are six steps in the performance management process. They are not linear and may overlap, but each is essential.

1. Performance planning
2. Ongoing performance communication
3. Data gathering, observing, documenting
4. Performance appraisal/review
5. Performance diagnosis and problem-solving
6. Action and follow-through

*Key Question:*

**What is the purpose or objective of the Performance Appraisal at APSU?**

\_\_\_\_\_ To weed out poor performance

\_\_\_\_\_ To recognize the so-called "A" players

\_\_\_\_\_ To provide the basis for compensation decisions

\_\_\_\_\_ To provide clues to future opportunity within the organization

\_\_\_\_\_ To map out an individual plan for personal development

## Recognizing the Most Common Rater Errors

- **Taking it personally** – This happens when managers over-identify with the job or employee they are trying to be objective about. In other words, managers become too subjective and lost their capacity to be critical. This can happen on a day-to-day basis, as well as at performance appraisal time. To overcome this error, you need to acknowledge your personal feelings about people who work for you (denying them only makes it worse) and then set those feelings aside as much as you can.
- **Fearing employees' reactions** – When managers base their assessments of employees on how they think employees will perceive their evaluations. Being aware of employees' perceptions is appropriate, but being overly concerned with employees' reactions could taint your evaluation. In a sense, the manager is putting the employee in charge of the appraisal process. Again, the solution calls for you as a manager to acknowledge your fears and concerns and then turn your attention to the actual results of each employee. You want to focus on outcomes and behaviors, not personalities.
- **Over generalizing** – When managers allow a single dimension of an employee's performance to affect the overall assessment; This takes two forms: generalizing performance in an overly positive way, and generalizing it in an overly negative way.
- **Focusing on recent work** – This occurs when you let an employee's recent behavior overwhelmingly shape your evaluation of his or her performance for the entire appraisal period. This is where having a performance management system in place is invaluable.

*Have you been there?*

## **Tips for Documenting Performance:**

- Use the system
- Make effective use of goals and objectives
- Make effective use of the job description
- Provide consistent feedback
- Document performance as a matter of routine
- Focus on behavior, not on people

*It is important for performance appraisal documentation to justify the ratings. Otherwise, what risks do we assume?*

### **4 things performance appraisal documentation should include:**

- Performance  
The employee's performance of his or her job requirements against a certain set of standards
- Potential  
The potential of this employee to assume more responsibility
- Deficiencies  
Any shortcomings of the individual that need to be corrected
- Actions  
Training or assistance that will help the employee correct problem areas or simply develop professionally

*Always try to use specific examples when documenting performance.*

## Skills Practice

### *Documenting Performance*

Which of the following statements should not be included in a performance evaluation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Tom learned how to use the new software in less than one week.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tom organizes his work carefully and sets priorities.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tom is unprofessional.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tom has arrived to work late four times in a one-month period.

How would you change the following examples of performance appraisal documentation to appropriately make them more specific?

“Is a team player”

“Is great with students”

“Doesn’t focus enough on details”

“His work is too slow”

“Mary has a bad attitude.”