



# Performance Management Program

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## *Performance Planning & Evaluation*

Performance Planning and Evaluations are a shared responsibility for both managers and staff, and are a key component of performance development. UMass Lowell policy states that staff should have an annual written performance evaluation and conversation. Many of you have started, or will shortly, be engaging with your staff regarding Performance Planning and Evaluations, and we want to share guidelines for success.

Effective Performance Management here at UMass Lowell, begins with respect for one another and ends with excellence in performance. It is the responsibility of every supervisor to communicate on an ongoing basis with their staff. These conversations should provide clear and honest role expectations and feedback and should identify goals and development.

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

At UMass Lowell, our mission is to enhance the intellectual, personal and cultural development of our students through excellent, affordable educational programs. We seek to meet the needs of the Commonwealth today and into the future and support the development of sustainable technologies and communities through our unique focus on teaching, research, scholarship and engagement.

UMass Lowell's Performance Management Program is intended to help employees recognize their own potential contribution to the University in supporting our mission, participate in continuous feedback and support, and remain flexible to accommodate situational changes. Performance management will also help achieve individual, department, and University-wide results by:

- opening the lines of communication and promoting a work environment in which goals are set and achieved through working together;
  - providing the tools to identify and recognize good performance;
  - maximizing individuals' potential by developing their skills and talents;
  - coaching performance at different levels; and
  - providing the tools to plan, maintain and continuously improve future performance.
- Every aspect of the Performance Management Program is intended to facilitate communication between supervisor and employee.

In order for this Program to be effective, all supervisors and employees will receive training. Employees need to understand the Performance Management Program and the expectations in their own jobs to improve their performance; supervisors need to learn how to improve their coaching and motivating skills. All members of the UMass Lowell community need to learn how to give and receive feedback effectively.

## ***WHAT IS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT?***

Performance management is a set of strategies and actions designed to develop and utilize all of the individual talents that exist in the University to achieve optimal results.

Performance management is an ongoing process that facilitates the planning, coaching and evaluating of employee performance. It is designed to promote a collaborative and developmental approach in planning and achieving workplace priorities as well as the identification of successes and of any areas for performance development.

Many organizations *evaluate* performance - evaluate performance results and behaviors. Performance management allows organizations to *manage* performance with employees working throughout the year to plan, monitor and develop the expected results and behaviors. The performance evaluation is just part of the performance management process.

The University, in collaboration with Bargaining Unit Leadership, has created a performance planning and evaluation form to facilitate this process. This is based on a set of performance categories which are university-wide behaviors and responsibilities that all employees are expected to exhibit. Expanded descriptions of the performance categories and evaluation criteria begin on page 11.

Specifically, the performance management process involves:

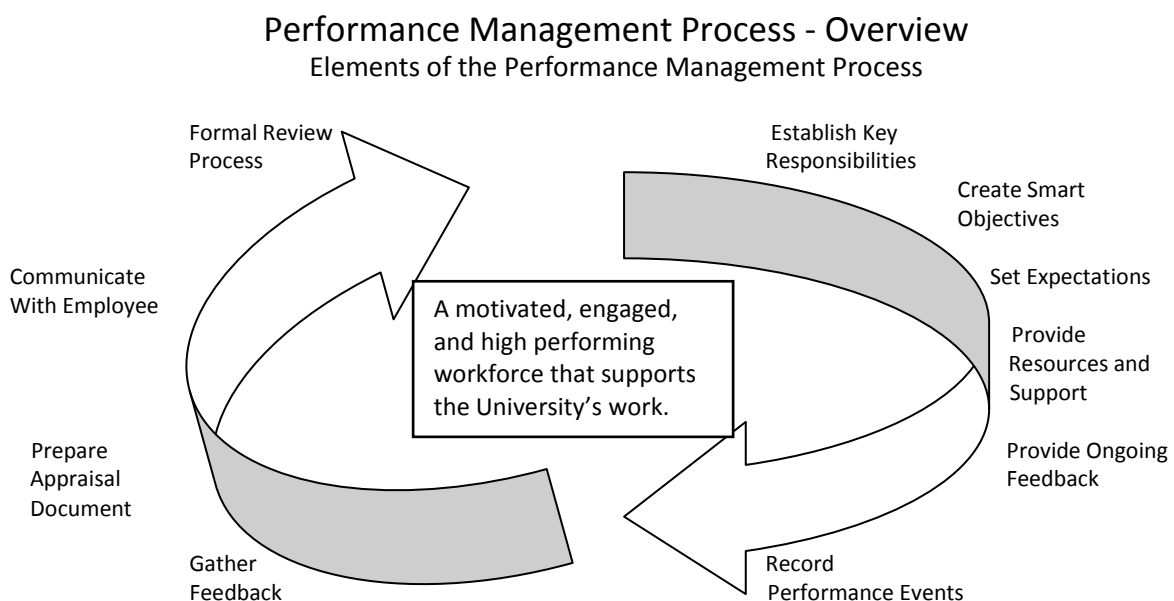
- a meeting between supervisor and employee at the beginning of the performance cycle to plan, set goals and identify development needs and opportunities;
- providing continuous feedback throughout the year on performance, goals, directions and changing expectations;
- coaching all levels of performance;
- evaluation of employee performance at the end of the year; and
- developing plans to maintain and/or improve performance for the next year.

Performance management, a process that empowers employees to play a major role in their own performance planning and development, gives supervisors and employees the tools to succeed.

An effective performance management program will result in improved operations for the University, more highly satisfied and motivated employees, and better outcomes and services.

## ***HOW DOES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT WORK?***

Performance management is an ongoing process. It operates as a three phase continuous cycle — Planning, Coaching, Evaluating — where the last phase (Evaluating) of the previous cycle leads directly into the first phase (Planning) of the next cycle. In fact, once you've gone through your first cycle, Phase III (Evaluating) for the previous cycle and Phase I (Planning) for the next cycle can occur at the same time.



The cycle or evaluation period for each employee runs from performance evaluation to performance evaluation, typically, one year apart. However, interim evaluations can be conducted at any time, either at the supervisor's discretion or at the employee's request.

Performance management responsibilities during these three phases can be divided into five basic steps:

I. Planning

1. Employee/supervisor to generate a work plan and a development plan for the upcoming year.

II. Coaching

2. Supervisor provides (or employee requests) feedback throughout the year. Remember that feedback can be given in multiple ways and can be shared on a formal or informal basis. Keep notes on performance throughout the year.

III. Evaluating

3. Review the University of Massachusetts Lowell performance ratings (expected accomplishments and behaviors).
4. Prepare for and conduct the year-end performance evaluation meeting.
5. Generate goals for future performance.

Departments at the University conduct performance evaluations in Spring of each year, beginning in the fourth (April - June) quarter of the fiscal year.

## ***PHASE I: PLANNING***

### **GENERATE a PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The planning process begins with the performance planning meeting. (Remember, once you complete the very first cycle of the performance management process, this meeting can be combined with the year-end performance evaluation meeting.)

At the beginning of the performance cycle, the supervisor and employee meet to develop the employee's work plan for the year. You can use the performance planning and evaluation form as the basis of your meeting agenda by reviewing each section.

## PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### *What is a Performance Development Plan?*

A development plan is a planning tool that uses input from the supervisor and the employee to identify knowledge areas and skills that the employee needs to acquire or areas of performance that need to be strengthened.

The purpose of the development plan is to enhance job performance and to facilitate professional growth.

A development plan can be used in three ways:

1. To acquire a new skill, ability or know-how needed by the department:
  - A current system is being upgraded to improve the department's output.
  - A new piece of equipment is being introduced.
  - The direction of the department has changed or the department has acquired new responsibilities or areas that require employees also to change their direction.
  - The purpose is to help successful employees keep pace with whatever direction their position and department are going or may want to go to support their continued success.
2. To strengthen performance or improve a skill that does not meet position requirements:
  - Refine a required technical skill.
  - Strengthen a communication or interpersonal skill (such as making a verbal presentation or a written report).
  - Improve work results or style -- (accuracy or timeliness). The purpose is to improve performance up to a satisfactory level.
3. To prepare for a future goal or aspiration:
  - Learn a new skill.
  - Find out more about the University as a whole --its mission, goals and resources.
  - Create a career path that builds on current and developing skills and abilities.

The purpose here is to meet an individual's need to change jobs and/or career direction.

Not all of these areas may be worked on at the same time. The supervisor and employee may need to focus on certain areas during a given period of time. The key is to strike a balance between individual and departmental goals without risking one for the sake of the other.

A development plan anticipates the skills/abilities needed to carry out work plan objectives and job responsibilities and sets forth how they will be learned. A development plan that is implemented successfully will benefit the individual, the department, and ultimately the University.

## **PREPARE A PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Before a meeting to discuss the development plan, the supervisor and employee should each consider the following questions:

- What skills/abilities are needed to accomplish the work plan and/or current job responsibilities?
- What are the employee's personal expectations (goals and objectives), current and future?
- What are the department's needs, current and future?

### ***Discuss the Performance Development Plan***

The employee and supervisor meet to discuss perspectives and information regarding learning needs/goals. A development plan for the employee is then set for the upcoming year.

### ***Write the Performance Development Plan***

Agreement is reached with the completion of this discussion. The plan is written as part of the performance evaluation.

### ***Meet to Discuss Progress***

The employee and supervisor agree to meet regularly, formally and informally, to discuss how learning goals are being met and if any additional resources are needed. The supervisor facilitates the employee's progress with appropriate motivation and coaching techniques.

An essential part of the performance planning process is coming up with a development plan for each employee for the upcoming year. The development plan is created based on an analysis of the employee's strengths and weaknesses exhibited during the previous year.

Together, the supervisor and the employee can use this section to discuss development objectives for the year as a way to successfully achieve individual and departmental goals.

## ***PHASE II: COACHING***

### **PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO EMPLOYEE**

One of the key responsibilities of a supervisor is to manage the performance actions, behaviors and results of employees throughout the year. One of the ways this is done is through coaching.

#### ***What is coaching?***

Coaching is:

- Observing and monitoring performance throughout the year
- Providing regular, timely constructive feedback, both positive and negative
- Documenting performance, both positive and negative

#### ***Tips on Observing Performance***

##### ***Observe what?***

- Important job duties
- Productivity, not activity
- Performance, not personality

##### ***Observe when?***

- Regularly
- Special projects
- Critical incidents

##### ***Observe how?***

- First-hand
- Review of work product
- Consult with others
- Balanced and fair

#### ***What is feedback?***

Feedback is giving timely and specific information about job performance based on recent experience or observations that include praise or constructive criticism.

The feedback between supervisor and employee can be either formal (given in a scheduled meeting) or informal (in casual conversation). Employees are encouraged to ask for feedback from the supervisor and others.

Advantages of continuous feedback:

- It's a powerful way of **motivating people**.
- Giving feedback helps **build relationships**.
- It improves efficiency in that through feedback there are opportunities to adjust goals leading to better results.
- It provides **documentation** that helps identify employee strengths and manage their areas for improvement.
- Timely feedback **enhances results**.

**All feedback is constructive.** Positive feedback is just as important as negative. It can build the employee's confidence, self-esteem, commitment, and loyalty.



The most common statement from employees when discussing non-monetary rewards and recognition is “a simple thank you from my boss would go a long way.” People want feedback – they especially want to be recognized and appreciated for a job well done. Similarly, supervisors also need to hear from their employees when they perform well.

Find situations when there is an opportunity to give positive feedback (to an employee or supervisor) and make sure to follow through.

If you are giving positive feedback, remember to choose a place and medium which are comfortable for the receiver. For example, some people are embarrassed by public acknowledgments and, therefore, might prefer a one-on-one thank you rather than an announcement in a department meeting.

### ***Tips and Techniques:***

If you are giving negative feedback, it should always:

- Be private and confidential
- Be immediate (the sooner the feedback, the more effective it is in influencing behavior)
- Be specific, refer to specific behaviors and outcomes
- Give feedback on performance, not personality
- Include the opportunity to improve performance
- Include something positive

Steps to follow when delivering negative feedback:

- Categorize and specify performance problem(s)
- Listen and summarize employee response
- Offer your view
- Give examples of occasions where employee has demonstrated ability in this area (e.g., Employee has demonstrated a strength in meeting deadlines and keeping manager informed of project status on projects with a short turnaround time. Employee should be encouraged to apply the same methodology to longer term projects where there exists a weakness in meeting deadlines.)
- Specify appropriate performance
- Review downside of no change
- Develop goal and action plan

## ***DOCUMENT PERFORMANCE***

### **Reasons to Document Performance**

- To acknowledge good performance
- To express concern with continued poor performance
- To help in the coaching process of improving performance
- To help in determining performance evaluation
- To support performance ratings

### ***The Importance of Documenting***

Documentation serves as a valuable resource during the Coaching and Evaluating phases. By documenting throughout the year, both an employee and a supervisor can rely on a written reference when completing the evaluation, rather than on just memory. Documentation, therefore, allows one to:

- Offer a more objective and complete evaluation by minimizing the bias toward recent events
- Save time during the evaluation by having a written reference
- Support the feedback process by providing specific examples of performance

Properly recorded documentation should be:

- Timely
- Specific
- Based on performance - not personality
- Related to performance standards and policies and procedures

Supervisors should consider using a standard form in order to keep documentation consistent. The Performance Notes Form is used to record information about an employee's job performance in relation to a particular incident or performance exhibited over a period of time. The performance being documented can include incidents of outstanding or notably positive behavior or behavior which reflects poor or unsatisfactory performance.



Learning with Purpose

## Performance Notes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Employee Name:</b>	
<b>Job Title:</b>	
<b>Supervisor's Name:</b>	
<p>This summary shall be used by supervisors to record information about an employee's job performance in relation to a particular incident or performance exhibited over a period of time. The performance being documented can include incidents of outstanding or notably positive behavior or behavior which reflects poor or unsatisfactory performance. This summary shall become a part of the yearly performance management evaluation for the employee. If improvement is needed, the supervisor shall discuss ways the employee can improve job performance with clearly defined performance standards and goals.</p> <p>The employee's performance reflects behavior that <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Improvement or that is <input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding/Notably Positive</p> <p>Describe in detail the actions that resulted in this Employee Performance Summary, to include improvement plans and goals if necessary:</p> <p>Check here if these Notes are a <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up Summary for Previous Improvement Needed</p> <p>Related documentation is attached as required: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> The employee has included written comments</p> <p><b>Narrative:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Supervisor Recommendation:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Employee Comments:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

Employee's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Department Head's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Documentation should be shared with the employee when recorded and/or during the evaluation meeting.

As an employee, you will also want to maintain a record of your accomplishments to remind yourself and your supervisor of your performance during the year. You may want to keep a *portfolio* handy, in which you place reminders of your achievements, including such things as work samples, thank you letters, project results, etc.

### ***Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory***

If you anticipate the performance evaluation will result in an assessment of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory, you should follow these steps:

- Complete the Performance Planning and Evaluation form and a Performance Development Plan. Contact the Human Resources and Equal Opportunity & Outreach Office to discuss prior to conducting the performance conversation.
- List the specific duties and responsibilities which are not being performed in an acceptable manner.
- Note the actions that have been and will be taken to improve performance.
- Schedule a regular series of one-on-one meetings to review progress. Determine what issues could be negatively impacting performance.
- Continue in the progressive disciplinary process, noting that performance is unsatisfactory and must be improved or further discipline up to and including discharge may result according established guidelines.

If you need more information or assistance with the progressive discipline process, contact your next level of management and/or Human Resources and Equal Opportunity & Outreach.

## ***PHASE III: Evaluation***

### **Review Performance Evaluation Categories**

**Review the performance categories.** These are the university-wide behaviors and responsibilities from UMass Lowell's Mission that all employees are expected to exhibit. The definition and examples described below are intended as guidelines for understanding the spirit of these performance factors.

<b>Performance Rating Category</b>	<b>Explanation of Categories</b>
<b>Outstanding</b>	Performance Requirements were consistently achieved above expectations. Significant accomplishments were made in unexpected areas. A rating at this level requires that several specific examples of outstanding performance be provided.
<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>	Performance Requirements were achieved and sometimes were achieved above expectations and established standards. A rating at this level requires that specific examples be provided.
<b>Successful</b>	Performance Requirements were successfully achieved.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	Performance reflects a need for improvement. A rating at this level may require action in the form of coaching, skill development and feedback to support development. This category may apply to new employees, newly promoted or transferred employees, or employees who have assumed new responsibilities. <i>Performance Notes</i> are appropriate for documenting improvement needed and positive performance.
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Established Performance Requirements were not achieved and some Performance was below established standards. A rating at this level requires the completion of a Performance Development Plan.

## ***UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS Lowell PERFORMANCE CATEGORY***

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### **Demonstrated Job Knowledge** -- Consider the following:

Acquires and uses technical/professional/procedural knowledge, skills and judgment to accomplish a result or to serve one's constituents effectively. Makes optimum use of resources (people, time and materials) to achieve goals and focuses on work activities that add value to the University.

- Demonstrates the knowledge and skills required to perform the job, including administrative policies and procedures, technical and/or specialized knowledge/expertise and managerial/supervisory skills (if applicable).
- Understands position goals, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Demonstrates current knowledge of professional/technical developments related to position.

### **Commitment and Accountability** -- Consider the following:

Demonstrates the ability to make decisions authoritatively and wisely, renders judgments, takes actions or makes commitments, after adequately contemplating various available courses of action and the needs and values of others. Demonstrates a high level of dependability in all aspects of the job.

- Demonstrates accountability in all work responsibilities.
- Exercises sound and ethical judgment when acting on behalf of the University.
- Exercises appropriate confidentiality in all aspects of work.
- Shows commitment to work and to consequences of own actions.

### **Communications** -- Consider the following:

Consciously uses the sense of hearing, attending to and fully comprehending what others are saying. Acts in a way that indicates understanding and accurate interpretation of others' concerns, motives, feelings, strengths and limitations.

- Demonstrates the ability to express thoughts clearly, both orally and in writing.
- Demonstrates effective listening skills.
- Shares knowledge and information.
- Asks questions and offers input for positive results.

### **Motivation** -- Consider the following:

Evaluates, selects and acts on various methods and strategies for solving problems and meeting objectives before being asked or required to do so; self-directed rather than passively complying with instructions or assignments. Generates novel and valuable ideas and uses these ideas to develop new or improved processes, methods, systems or services.

- Shows initiative, anticipates needs and takes actions.
- Demonstrates innovation, creativity and informed risk-taking.
- Engages in problem-solving; suggests ways to improve performance and be more efficient.
- Strives to achieve individual, unit, and University goals.

## ***UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS Lowell PERFORMANCE CATEGORY (CONT'D)***

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### **Collaboration** -- Consider the following:

Willingly cooperates and works collaboratively toward solutions which generally benefit all involved parties; works cooperatively with others to accomplish University objectives.

Understands the agendas and perspectives of others, recognizing and effectively balancing the interests and needs of one's own work group with those of the University.

- Establishes and builds working relationships to solve problems and achieve common goals.
- Demonstrates sensitivity to the needs of others.
- Offers assistance, support, and feedback to others.
- Works effectively and cooperatively with others.

### **Service-Orientation** -- Consider the following:

Focuses one's efforts on discovering and meeting the needs of faculty, staff, and other community members, etc., in a manner that provides satisfaction within the resources that can be made available.

- Is approachable by and accessible to others.
- Reaches out to be helpful in a timely and responsive manner.
- Strives to satisfy one's external and/or internal customers.
- Is diplomatic, courteous, and welcoming.
- Is responsive to requests.

### **Adaptability** -- Consider the following:

Changes behavioral style or method of approach when necessary to achieve a goal; adjusts style to needs of a situation. Responds to change with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn new ways to accomplish work and objectives.

- Is flexible, open and receptive to new ideas and approaches.
- Adapts to changing priorities, situations and demands.
- Handles multiple tasks and priorities.
- Modifies one's preferred way of doing things.

### **Inclusion** -- Consider the following:

Creates an atmosphere of valuing and accepting others. Demonstrates respect for the opinions and ideas of others. Seeks the input of group members and encourages their participation.

- Shows respect for differences in backgrounds, lifestyles, viewpoints, and needs, with regard to ethnicity, gender, creed, and sexual orientation.
- As a manager, is proactive in diversifying search committee and/or candidate pools, as applicable.
- Promotes cooperation and a welcoming environment for all.
- Works to understand the perspectives brought by all individuals.
- Handles issues with sensitivity and provides genuine assistance, and confidentiality.
- Pursues knowledge of diversity and inclusiveness.

### **Self-Development** -- Consider the following:

Keeps up-to-date on the professional/technical or procedural aspects of the job. Identifies and takes advantage of opportunities to acquire new skills, apply knowledge, and assist others in learning new ways to achieve goals.

- Enhances personal knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Anticipates and adapts to technological advances needed.
- Seeks opportunities for continuous learning.
- Seeks and acts upon performance feedback.

## **PREPARE FOR AND CONDUCT EVALUATION MEETING**

The performance management cycle concludes (and the next begins) with the evaluation meeting. Keep in mind, however, that at any time during the year, the supervisor and/or the employee can request a meeting to discuss and review the employee's performance to date.

Since employees play an active role in planning and developing their performance, they should also be an integral part of the evaluation process and are expected to contribute to the evaluation discussion.

### ***The Supervisor's Role***

To prepare for the evaluation meeting, as a supervisor you should:

- Finalize the meeting date, time and place with your employee about two weeks ahead of the performance evaluation date.
- Be sure to allow enough time for thorough discussion and to address employees' questions/concerns.
- Do not change the schedule or allow interruptions unless absolutely necessary.
- Changing the date or attending to other business during an evaluation meeting sends a negative message to the employee that the evaluation meeting is not important.
- Realize that not taking an employee's performance evaluation seriously negatively impacts employee morale.
- Provide the employee with a blank copy of the Performance Planning and Evaluation Form so he/she can prepare for the meeting.
- Review and finalize the documentation in the employee's file as well as any other relevant documentation.
- Seek input from others. Remember, documentation can come from others - peers, students, subordinates, "customers," etc.
- Complete the evaluation form.
- Determine the employee's strengths and development needs.
- Consider department goals and objectives for upcoming year and impact on expectations of employee.



Additional questions to consider in preparing for performance evaluation conversations:

What are some strengths demonstrated during the performance period. [ <i>Refer to any Performance Notes you took.</i> ]
In what area(s) can performance be improved?
Identify learning needs, skills or abilities to develop.
Are there any barriers to effective work and/or job satisfaction?
Are there procedures/tasks that can be improved?

### ***Why Supporting Statements?***

Statements supporting your rating in each category are encouraged. These statements can indicate the method used to validate the evaluation rating. Validation methods include *observation, demonstration, and testing*. Examples include:

- **Observation:** “Review of 10 prospective student applications indicates that assessment of students is routinely done in timely manner.”
- **Demonstration:** “Mary has demonstrated to me that she is knowledgeable and competent in conducting interviews with prospective students.”
- **Testing:** “John successfully completed the introductory spreadsheet course.”

Supporting statements can also include constructive feedback and/or compliments.

Examples:

- “The training session which Mary led in June was well organized and comprehensive.”
- “When under stress, John sometimes fails to communicate in a sensitive, caring manner.
- He needs to be more tactful in his approach at these times.”

Now that you have gathered your thoughts and considered the employee’s performance you can begin completing the performance planning and evaluation form.

## ***EMPLOYEES WITH SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES***

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Supervisors may also be evaluated on ***additional skills***, behaviors and responsibilities in managing their own and others' work styles.

**Coaching** -- Consider the following:

Works to improve the immediate performance of others and facilitates their skill development by providing clear, specific performance feedback, making or eliciting specific suggestions for improvement, in a manner that builds confidence and maintains self-esteem. Provides training and developmental opportunities.

- Reinforces effective behaviors or results.
- Clearly states actual performance compared to expected or desired performance.
- Takes extra time to assist and provides specific, detailed follow-up.
- Gives people assignments and training to develop their abilities.

**Leadership/Stewardship** -- Consider the following:

Develops and uses effective strategies and interpersonal styles to influence and guide others toward the accomplishment of identified objectives and goals.

- Seeks information and asks for suggestions.
- Solicits the input of others who are affected by plans or actions.
- Develops and uses positive approaches to influence others.
- Actively promotes diversity and inclusion in the workforce and campus community.

**Performance Management** -- Consider the following:

Participates in all aspects of the performance management program in a proactive and constructive manner, including conducting performance planning, coaching and evaluation sessions.

- Completes thorough performance evaluations in a timely manner.
- Encourages communication and participation in all aspects of the performance management program.
- Provides resources and/or training for employees.
- Demonstrates concern for treating people fairly.

### ***The Employee's Role***

As an employee, you play a critical role in planning, developing and evaluating performance and have a responsibility to prepare for the evaluation meeting as well. To get ready, you should:

- Review the Performance Planning and Evaluation form and be prepared to discuss:
  - Performance and behavior relative to the Performance Rating Categories.
  - Achievement of your personal development plan.
- Review and summarize your documentation. Determine strengths and development needs.

The evaluation meeting is an opportunity for open, two-way communication, setting the stage for mutual agreement, problem solving and goal setting.

This discussion is based on shared perspectives with the supervisor asking open-ended questions while listening to the employee's issues, problems, and feelings. The purpose of a two-way conversation, with each side contributing his/her perspective, is to support the following outcomes:

- To contribute to the success of the individual, department, and the University.
- To add to the understanding of what needs to change.
- To gain enthusiasm for the future.
- To share an appreciation for the evaluation process.

During the discussion, cite specific examples describing behavior to support each performance area. The examples include positive and successful contributions as well as difficulties.

The meeting can be divided into two parts:

- Evaluating past performance
- Developing future performance (performance development plan)

### **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION DISCUSSION**

The first part of the meeting should focus on evaluating the employee's performance for the just completed evaluation period based on the nine Performance Rating Categories.

Discuss the overall performance evaluation, identify strengths and weaknesses, and discuss development opportunities.

If the supervisor and employee do not agree, the supervisor may agree to revise the evaluation based on the employee's justification or documentation of performance. Try to reach an agreement. (If the supervisor has been coaching and providing feedback throughout the year, the supervisor should be able to avoid any disagreement or surprises.)

If, however, an agreement cannot be reached, the supervisor must decide on the appropriate evaluation rating. The employee can write a rebuttal statement which will be attached to the evaluation and can refer the situation to the next level of management if he/she feels the evaluation is unfair or unjust. Although the Human Resources and Equal Opportunity & Outreach team is always available in an advisory capacity, every attempt should be made to resolve the disagreement within the department.

## **SET GOALS FOR FUTURE PERFORMANCE**

The second part of the evaluation meeting is devoted to setting goals for future performance.

The supervisor and the employee should use this meeting to prepare goals and a new personal development plan for the next year (refer to *Prepare a Performance Development Plan*).

At this point, not only have you completed the performance management cycle for the period just ending, but you have also begun the performance planning phase of the next cycle.

### ***What if the employee is not meeting standards at the time of the performance evaluation?***

In most instances, working with a poor performer throughout the year by providing feedback and discussing development needs, will result in successful performance.

In some cases, coaching and feedback will not result in successful performance. The supervisor will need to create a performance development plan and use the progressive disciplinary process to document performance deficiencies.

### ***Next Steps***

Once the supervisor and the employee complete the performance evaluation and have agreed to a professional development plan for the upcoming year:

- The supervisor and the employee sign and date the form.
- The supervisor will photocopy the professional development plan and give a copy to the employee and keep a copy in the employee's file.
- The supervisor will send the form to his/her department head for review. All forms will then be shared with the appropriate division manager before being sent to the Human Resources and Equal Opportunity & Outreach Department.
- The supervisor will follow up on any of the suggestions or issues raised in the Employee Comments section.

## ***SUMMARY: THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM***

A good performance management program helps people be more effective in their jobs, resulting in a more successful place to work. Specifically, any formal or informal discussion on performance, if carried out well, can have a positive effect on everyone involved (supervisor, employee, department, and the University).

**Key Points:**

Highlights of UMass Lowell's performance management program include the following:

- Both the supervisor and employee play an active role in the entire performance management process.
- The planning sections of the performance evaluation form (performance development plan) are used to facilitate the process of communicating about work and communicating about performance.
- Conversations about performance are conducted frequently throughout the year, eliminating any surprises at the actual evaluation meeting.
- Each employee needs to develop the ability to analyze his/her job in terms of specific performance attributes.
- The performance management process operates as a continuous cycle.

Notes:

[illegible]