

Determining Your Performance Evaluation Mindset

You should respond to this quiz as you actually think. The result of this quiz does not need to be shared.

Answer each question true (T) or false (F)

1. Before my performance evaluation review I typically:

- a) try not to think about it T__ F__
- b) do a self assessment of my strengths & areas where I could use improvement T__ F__
- c) make sure I can justify all mistakes or incidents of poor performance T__ F__

2. When it comes to performance evaluation my strategy is:

- a) argue or negotiate for the highest rating T__ F__
- b) let the boss have his/her say and get it over with as quickly and painlessly as possible T__ F__
- c) learn as much as I can – it's a good tool for professional growth and development. T__ F__

3. Based on my experience, I generally assume that most bosses:

- a) will put little time and effort into my performance evaluation as possible (so why should I waste my time?) T__ F__
- b) will use performance evaluation as a power play (so I need a few tricks of my own) T__ F__
- c) will have good intentions and will try their best (but may need help) T__ F__

4. When my boss criticizes me I feel:

- a) he/she cares enough to tell me where I need to improve T__ F__
- b) I have to defend myself T__ F__
- c) I should just ignore or forget it because my boss usually doesn't know what he/she is talking about. T__ F__

5. From my experience, in the days immediately following a performance evaluation discussion, I should:

- a) stay clear of my boss for a few days because there are usually ill feelings T__ F__
- b) write up a plan of action for areas needing improvement T__ F__
- c) look for chances to take advantage of the fact that my boss usually feels guilty T__ F__

Receiving Feedback

- **Listen Actively**
Make eye contact with the speaker. Ask probing questions to make sure you understand what is being said.
- **Don't get emotional**
Breathe deeply. Sit back. Adopt a relaxed body posture. Lower your voice. Speak slowly.
- **Don't get defensive**
This is not aimed at you personally. Understand the other person's perspective before presenting your side of the story. Ask for more details on points you don't agree with.
- **Accept the input**
Even when you don't agree with all of it, there will be some good ideas – accept them. This shows respect for the other person's perspective.
- **Work to improve**
Devote your energy to finding improvement rather than disputing observations. Don't put the burden of solutions to the other person. Offer ideas of your own.



Preparing for the Evaluation

Here is a listing of things that should be reviewed and considered when doing the final preparation for your performance evaluation. This listing applies to both exempt and non-exempt employees.

Review your Performance File

Your performance file should be a running file that you keep with important documentation related to your performance and behavior.

- Previous Performance Evaluations and documentation specific to the current evaluation period.
 - Goals & objectives
 - Ratings
 - Comments
 - Accomplishments
 - Opportunities for improvement
- Notable incidents or similar documents.
 - Any documented discussion with your supervisor
 - Documented counseling
 - Documented accolades from your supervisor, peers, customers, other management
- Production Records.
- Disciplinary Action.
 - Performance Improvement Plan
 - Reprimands
- Customer Feedback.
 - Emails
 - Documented verbal feedback
 - Memos or letters
 - Letters of commendation
 - Written complaints
- Training Records.
 - Department training
 - CLPD
 - Outside training
- Certification and Licensures.
- Completed projects, education, and professional development.

Review the Job Description

Review the job description to make sure that it accurately reflects what you're doing. If you are performing additional duties and tasks that are not listed in the job description, or not performing

the duties and tasks listed in the job description on a regular basis, you may need to sit down with your supervisor to determine exactly what you should be doing.

- Are the job requirements accurate and complete?
- Do the duties and tasks performed by you match those in the job description?
- Are you performing duties and tasks that are outside of the job description?
- Do you have the knowledge and skills required by the job description?
- Have you been assigned tasks and projects that are outside of the scope of the job?

Consider support factors that may have impacted performance

Examine support and resource factors that may have impacted your performance. Many of these may be outside of your control and should not be counted against you when your supervisor evaluates your performance.

- Changes to the priority of goals that were identified during the last performance evaluation.
- Lack of resources; tools, equipment, or support.
- Outdated or ineffective tools or equipment.
- Lack of or insufficient training support.
- Insufficient funding for travel, certifications, licensures.
- Lack of planning and direction that result in changing priorities, project deadlines, and urgency.
- Lack of decisions or decisions that are not timely, delays in projects and tasks, ineffective support.
- Lack of support by other employees or departments.

Consider changes in the team, group, or department that may have impacted performance

Examine changes in the department that may have impacted your performance. Many of these may be outside of your control and should not be counted against you when your supervisor evaluates your performance.

- Changes in the management structure of the department that may have impacted priorities.
- Changes to the mission of the department, team, or group based on restructuring or reorganization.
- Changes to the goals or objectives for the department, team, or group.
- In progress tasks or assignments stopped or abandoned due to a change in direction.
- New projects or tasks assigned to you due to a change in the department mission, goals, or objectives.
- Staffing changes resulting in additional work load for you.
- Changes in funding resulting in canceled training, travel, certifications, licensures, tools, equipment, or support.



Complete a self-assessment

A self-assessment provides your supervisor with additional information, and important insight into how you view your contributions and the importance of your job. The self-assessment can be structured (a Exempt Employee Self Assessment Form is available at http://hr.nmsu.edu/employee-relations/files/2011/12/R_F_Self_Assessment_Form-Exempt_Employee.doc) or more informal. Here are some things that you may want to get feedback on.

- Your understanding of what is expected of you in your job and how the job fits into the overall department function.
- New projects, duties and tasks assigned during the evaluation period.
- Your job strengths and weakness.
- Factors that you feel impacted your job.
- Ways that the supervisor can assist you.
- Areas where you would like to gain additional experience, training, or education.
- Things that you accomplished during the year.
- Your career advancement goals.

Pre-evaluation meeting

Ask your supervisor to schedule a meeting with you before he or she completes your evaluation. During the meeting, review all of the information that you've gathered so that your supervisor has all of the information necessary to give you a fair evaluation. Be sure to have copies of everything for your supervisor.



Pre-Evaluation Meeting

If your supervisor does not schedule a pre-evaluation meeting with you, here are some things that you can do to be proactive and setup a meeting with your supervisor.

Schedule the meeting

None of us like to be surprised when it comes to discussing our performance; that includes your supervisor. In fact, scheduling a pre-evaluation meeting with your supervisor tells him or her that you're serious about having an open, productive meeting and providing them with information to help them give you a fair evaluation.

- Let your supervisor know what the meeting is about, what you would like to talk about and about how much time you think you will need for items that you have.
- Schedule enough time to:
 - Review all of your material with your supervisor
 - Allow time for productive discussion
- Give the supervisor at least a day or two to:
 - Gather their documentation
 - Review their notes
 - Plan what they want to discuss

Making the meeting productive

Performance discussions are very important to each of us. It's important to plan what you want to discuss and what you want to say when you meet with your supervisor.

- Write down what you want to accomplish in the meeting.
 - Remember to focus on your performance and behavior.
- Start with a positive point. Regardless whether you set the meeting or your supervisor sets it up, it's very important to start the meeting on the *Human* side; a simple compliment, inquiry about the supervisor or family, or a brief conversation about a hobby or interest that the supervisor has. This helps to break the ice and put everyone at ease. It also shows them that you're interested in them as a person.
- Key points to discuss:
 - Your performance file
 - Accomplishments
 - Progress since your last evaluation
 - Customer feedback that you've received
 - Your expectations and your supervisor's expectations
- Discuss your self assessment and information that you gathered during the year with your supervisor.
 - Your strengths and weaknesses
 - Changes that you feel impacted how well you were able to perform



- Your job performance and career advancement goals
- Ask about the overall evaluation process and timelines.
 - How the overall evaluation process works. Remember, your supervisor may not realize what the correct process or flow is. Here is the flow that Human Resources has put out:
 - Evaluation is completed by the supervisor and sent to the next level approver for review and approval
 - Evaluation is approved by the next level supervisor and returned to the supervisor
 - Supervisor is to discuss the evaluation with the employee
 - What happens next?
 - When the supervisor plans to begin your evaluation
 - When the supervisor might expect to schedule a meeting with you to review the evaluation
- Practice active and reflective listening during the meeting.
 - Good eye contact
 - Don't interrupt when your supervisor is talking
 - Ask questions to make sure you understand
 - Repeat things back to help make sure that what you heard is what your supervisor meant
 - Watch your body language. Remember 55% of what your supervisor "hears" comes from your body language
- Close the meeting on a positive note.
 - Thank the supervisor for their time and giving you the chance to give them your input
 - Close on the human side



Evaluation Meeting

Preparing for the meeting

All of us get a little nervous when it's time to have our evaluation meeting. Even if you had a pre-evaluation meeting with your supervisor, here are some tips that will help you prepare for your evaluation meeting.

- Review your information before the meeting if possible.
 - Information from your pre-evaluation meeting if you had one
 - Your accomplishments
 - Progress since your last evaluation
 - Customer feedback that you've received
 - Your strengths and weaknesses
 - Your job performance and career advancement goals
- If you have things that you would like to discuss with your supervisor, let him or her know what you would like to talk about in advance and about how much time you think you will need for items that you have. This helps the supervisor plan the meeting a little better.

Making the meeting a success

Here are some tips for the actual meeting.

- Have a positive mindset. If you expect the meeting to go badly, it probably will.
- Start with a positive point. It's very important to start the meeting on the *Human* side; a simple compliment, inquiry about the supervisor or family, or a brief conversation about a hobby or interest that the supervisor has. This helps to break the ice and put everyone at ease. It also shows them that you're interested in them as a person.
- Practice active and reflective listening.
 - Good eye contact
 - Don't interrupt
 - Ask questions to make sure you understand
 - Repeat things back to help make sure that what you heard is what your supervisor meant
 - Watch your body language. Keep in mind that 55% of what your supervisor "hears" comes from your body language
- Avoid acting defensive during the meeting. Like with our body language, 38% of what we "hear" comes from how something is said. Remember, everyone talks differently, so don't just focus on how something is said, but always try to find something useful in what was said.
- If you're not able to talk about the things that you wanted to discuss during the meeting, ask your supervisor if an additional meeting can be setup.
- Close the meeting on a positive note.
 - Thank the supervisor for their time and giving you the chance to give them your input
 - Close on the human side



Article 21 Performance Evaluation

Section 1. Purpose.

Performance evaluations are intended to establish a communication tool to ensure that employees are performing at acceptable levels and to provide a means by which to document performance and to establish a procedure for correcting performance problems should they occur. Written performance evaluations shall be completed: after completion of a probationary period; on an annual basis by March 31 and no later than April 30; any time a supervisor considers an evaluation necessary or useful for the purposes stated above; or upon transfer to new supervision. No employee shall be denied a merit pay increase based upon the University not providing a timely annual performance evaluation. 30

Section 2. Performance Ratings.

For each of the elements evaluated and for the overall rating, an employee shall receive one of the following ratings (see Performance Planning and Evaluation Form attached as an appendix to this Agreement):

- A. Outstanding – continuously exceeds expectations for the position.
- B. Commendable – accomplishments exceed expected level or essential requirements.
- C. Satisfactory – performance meets standards of job requirements.
- D. Needs Improvement – performance does not meet all essential requirements of job; work requires frequent guidance and checking; improvement is expected.
- E. Unsatisfactory – performance substandard; requires a high degree of supervision and direction; deficiencies are clearly evident and specific; remedial action is required.

Section 3. Performance Elements.

Performance elements shall be based on the regular and recurring duties assigned to the employee and previously agreed-upon goals and objectives. At a minimum, the following elements should be rated on a performance evaluation: knowledge of job; quality of work; time and task management; attendance and punctuality; work relations; judgment; dependability; adaptability; and ability to represent the department and University (see Performance Planning and Evaluation Form attached as an appendix to this Agreement).

Elements will be rated fairly and equitably. The supervisor shall take into account equipment and resource problems, lack of available training, and other such matters that were outside of an employee's control. Pre-approved time away from the job including sick leave, annual leave, comp time off and authorized duty time for union representational purposes and other authorized activities will not be considered negatively in the application of performance elements, but evaluations shall fully take into account such pre-approved absences in a measure of timeliness and quantity of work. If an employee does not have an opportunity to perform work encompassed within an element for reasons outside of the employee's control, that element will not be considered in the performance evaluation process.



Section 4. Supervisor Completion.

The employee's immediate supervisor, who is in the ordinary course of business the individual responsible for assigning and reviewing the employee's work, will prepare all performance evaluations when possible. If an employee is transferred, he/she shall be given an exit evaluation and it shall be used in conjunction with his/her new supervisor's year-end evaluation, unless the employee has been working under the new supervisor for at least six (6) months, in which case the new supervisor may elect not to use the former supervisor's evaluation. When both evaluations are used, the overall ratings may be averaged in accordance with the number of months evaluated by each supervisor. 31

Section 5. Deficient Performance.

A. In the event during the current rating period, an employee's performance deteriorates to a less than satisfactory level, the supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the deficiencies. If a performance evaluation is conducted, the supervisor shall include in the written performance evaluation:

1. the specific tasks and standards that will assist the employee in accomplishing his/her overall objectives for the next evaluation period; and
2. any training needs.

B. The employee will be given a reasonable amount of time to correct the performance deficiencies before the next performance evaluation is conducted unless the deficient performance occurs late in the annual evaluation period.

Section 6. Miscellaneous.

A. Performance evaluations shall also include the following:

1. an overall performance rating for the period;
2. a statement of goals and objectives for the forthcoming period (which may include recommendations for training, if any, to enhance the employee's skills); and
3. a statement justifying an overall rating of either "Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory."

B. The Employer will not prescribe a forced distribution of levels for ratings for employees covered by this Agreement.

C. The Employer may change an employee's final evaluation only with written justification to the Human Resources Office. The supervisor shall give the employee a copy of the final evaluation and a copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file. A statement of an employee's objection to an evaluation or comment may be attached and put in their personnel file.

D. Disagreement with overall performance ratings of "Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory" may be grieved/appealed through the Union Grievance Procedure or the University appeals process.