

Performance Appraisal Checklist for Managers

The following information serves as a general framework for conducting effective performance appraisals. Please contact System HR at 217-333-2600 or erhr@uillinois.edu for assistance or advice.

Set up the Meeting

- Determine the meeting format (in person or virtual) and schedule the performance evaluation. You should allow enough time for discussion (usually one hour).
- Since the employee begins the performance appraisal process in the online system, notify the employee of the meeting and refer them to the System Office performance appraisal website for instructions and resources for how to login.
 - Include the link or a copy of the organization's mission, vision, guiding values and/or goals (optional).

Prepare for the meeting

- Review the employee's job description and note any duties that have changed.
- Gather relevant information for the review, such as
 - Length of service with the department/University.
 - Educational background.
 - Experience background.
 - Level of technical skills.
 - Current projects.
 - Projects the employee has completed during the review period.
 - Attendance records.
 - Any other documentation or notes from previous discussions.
- [Login](#) to the performance appraisal system and review the employee's started appraisal that lists accomplishments, challenges, previous year's goals/results, and next year's goals.
- Identify the top 2-3 skills that are critical for the position. Provide examples of the employee's primary strengths/talents that contributed to their success.
- Consider and document how you will assist the employee in fulfilling their goals over the next year.
- Describe areas for professional development and growth that the employee should focus on over the next year. Prepare a list of expectations to discuss, if needed.
- Discuss the draft appraisal with your manager or unit head for input (optional).
- Complete the rating to indicate how well the employee met the expectations of their role and responsibilities over the last year. The employee will receive an email that you have completed the supervisor portion of the performance appraisal.

The Day of the Performance Review

- Arrange for all calls, visitors, and interruptions to be avoided during the performance appraisal timeframe.
- If you are meeting with the employee in person, ensure the meeting room is a confidential environment and has comfortable seating, lighting, air temperature, etc.
- If you are meeting with the employee virtually, ensure that you have a stable internet connection and test the video and audio settings on your computer.

- Organize and make easily accessible all relevant documents for the discussion, including the
 - Employee job description.
 - List of goals and objectives created during the last review.
 - Performance documentation and/or customer feedback.
 - List of expectations to be discussed.
 - Draft goals for next year. *Refer to the Writing SMART Goals [resource](#) on the performance appraisal website for guidance.*

During the Evaluation

- If you are meeting virtually minimize distractions and refrain from multi-tasking. Turn on your video camera and encourage the employee to turn on theirs. This helps build rapport and being able to see facial expressions and body language is crucial for effective communication.
- Engage in active listening. Pay attention to the employee, make eye contact, and use verbal and non-verbal cues to show that you are listening.
- Encourage the employee to ask questions and assure them their input and perspectives are valued.
- Discuss your expectations for the position and employee's overall performance.
- Acknowledge and appreciate the employee's achievements and contributions.
- Discuss the employee's professional career goals.
- Ask the employee about any undocumented contributions to the unit or tasks added in the last year.
- Ask the employee about any challenges or obstacles hindering their progress.
- Verify the employee has the resources needed to achieve their goals and provide support for the employee's growth. This may include additional training, learning opportunities and/or development planning.

Post-evaluation

- The employee reviews/edits or types optional comments and then completes/acknowledges the appraisal in the online system. This routes the appraisal to you for review and approval.
- Review the appraisal and any comments, then submit/acknowledge the appraisal to finalize. You and the employee will receive an email once submitted.
- Send a follow-up email summarizing the key discussion points, agreed-upon goals, and any action items (recommended).
- Update job description if needed and communicate changes to System HR at erhr@uillinois.edu

Suggestions for Writing Effective Appraisals

- Show respect by treating the employee with courtesy, fairness, and empathy, while maintaining a focus on honest, constructive feedback and improvement.
- Use action verbs to describe performance and include specific actions needed to reach the desired performance level.
- Use "I" language and speak in behavioral terms, describe what you observed and what you expect.
- Focus on performance, not personalities.

- Examine valid, concrete issues, not subjective emotions or feelings.
- Consider these questions and be able to articulate your answers in written and oral form:
 - What are my expectations of the employee?
 - Where is the employee's performance now?
 - Where does the employee's performance need to be?
 - How do we get to the desired performance level?
 - How has the employee progressed on the previous year's goals?
 - How can I motivate this employee to want to work towards their goals and help them succeed?

Using Effective Phrases for Performance Appraisals

Start with a phrase that accurately describes the employee.

- Add the employee's name and substantiating information to the phrase.
 - Original Phrase: *demonstrates sound cost effectiveness*
 - Revised Phrase: Terry *demonstrates sound cost effectiveness* by achieving an 8% reduction in departmental expenses in 2022.
- Use the phrases as a base for describing areas that need improvement.
 - Original Phrase: *provides quick responses to customer complaints*
 - Revised Phrase: Justin could improve customer satisfaction ratings by *providing quicker response times to customer complaints.*

Performance Appraisal Response Example

Susan has successfully updated the department website every Monday in 2022. Thanks to her efforts, client calls regarding status updates have decreased by 42% from the previous year.