



# **Best Practices For Conducting Employee Evaluations**

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## Objectives of Webcast

At the conclusion of this webcast, you will know:

- The benefits of conducting regular employee performance evaluations;
- The "Don'ts" of conducting employee evaluations;
- Best practices for conducting more thorough and legally sound employee evaluations;
- The impact of employee evaluations in litigation;
- How to evaluate the problem employee; and
- What to do when an employee disagrees with your evaluation

## What Is An Employee Evaluation?

- A formal written assessment and review of an employee's job performance during a particular period, and in relation to certain pre-established criteria and organizational objectives.
- An employee evaluation is typically performed on a regular basis (once or twice a year) as determined by the organization.

# Should Your Organization Conduct Employee Evaluations?

**Quality is impossible if people  
are afraid to tell the truth.**

**- W. Edwards Deming**

## Why Conduct Employee Evaluations?

- Provides a way for managers/supervisors to help achieve agency missions, goals and objectives;
- Improves communication with employees;
- Provides written documentation to support personnel decisions, and of employee performance in general;
- Helps employees know clearly what their job duties are and what is expected from them;

## Why Conduct Employee Evaluations?

- Allows managers and supervisors to measure the productivity of their employees in executing their duties;
- Improved employee productivity;
- Enhanced quality of employee workforce; and
- Employee development;

## **Employee Evaluations Should Address the Following Questions**

- What was the employee expected to accomplish?
- Was the employee provided the tools necessary to accomplish expected tasks?
- What did the employee actually accomplish?
- How did the employee achieve these accomplishments?
- What was expected of the employee that was not accomplished, and why?
- In what areas of performance does the employee need to improve?

# Preparing to Conduct Employee Evaluations

## Preparing to Conduct Employee Evaluations

- Know the organization's objectives and strategic plan for the next year, or review period;
- Know the employee's major accomplishments during the review period;
- Be aware of the employee's development efforts in the past review period;
- Be aware of problems with the employee's performance during the current review period;

## Preparing to Conduct Employee Evaluations

- Be prepared to support negative feedback with documentation, if relevant or applicable;
- Determine whether the evaluator can conduct an objective and unbiased evaluation of the employee; and
- Be clear about whether the employee is being compared to his/her colleagues or against a pre-determined standard.

# Types of Employee Evaluations

## Types of Employee Evaluations – Ratings Scale Method

### Ratings:

- Unsatisfactory
- Needs Improvement
- Meets Expectations
- Excellent
- Outstanding:

### CONTENTS OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FORM:

#### 1. Quality of work

- Accuracy, thoroughness, effectiveness.
- Pressure, ability to meet standards of quality.
- Use of time and volume of work accomplished.
- Work output matches the expectations

#### 2. Quantity of work

- Competence, thoroughness, and efficiency of work regardless of volume.

#### 3. Teamwork:

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships
- Follows instructions of supervisor and responds to requests from others in the team in a helpful manner.

## Types of Employee Evaluations – Essay Method

Sample essay questions:

1. Describe the employee's accomplishments for this review period.
2. Describe the employee's strengths.
3. Describe the overall quality of the employee's written work?
4. Give examples of the employee's strengths?
5. Provide examples of the employee's weaknesses?
6. Are there areas in which the employee needs to improve upon his/her performance?

# Problems in Performance Evaluations

## Problems in Employee Evaluations

- Errors In rating
- Stereotyping/Personal bias
- Failure to communicate standards
- Failure to give timely feedback
- Failure to allow employees to correct performance
- Inconsistency in measuring performance
- Failure to document performance objectively

## Avoiding Discrimination in Employee Evaluations

- In general, the behaviors or characteristics measured by a performance appraisal should be related to an employee's job and the employee's success on the job.
- Accordingly, employee evaluations should never be based on an employee's race, sex, color, religion, or any other protected characteristic, but only on whether the employee meets the standards of performance.

# Best Practices For Conducting Employee Evaluations

## Best Practices For Conducting Employee Evaluations

- Develop an evaluation form that relates to the employee's job;
- Complete evaluations on a regular basis for employees;
- Avoid the use of completely vague and subjective evaluation criteria – use descriptive and objective criteria;
- Train managers and supervisors on how to conduct employee evaluations;
- Always conduct evaluations in writing – never verbal;

## **Best Practices For Conducting Employee Evaluations**

- Compliment good performance;
- Identify and address problem performance;
- Create new performance goals;
- Include observations, not assumptions;
- Be brief, but complete;

## Best Practices for Conducting Employee Evaluations

- Avoid Bias;
- Give employees the opportunity to review the evaluation and comment in writing;
- Require employees to review and sign evaluations after they have reviewed and commented; and
- Follow up with the employee regarding any reports, inferences and/or allegations of discrimination, harassment, retaliation or other illegal treatment.

## **Best Practices – Documenting Employee Performance**

- Document performance of all employees;
- Provide complete and accurate information;
- Document performance on a regular basis; and
- Make sure documentation is objective.

## What NOT To Do When Conducting Employee Evaluations

- Lightheartedness
- Surprises
- Lack of Preparation
- Insensitivity
- Discrimination/Harassment
- Retaliation

## What NOT to say when evaluating employees – Example

- **Supervisor:** Employee, I would like to conduct your semi-annual performance evaluation. I will start by commending your performance since your last review. However, there are some issues with your performance that we must address.
- **Employee:** What areas?
- **Supervisor:** We've received complaints from managers about your attitude and the quality of your work.
- **Employee:** Can you be more specific about the complaints? When did you receive them?
- **Supervisor:** I received the first complaint about four months ago, and receive others weekly.
- **Employee:** This is the first time anyone has said anything to me about the complaints.
- **Supervisor:** We are discussing the issue now. Further, your co-worker has not had as many complaints as you. Also, in my opinion, I don't think you like your work or me because you don't talk to me as much as you talk to other people.
- **Employee:** I don't have anything against you, but I don't think it is appropriate to chat with my supervisor. Again, can you please show me documentation of the complaints or at least be more specific so that I know how I might improve?

## What NOT to say when evaluating employees – Example 1, continued

- Employee was not given any notice between the last employee evaluation and the current one about problems with performance
- Supervisor compared Employee's performance to that of a co-worker.
- Supervisor made the employee's evaluation personal.
- Supervisor was vague and nonspecific in the evaluation.
- Supervisor did not produce documentation to support review

## How To Avoid Legal Problems When Conducting Employee Evaluations

- Counsel supervisory employees to create a thorough and accurate record regarding employee performance.
- Be candid in assessing strengths AND weaknesses.
- Document, and relay to employee, failure to meet legitimate requirements or expectations of the job
- Consistent evaluations;
- Utilize witnesses for evaluations;
- Follow discipline policy, if applicable; and
- Remember that “no good deed goes unpunished”.

**QUESTIONS?**

## For More Information:

If you would like more information about the services of Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta, contact us at:

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