

**ANNUAL EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS
AT OBERLIN COLLEGE**



RATIONALE/PURPOSE OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Formal evaluations of employee work behavior helps the employer and employee build on the strengths of the employee and identify those areas the employee needs improvement to be more effective and efficient in their job.

Performance evaluations enable the creation of reasonable performance standards so that both supervisor and employee are aware of work that is considered "acceptable performance." Because of the active involvement of both the supervisor and the employee in performance evaluations, an important channel of two-way communication is opened. Communication can result in increased cooperation and understanding between supervisors and employees, which in turn can enhance work performance and work environment thus providing better customer service to our community and each other.

Performance evaluations allow the supervisor and employee to communicate openly about performance. This should happen throughout the year and not only at this time. Issues discussed during the evaluation should not be unexpected to the employee and supervisors should take advantage of the opportunity to hear employees' views of their work experience.

As part of the evaluation, supervisors and employees should also use the opportunity to mutually establish annual goals for progress. Goals should be realistic, measurable, and obtainable within six months to one year. Should an evaluation reveal performance that does not meet expectations, supervisors and employees should identify actions that can be taken to enhance development and performance of the employee.

Each employee will be issued the opportunity to complete a self-evaluation through the ViDesktop performance product to complete. The supervisor should review that self-evaluation with the employee, before completing their evaluation of the employee's performance, considering the information the employee has provided. A follow up meeting could be necessary, if changes are substantive. The employee will have access to the final evaluation. The employee will be asked to electronically sign that they have met with their supervisor as part of the evaluation process but signing the evaluation does not indicate their agreement of the outcome.

Throughout the year, the supervisor and employee should evaluate results based on previously established goals and performance standards, which provides a basis and documentation for transfer, promotion, reassignment, or disciplinary action. Standards for decisions on merit advance.

Gaining the cooperation and active involvement of employees is critical to the college's success. Providing them with a clear sense of how their activities and assignments are connected with the college's mission and goals, facilitates such involvement. It is your role to provide direction and feedback to accomplish those outcomes, and a performance appraisal is the mechanism by which it all happens.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The annual appraisal process is a valuable milestone for both employee and supervisor to take stock of the past year and review the needs and expectations for the coming year. The conduct of performance appraisals can be the basis for legal action by disgruntled employees. Consider the following:

1. All appraisals should be fact-based and non-discriminatory.
2. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act does not require proof of intent to discriminate in order to prove discrimination. Disproportionate numbers of majority or minority members in specific job categories are considered prima facie evidence of discrimination. Any performance appraisal system that results in differential promotion or dismissal of groups of employees may be discriminatory.
3. Employers are solely responsible for validating the performance appraisal system that they use. If an employee shows that evidence of discrimination exists, he or she does not have to prove that the performance appraisal system is invalid.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Employees are naturally concerned about the appraisal process since it involves judgment of their effectiveness. They may know when a performance review will take place, but often have only a vague understanding of the standards by which they will be evaluated. The Performance Appraisal often has a role in salary increases and promotions, adding to the feeling employees have that it will “make or break” them.

Managers, as well, may not look forward to the process. Few people are comfortable sitting in judgment of others, and when each individual’s performance must be separated from the activities of the group, their effectiveness can be difficult to measure. The process can be time consuming, especially if supervisors do only annual reviews that force them to recall and catalogue a year’s worth of experiences. This “once-a-year” approach to performance appraisals doesn’t work well since it tends to focus the appraisals on extraordinary events or to rehash past problems that should have been addressed already. Additionally, some employees need regular, ongoing evaluations and structured guidance to help them set and achieve both job and career goals. It is a heavy responsibility to evaluate a person’s performance for the record.

With these fears and concerns in mind, we have developed a workshop that focuses on providing specific strategies for managers that are easy to use, and easy to learn. Managers who have a structured, organized set of strategies approach the process with increased confidence and enthusiasm.