

## Introduction

Performance evaluations are incredibly important to each employee and the organization as a whole. This workshop will focus specifically on how to conduct an effective annual performance evaluation meeting; steps that lead up to and follow that meeting will also be addressed. This workbook provides comprehensive activities to clarify the evaluation process.

## What Motivates Employees?

Rank the factors below in the order of the importance you think **your employees** would put them in; "1" being most important, "2" being second most important, etc.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Work with people who treat me with respect
- \_\_\_\_\_ Interesting work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recognition for good work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chance to develop skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Working for people who listen if you have ideas about how to do things better
- \_\_\_\_\_ A chance to think for myself rather than just carry out instructions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeing the end results of my work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Working for efficient managers
- \_\_\_\_\_ A job that is not too easy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Feeling well informed about what is going on
- \_\_\_\_\_ Job security
- \_\_\_\_\_ High pay
- \_\_\_\_\_ Good benefits

Excerpt from: *The Journal of Leadership*, Vol. 3, No. 6  
<http://www.stuffofheroes.com/Secrets%20of%20Motivation.htm>

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## Performance Evaluations: Concerns and Benefits

### Concerns:

From the flip chart activity or your personal experience, list some of your concerns about conducting performance evaluations:

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### Benefits to the Employee:

From the flip chart activity, list some benefits to the employee from conducting performance evaluations:

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**Benefits to the Employer:**

From the flip chart activity, list some benefits to the **[CLIENT]** from conducting performance evaluations:

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**Preparing to Conduct an Effective Evaluation**

In a performance review meeting, the natural tendency is to rely more heavily on the most \_\_\_\_\_ performance, but your evaluation should cover the entire period.

Review a copy of the employee's \_\_\_\_\_  
so you are reminded about what their actual responsibilities are.

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**Preparing the Form: Getting Started:**

1. **Fill in the employee information** at the top of the evaluation form.
2. **Mark your initial ratings** in the Factors area in pencil. It's very likely that the employee will remind you of some aspects of their performance during the year that will warrant a revised rating. Marking in pencil allows for easy revisions.
3. **Make notes on a separate sheet of paper** as you rank the employee on each item as a reminder to why you gave them each rating. You should be able to support your rating with documentation you collected throughout the year.
4. **Fill in Item 1** - Describe the person's significant strengths.
5. **Fill in Item 2** – Outline areas where the person requires improvement.
6. **Fill in item 3** - If you have some assignments or educational experiences that you feel would benefit the employee. This is another item that you may add to during the course of the meeting

***Reactions to Consider:***

- ✓ **Employee feeling demoralized, and possibly angry or frustrated.**

This is possible if you rate them low on a factor. You can avoid this by

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- ✓ **Employee feeling recognized.** Providing a high rating can validate an employee's efforts. Reinforce your message by \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Meeting Tips:**

- Wait until the meeting to fill out the rest of the form
- Help employees know that you have an open mind and they have input into how they are evaluated by filling in their overall ratings **after** discussion and review.

## **Scheduling and Location**

### **Time:**

- ✓ Allow enough time. Employees with detailed positions will likely require longer evaluations. Don't rush it!

### **Location:**

What are some key words that describe an appropriate location for your meeting?

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## **Employee's Preparation:**

- ✓ **DO** encourage them to also do some preparation
- ✓ **DO** suggest that they conduct a self-evaluation to document their suggested ratings and bring any documentation they have to support their ratings.
- ✓ **DO** remind them that evaluations are based on facts and documentation
- ✓ **DO** go in with an open mind
- ✓ **DO** remember that there may be positive details you've overlooked
- ✓ **DO** revise your details if the employee supports their evaluation with proof
- ✓ **DO** ask for support or documentation if employees ask for a rating that you think is higher than they deserve

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# Conducting Effective Performance Evaluations Participant Workbook

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## Personality Styles

From the flip chart activity, which of the four shapes below do you best associate with?  
Which best describes you?



### Personality Traits to Consider:

- Different people will have different expectations about and reactions to the performance evaluation
- Remember that the overall goal is always to improve performance
- use the performance evaluation as an opportunity to coach or mentor your employees

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## Coaching and Mentoring

Coaching and mentoring are both parts of your job as a supervisor.

**Coaching is:**

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**Mentoring is:**

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## Setting the Tone for the Evaluation Meeting:

- **REMEMBER** everyone is apprehensive about having their performance reviewed.
- **UNDERSTAND** how stressful the process is for the employee
- **RESPECT** the employee and treat him or her as you would like to be treated

**How will you help put the employee at ease?**

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**7 Simple Steps to Setting a Positive Tone:**

1. Make sure that the employee understands the need for, and value of, performance evaluations. What would you say?  

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2. Explain to the employee that you've already made an initial review, but that you want to discuss all of your ratings before you make your final evaluation.
3. Ask the employee if they have any questions before you begin, and address any questions they may have.
4. Go through each of the nine Factors on the form, providing feedback and a rating using the 'Outstanding' to 'Unsatisfactory' scale.
5. You just need to be fair and consistent in your application of the ratings.

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## Common Performance Evaluation Errors

1. \_\_\_\_\_:

Focusing on one trait that you are particularly impressed with and based on that one positive trait, rating the employee higher on all other factors. This is especially common with people who are friendly or likeable. On the contrary, focusing on personality differences and allowing them to cloud your view of an employee's behavior, resulting in lower ratings. It is key to remember to focus on the performance, not the personality.

2. \_\_\_\_\_:

Ignoring bad performances, or inflating the ratings of average performance, because you know that your employees will like you more if you rate them higher. Your employees will have more respect for you and the evaluation process if you are truthful and constructive.

3. \_\_\_\_\_:

Being excessively harsh to avoid being seen as a pushover or in an attempt to motivate employees to work harder. Consistent low ratings will have a demoralizing effect on employees.

4. \_\_\_\_\_:

Discounting all but the most outstanding performances, either positive or negative, and rating almost all employees as "competent".

5. \_\_\_\_\_:

Basing your review of the entire year's performance on what occurred in the last few months or weeks. This is human nature. The more recent performance is fresh and clear in your mind. The only way to overcome this error is to document performance throughout the year so you have records to refer to and refresh your memory.

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# Conducting Effective Performance Evaluations Participant Workbook

## Points to Consider:

- Focus on performance, not personality.
- Don't tell the employee what you THINK about their performance, tell them what you've SEEN or what they've actually done.

## Performance Evaluation Statements:

Consider the case study below. Columns A and B contain similar statements but with different wording. Select the statement you feel would be more effective and appropriate to use during a performance evaluation.

Case study #1	Statement A	STATEMENT B
Mary is consistently a good, reliable worker. She shows up on time, meets deadlines and is well liked by her coworkers and her supervisor. People often express that they like working with her because she is cheery and keeps things moving. Unfortunately, there is one key aspect of her job where Mary is lacking skills. There is one key computer program that her position requires her to use. The company paid for Mary to take a course to become proficient with the program but she did not attend every session and now is unfamiliar with some of the key functions of the program. This slows down her production in this one area since she is constantly asking others for help. She completes all other tasks without problems.	1. You are so great and everyone likes you. I'm so happy that you work here.	2. Your work style helps spur productivity of your teams.
	2. It seems that your productivity is slowed down in this one particular area due to not being familiar with this key program.	2. I know you struggle a bit with that one program but hey, who doesn't have issues with computers!
	3. Your projects are always concise and completed on time.	3. You are a great worker and such a fast typist.

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**Resolve Differences in Perceived Performance:**

If an employee disagrees with your rating, you need to find out why and address it.

- \_\_\_\_\_ for the employee's reactions
- \_\_\_\_\_ the employee's perception of their performance

**If the Employees Perception Differs from Yours:**

- Find out why there is a difference in perception
- Ratings should be based on actual performance or results, make sure that the employee focuses on performance and results
- Issues should not be clouded with statements about how the employee intended, meant or hoped to do something. What's important is what they actually did.

***Keep in Mind:***

- Take into account any roadblocks that kept the employee from performing at a higher level
- Did they have the resources they needed
- Were they given sufficient time to complete the task
- You may need to weigh that information in your rating

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## Listening Skills

Responding to employee concerns about your ratings requires good listening skills. That includes observing both the verbal and non-verbal messages you are getting from the employee.

List some examples of **non-verbal feedback**:

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While the performance evaluation meeting is primarily an opportunity for you to give your feedback, it's really a \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ interaction,

## Active Listening

- **REMEMBER**, "Active Listening" is a method used to probe for the meaning behind employee statements
- **UNDERSTAND** that this method of communication can be used to confirm the meaning of a message with the employee

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**Misunderstood Employee Statement:**

“I don’t know how you can give me a fair rating, since you aren’t around most of the time and don’t really know what I do.”

**What would be an appropriate Active Listening response:**

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**Good Active Listening Statements:**

- ✓ Good active listening statements are \_\_\_\_\_. They don’t imply that you agree or disagree with what the employee said
- ✓ Good active listening statements aren’t \_\_\_\_\_. Simply, they are an effort to get more information about what the employee really meant

**List Some Benefits of Active Listening:**

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## Focusing on Performance

### Behavior or Personality: You Make the Call:

**Statement 1:** “You don’t seem to be very nice to people when they confront you about errors; it makes you hard to work with.”

Was the statement focusing on Behavior or Personality? \_\_\_\_\_

If personality, in the space provided below, rewrite the statement to focus on behavior rather than personality:

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**Statement 2:** “You laugh at others a lot; I think you do this to make yourself feel better.”

Was the statement focusing on Behavior or Personality? \_\_\_\_\_

If personality, in the space provided below, rewrite the statement to focus on behavior rather than personality:

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**Statement 3:** “I’ve noticed you becoming agitated when others in your department miss deadlines; they have reported to me that this makes them uncomfortable.”

Was the statement focusing on Behavior or Personality? \_\_\_\_\_

If personality, in the space provided below, rewrite the statement to focus on behavior rather than personality:

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**Never Underestimate the Power of Accurate Record Keeping:**

**Important Tip:**

- ✓ When you keep accurate records with dates and times that you witnessed performance (positive or negative), or documents that demonstrate performance, the employee will have difficulty disagreeing with your performance rating.

**Giving Negative Feedback**

**Giving Higher Ratings than the Employee has earned:**

- Misses the opportunity to correct the performance
- Is unfair to other employees who are reaching or exceeding the “competent” level of achievement
- In times of employee lay offs, allows employees that contribute less to remain with the company while more talented and valuable employees may be let go in place.

**How can negative feedback be beneficial to the employee?**

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**Employee’s that do not “make the grade”:**

- ✓ **REMEMBER** it is still very important to listen and respond to employee input, and to make the performance evaluation a true two-way discussion
- ✓ **UNDERSTAND** in the end, it’s you who has the final say and at some point may need to justify your performance rating of that individual
- ✓ **RESPECT** the employee and allow them a real opportunity to offer responses to your evaluation

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### Retaining Control in the Performance Review Meeting

- ✓ **REMEMBER** work is not a democracy
- ✓ **UNDERSTAND** you are ultimately responsible for the performance of you people and your department
- ✓ **KNOW** that you may have to say “I’m sorry that you don’t agree with me, but I think I’ve rated you fairly on this factor.”
- ✓ **RECOGNIZE** sometimes employees do not perform well because of reasons that are out of their control.

### *As a Supervisor, ask yourself:*

- Do my employees have all the resources needed to be successful in their positions?
- Do my employees fully understand what I am asking of them and am I being clear?
- Do my employees fully understand my expectations for them in their position?

**What are some ways you could improve your communication to employees to make sure they understand what you expect of them?**

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***Following Instructions Exercise:***

1. Take a sheet of notebook paper. Now close your eyes and follow my instructions. First, fold the sheet in half
2. Now fold it again
3. Now fold it one more time
4. Now tear the right hand corner off
5. Turn the sheet over and tear the left-hand corner on
6. Open your eyes and unfold the sheets

**Completing the Evaluation Form**

**Attendance Section:**

- ✓ **REMEMBER** to consider not only absent and sick days, but also tardiness and adherence to any rest and lunch periods
- ✓ **UNDERSTAND** how attendance affects the employee's performance

**Development Section:**

- Note in this section if there are any development opportunities that might benefit the employee and allow for better production
- Be specific about the development opportunities and anticipated completion date:
  - List the name of the class, conference, training that would benefit the individual
  - List when the event is being offered and details about signing up for the opportunity

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**Strengths Section:**

- This is your opportunity to single out traits that may have earned the employee a good rating
- Your opportunity to mention some other characteristics of the person that might not be reflected in the ratings

**Improvements Section:**

- If the employee scored low ratings in any area, you should describe in great detail what it is they need to improve upon

**Focus on the Future:**

- Keep in mind that the main purpose for performance evaluations is to improve future performance
- Remember that the real goal is to bring about positive changes in future performance

**Overall Rating:**

- When determining the overall rating of the employee, make sure to weigh the nine factors fairly.
- Housekeeping should not carry the same weight as quantity or quality of work
- Make sure to conclude the evaluation on a positive note

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## Preparation for the Next Evaluation

### Documenting Performance:

- Document both positive and negative employee performance throughout the year
- Ensure to include representative examples of their work

### Ongoing Feedback:

Providing feedback throughout the year can:

- Make the yearly performance evaluations run smoother as there will be fewer surprises
- Help get an employee quickly back on track and prevent unwanted negative work habits from becoming a fixture in an employees performance
- Help motivate positive performance. Positive feedback about good performance makes employees feel good.

### *Points to Consider:*

**How can positive feedback throughout the year help improve overall performance?**

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## Tips for Giving Constructive Criticism

If you see or become aware of an employee doing something that you feel needs to be addressed and corrected, these tips will be helpful.

1. Don't expect to eliminate defensiveness. Almost everyone will initially react with defensiveness, and possibly anger. Be prepared to defuse that reaction.
2. Before you criticize, verify the facts. If your information came from only one source, did you verify it? Do you have enough information to support your criticism? Especially today, when so many people resolve employment disputes through the court, it's important that your evaluation be accurate and fact-based.
3. Don't react emotionally. Before criticizing, make sure you are calm and not acting out of anger or frustration. Remember that your goal should be to improve performance, not to instantly punish the employee.
4. Choose the right time. The best time is probably immediately after you observe the behavior, while it's still fresh in the employee's mind, but be careful not to react emotionally. You may choose to delay the criticism to allow the situation to calm down, but don't allow things to "cool down" so much that the behavior goes unmentioned.
5. Choose the right place. It is almost never a good idea to criticize one employee in front of others.
6. Focus on the action not the employee. Describe what happened rather than what the employee did. People always react more negatively when they feel personally attacked.
7. Ask questions to be sure that you understand what really happened, and to give the employee the opportunity to explain their actions. There may be a reason for their actions that isn't immediately obvious.
8. Involve the employee in the solution. Ask them what they suggest should be done to be sure that the behavior improves.

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9. Close on a positive note. After the criticism, express your confidence that the employee will be able to correct the problem so it won't happen again. If it's appropriate, point out a positive aspect of the employee's behavior and link it to the needed improvement. "Bob, you have a reputation for always trying to do a good job, so I know you'll be able to correct this problem."
10. Follow up. If you see that the situation has been corrected, then let the employee know. That will reinforce the positive change. If it wasn't corrected, then perhaps more serious action is required.

## Tips for Correcting Job Performance

When an employee fails to perform their job at the levels you think are appropriate, this list will help guide your efforts to resolve the problem.

1. Does the employee know what the job is and how to do it correctly?
2. Does the employee understand the quality expectations for the job? How can they be measured and verified?
3. Has the employee performed the job correctly in the past? If so, then that suggests that this has nothing to do with job knowledge, and that something else is creating the problem.
4. Has the job changed the last time employee performed? If so, training may be necessary.
5. Is the employee experiencing any personal issues or home life problems that could be affecting their work performance?
6. Does the employee have the resources necessary to perform the job, including people, tools, information, materials and time?
7. Does the employee have the ability to do the job? If not, can that be corrected by training? If not, can the employee be reassigned?
8. Is the employee overqualified, leading to boredom and a drop in performance? Can that be corrected new responsibilities?

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- 9. Does the employee know they are not meeting expectations?
- 10. Are you doing something that contributes to the problem? The only way to answer this question is to ask neutral third party.

**Praise in Public:**

- ✓ **REMEMBER** to never criticize in public
- ✓ **RECOGNIZE** that praise in public can also lead to jealousy from other employees
- ✓ **UNDERSTAND** that a special achievement does deserve praise, just be careful how, when and how often it is provided

**What other emotions could praising an employee publicly raise in other employees?**

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## Workshop Wrap Up

### Discomfort with Change:

- The performance evaluation process is all about change. As a supervisor, you are either trying to change the performance of your employees, correct unwanted performance or encouraging employees to reach higher levels of performance.
- Change for the most part is an uncomfortable experience

### Action Planning:

- {Action Plan Form and instructions to be inserted here.}
- If you can do a better job of managing the performance of your employees, then they will all be able to do a better job for your organization

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