




Tips for Conducting Performance Evaluations

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF IN PREPARATION FOR A PERFORMANCE INTERVIEW



- What results do I want?
- What contribution is my employee making?
- What contribution should my employee be making?
- Is my employee working near or at his or her potential?
- What are my employee's strengths which could be built upon?
- Does my employee know, clearly, what is expected of him or her?
- What training, job restructuring or additional support might help my employee grow?
- How has my performance or others' performance helped or hindered my employee's performance?
- How can I best help my employee help himself or herself in the coming year?

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- ➡ The evaluation interview is a review of my employee's performance from my objective perspective. I want to take into consideration how my employee views his or her performance and acknowledge this, but it is not a joint evaluation process. I should not put myself in a situation to spend most of the interview defending my objective perspective. My employee should know how I arrived at my ratings but not as a cross-examiner. Reasonable minds can differ without being unfair or untruthful. I need to let go of the need to convince my employee that I am right.
- ➡ Have in mind a core or single-most important message I want to communicate to my employee, which I can reinforce at various times during the interview.
- ➡ Start on a positive note. Establish a sincere, open and friendly atmosphere. Explaining the process often helps reduce anxiety, also.
- ➡ Discuss accomplishments and strengths first.
- ➡ Base discussion as much as possible on first hand, observed behavior or data available to both parties. Avoid unfavorable and subjective hearsay. Keep it concrete.
- ➡ Listen with full attention to my employee and be open to his or her explanations, but don't be diverted by excuses.



- ➡ Ask questions to gain better understanding.
- ➡ Be willing to make adjustments to scores based on honest insights from the interview process.
- ➡ Stay on track and minimize the discussion on unrelated or side-track topics. Don't get bogged down on one area. Use good time management with examples, rather than exhaustive dialogue. If I have an hour, I want to be done in an hour. Plan time accordingly.
- ➡ If notes will be taken, and they usually are a good idea, make sure my employee understands that notes are needed to help recall, since I will be conducting many interviews with direct reports.
- ➡ Avoid references which could be perceived as personalized attacks.
- ➡ Be aware of how I present myself. Avoid body language which can chill candor or discussion. I need to be my employee's role model.

PLANNING FOR THE NEXT PERFORMANCE CYCLE

Look at the interview as a tool for guiding the future direction of my employee's area.



Set goals to align my employee's work with the needs of the division or university.



Endeavor to build on strengths.



Seek to develop my employee's knowledge, skills and abilities and motivate him or her to do better.

BRINGING CLOSURE TO THE INTERVIEW



Signal my intention to close the discussion.

Summarize the key points discussed.

Summarize agreements.

End on a positive note.

Thank the employee for their participation in the interview process.

CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW WITH A STRUGGLING EMPLOYEE

- ➡ Ask for suggestions from my employee on what he or she might do differently in the future to achieve better results – understanding that the most effective way to create change is to create it in the environment my employee has best control over – his own.
- ➡ Offer my help.
- ➡ Focus on specific behaviors and the quality of work I want from my employee.
- ➡ Make sure goals and objectives are measurable, specific, quantifiable, and written.
- ➡ Make sure goals and objectives are reasonable and the necessary resources and commitment are available for my employee to accomplish them.
- ➡ If I sense the discussion sliding into combat, move on. Beating a dead horse will just make things worse.



KEYS TO MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES TO DO THEIR BEST

- ➡ Give my employee interesting, challenging work.
- ➡ Give my employee credit for doing it and give him or her the knowledge that I recognize and appreciate the added value he or she gives the university.
- ➡ Involve my employee in the “how” things will be done, rather than imposing the structure.
- ➡ Give my employee the support and tools they need to be successful.
- ➡ Give my employee the sense that he or she is part of the team and not alone.
- ➡ Show patience with failure. It is normally part of the growth phase. Allow my employee to risk failure within reasonable parameters.
- ➡ Allow my employee to be an individual.



CONTACT INFORMATION



If you have any questions or would like to talk more about strategies to conduct performance evaluations, please contact Scott Sherman, Director of Organizational Development, at 610-436-3380 or ssherman@wcupa.edu.