

Performance Evaluation Program

Introduction

Purpose/Philosophy

The APSU community, through its Performance Evaluation Program, recognizes and respects the voice and value of every member of its work and learning environment. This program aims to create and maintain an interrelated, respectful, effective, diverse, user-friendly work environment by:

- Promoting and building on-going dialogue/communication between employee and supervisor that is clear and which establishes expected job-relevant performance standards that are understood and acknowledged.
- Applying standards consistently in evaluating the work of all employees in their assigned position while assisting the employee to advance and improve.
- Providing the opportunity for the employee and supervisor to create customized performance factors that objectively appraise an employee's work.
- Encouraging self-improvement, enhanced skill levels and the acquisition of new knowledge by an employee.
- Documenting and delineating areas of required employee improvements by defined criteria and timelines for the demonstration of improvement.
- Ensuring that personnel decisions are made in a timely manner and in congruency with the performance evaluations.
- Creating and advising employees of a process for rebuttal.

Procedures

1. Annual performance evaluations are conducted during April of each year. The evaluation period is April of the previous calendar year through March of the current calendar year.
2. The probationary evaluation process begins at the end of the fifth month of employment for new employees (or employees moving to a new position). **It is critical that the probationary evaluation is completed and returned to HR by the due date.** Human Resources will notify the evaluating supervisor at the beginning of the sixth month of employment of the due date of the probationary evaluation. A friendly reminder will be sent weekly until the evaluation is received. If the evaluation has not been submitted to HR by the final week, the notice will be copied to the appropriate Vice President/Senior Administrator.

If the evaluating supervisor has not completed his/her six month probationary period, either the interim replacement or the supervisor's supervisor must complete the evaluation.

Please note: Failure by the supervisor to complete the probationary evaluation does not extend the employee's probationary period.

3. New supervisors who have not been in their current position for at least six months when evaluations are due should wait until they have been in the position for six months before evaluating their employees.

4. Evaluation forms may be completed on-line and downloaded by department personnel when ready for signature. All signatures must be original.
5. Human Resources will notify departments annually (at the beginning of April) when evaluations are due.
6. Vice Presidents and Senior Administrators will ensure that all evaluations are completed during the scheduled month.
7. Completed evaluations will be signed by the employee, the evaluator and the evaluator's supervisor. Completed evaluations will be forwarded to Human Resources to be maintained in the official personnel file.
8. Job descriptions should be reviewed jointly between the employee and the supervisor during the evaluation period. Any changes should be attached to the evaluation and forwarded to Human Resources to incorporate into the job description for the next rating period. Current job descriptions are available on the HR webpage at:
http://www.apsu.edu/Hrhomepage/job_descriptions.htm.

Definitions of Ratings

The definition for each rating is shown on the appropriate evaluation form.

Performance Evaluation forms may be downloaded from the HR website at:
<http://www.apsu.edu/Hrhomepage/evaluation/>.

There are three separate and unique evaluation forms:

Administrative Employees' Performance Evaluation – This form should be completed for exempt employees (paid on the monthly payroll) **who report directly to the President or a Vice-President.**

Professional Employees' Performance Evaluation – This form should be completed for exempt employees (paid on the monthly payroll) **who report to someone other than the President or a Vice-President.**

Clerical/Support Employees' Performance Evaluation – This form should be completed for non-exempt employees (all employees paid on the semi-monthly payroll).

Documentation to support ratings of "1", "2", or "5" must be included. Documentation should contain specific dated information, rather than vague general statements. Prior counseling information should be included and attached to the evaluation form.

Each form has an option to be used as a self-evaluation. Supervisors have the option to require that employees complete a self-evaluation as a component of their evaluation/discussion with the employee.

An evaluation of the supervisor is no longer a part of the performance evaluation process.

Avoiding Common Rating Errors

To be fair and equitable, a performance appraisal must be based on the employee's job-related behavior, not on personal traits and not on a comparison to other employees. In order to be considered objective, the appraisal must be based upon measureable and observable behaviors.

	What to Do	What Not to Do
Contrast Effect	Rate employees against the standards of the job.	Don't evaluate employees in comparison to others. <i>Ex: "No, he doesn't really deserve an "outstanding" rating, but compared to the other employees, he really stands out."</i>
First Impression	Weigh evidence fairly	Don't let your initial positive/negative judgment of an employee color your later appraisal. <i>Ex: A new supervisor noted one employee who was going through a divorce performing poorly. Within a month, the employee's performance had returned to its previous high level, but the supervisor's opinion of the person's performance was negatively affected by the initial negative impression.</i>
Halo/Horns Effect	Look at all aspects of your employee's work.	Don't make inappropriate generalizations from one aspect of an employee's performance to other areas of that person's performance. <i>Ex: Employee A was outstanding in his ability to repair equipment. His excellence in this area led his supervisor to rate him highly in unrelated areas where his performance was mediocre.</i>
Similar-To-Me Effect	Respect differences in talents among your staff.	Don't rate employees who resemble you more highly than you rate others. <i>Ex: Supervisor A was a single mother, had worked hard and been promoted to supervisor. She unconsciously rated several women who were also single parents higher than their performance warranted.</i>
Negative/Positive Skew	Be honest—it's only fair! A dishonest evaluation could create problems for you later if there are actual performance or behavior problems.	Don't rate employees higher or lower than their performance warrants. <i>Ex: "No one in my department will get higher than "satisfactory" because I want them to have something to strive for."</i>
Recency Effect	The evaluation period covers a full year. <u>Keep a file for your employee and drop notes into it throughout the year.</u> Notes should include positive as well as negative behaviors. This will make the evaluation process much easier. Ask your employees to also maintain a record of accomplishments and	Don't allow minor, recent events to have more influence on the rating than those occurring throughout the annual review period. <i>Ex: Because Supervisor C doesn't keep notes of the overall performance or important incidents of his employees' work, he can't remember examples from more than two months ago when he sits down to do their performance appraisals.</i>

	discuss these accomplishments during the appraisal.	
Stereotyping	Recognize individual differences between your employees.	Be careful to not generalize about members of a group and ignore individual differences. <i>Ex: Although Employee B is the youngest staff member in the unit, he's one of the most dependable. However, Supervisor C rates the older, more experienced staff higher than Employee B because he has fewer years in the job.</i>
Frame of Reference Error	Rate your employee based upon the job description or written performance standards.	Be careful to not compare an employee's performance to your own personal standards. <i>Ex: Supervisor D rates Employee C as "satisfactory" on attendance. "Although Employee C has used his leave time appropriately, Supervisor D feels that only 100% attendance warrants a higher rating."</i>
Fear of Employees' Reactions	Be honest! Be aware of employees' perceptions; however, acknowledge your fears and concerns and then turn your attention to the actual results of each employee. Focus on outcomes and behaviors, not personalities.	Don't rate employees in the middle of the scale if their performance clearly warrants a significantly higher or lower rating. Don't be overly concerned with their reactions, which could taint your evaluation. This essentially puts the employee in charge of the appraisal process. <i>Ex: Supervisor B's desire to avoid conflict led him to evaluate all employees he supervised as "satisfactory."</i>
Taking it Personally	Be objective; acknowledge your personal feelings about employees who work for you and then set those feelings aside as much as possible.	Don't over-identify with the job or employee and lose your capacity to be objective and critical when necessary.