

Supervisors Round Table: Performance Evaluations

1. Preparing to write the Performance Evaluation

- Review the policy for a refresher, as needed
- Review Supervisor's File – where you've kept discussion notes, feedback and performance issues throughout the year
- Review last year's evaluation, then think about whether, within each category, the employee's performance improved, deteriorated, or stayed the same. Identify specific examples in evidence of your conclusions, and be sure to reflect that in the narrative – then rate accordingly
- Contact HR for support if you anticipate significant decrease in ratings over prior year, or if you're dealing with an employee who has had disciplinary action over the evaluation period, or has exceeded the threshold established in the Sick Leave Monitoring program (48+ hours,64+ hours)
- Review training record; HR can provide a report listing the training the employee has attended during the past year

2. Writing the Performance Evaluation

- No surprises on the formal evaluation –constructive feedback should have been given throughout the year, especially if there are performance concerns
- Provide specifics – give examples of work product, behavior, actions, accomplishments or the way they handled assignments as the basis for the category rating
- Make a call – mark the appropriate rating category “box” – not in between! Let the narrative providing the shading/nuances.
- What do they need to do to achieve a higher rating for next evaluation period?
- Use sick leave report for rolling 12-month period for the attendance section – do NOT comment about a workplace injury or FMLA/protected leave.
- Consider starting each section's narrative with a sentence that identifies the current evaluation rating as compared to last year. For example: “Laura has been rated higher in this category as compared to last year's evaluation as a result of”
- Beware the “halo/horns” effect

3. Conducting the Performance Evaluation

- Provide a draft copy a few days in advance of the meeting
- Ask the employee to be prepared to discuss both prior performance and future goals, as well as consider what feedback the employee can provide you that would be helpful to you as their supervisor in supporting their efforts to succeed
- Use this as an opportunity to look FORWARD, not just BACK on prior performance. Spend an equal amount of time looking at assignments, goals for next evaluation period that you do covering last year's performance. Engage with the employee – get their thoughts/input about expectations for next year. After you have this discussion regarding future expectations, finalize the Discussion Form.
- Seek feedback about your own performance as the employee's supervisor: do they feel you are providing the right level of support for them? Is there something you could be doing differently, in terms of how you delegate assignments, provide feedback, or interact with the employee in general that would be more helpful to them in achieving set goals?

4. What's wrong with this picture?

- A. Narrative doesn't match rating
- B. Comments about protected leaves
- C. Not marking a specific box
- D. Minimal amount of narrative provided – no specifics
- E. Inconsistency

Refer to attached sample evaluation excerpts on the following pages.

NARRATIVE DOESN'T MATCH RATING

PROBLEM: IS THE EMPLOYEE TRULY ABOVE AVERAGE IN THIS CATEGORY AND IT'S JUST THE COMMENTS THAT DO NOT SUPPORT THE RATING, OR, ARE THE COMMENTS RIGHT ON POINT AND THE RATING IS INFLATED????

BELOW STANDARD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	ABOVE AVERAGE	OUTSTANDING
-------------------	----------------------	--------------	------------------	-------------

Work Habits/Safety: Consider whether follows work rules, adherence to policies and procedures, and safety awareness.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequently fails to carry out assigned work; wastes an inordinate amount of time; has many careless injuries.	Sometimes doesn't clarify assignments; doesn't keep supervisor informed; safety is not a priority.	Follows instructions and performs work as assigned; keeps supervisor informed of progress; does jobs in safe way.	Consistently follows work rules and procedures; makes constructive suggestions to improve; takes no chances with safety of others.	Is exemplary role model for others; very reliable on follow through; always gets the job done; actively promotes safety.

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: Mason follows most instructions and works safely. He keeps me informed of progress. We need to work on minimizing other staff distractions whenever possible and returning from breaks on time.

RECOMMENDED RATING FOR ABOVE SUPPORTING NARRATIVE

Rating: Satisfactory

RECOMMENDED SUPPORTING NARRATIVE FOR ABOVE AVERAGE RATING

Mason consistently follows the direction of his supervisor and crew leader and takes notes to ensure he has the direction clear. He has taken safety to heart and has provides valuable input during safety tailgate meetings i.e. ensuring we had the proper probes on the truck prior to leaving the yard for the job of Treat Blvd. I have observed him in the field reminding others to wear their safety hats. I encourage Mason to consider becoming a member of the site safety committee or the District wide Safety Committee.

COMMENTS ABOUT PROTECTED LEAVES

BELOW STANDARD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	ABOVE AVERAGE	OUTSTANDING
-------------------	----------------------	--------------	------------------	-------------

Attendance: Consider absenteeism, tardiness, use of sick leave and adherence to call-in requirements. Sick leave usage during the evaluation period was 96 hours

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excessively absent; abuses sick leave; almost never calls in as required.	Absent more than most; late to work; higher than average use of sick leave; sometimes does not call in on time.	Acceptable attendance record; uses an average amount of sick leave; calls in when unable to report to work.	Very reliable attendance; almost never late; uses less sick leave than the average; always calls in on time.	Exceptional record; rarely absent; has seldom been late; has high sick leave balance on books.

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: **During this evaluation period Carlo has used 96 hours of sick leave, 88 hours due to his recent FMLA for his wife’s foot surgery. The amount of time he has missed has impacted his ability to get his job done. Carlo needs to bring his sick leave usage under the thresholds of 64 hours and 48 hours.**

RECOMMENDED RATING AND SUPPORTING DIALOGUE:

Rating: Above Average **Number of Hours: 8**

During this evaluation period Carlo used a total of 8 hours of unmitigated sick leave. This demonstrates his understanding as to the impact absences can have on work and that by minimizing his usage he is able to contribute greatly to the goals and objectives of the District. He has regularly maintained an unmitigated low sick leave usage over the past several years. Continue to keep up the good work.

Attendance: Consider absenteeism, tardiness, use of sick leave and adherence to call-in requirements. Sick leave usage during the evaluation period was 50 hours.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excessively absent; abuses sick leave; almost never calls in as required.	Absent more than most; late to work; higher than average use of sick leave; sometimes does not call in on time.	Acceptable attendance record; uses an average amount of sick leave; calls in when unable to report to work.	Very reliable attendance; almost never late; uses less sick leave than the average; always calls in on time.	Exceptional record; rarely absent; has seldom been late; has high sick leave balance on books.

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: **June has decreased her sick leave usage over the past evaluation period. She needs to be aware of her sick leave usage and reduce her usage when and where possible.**

RECOMMENDED RATING AND SUPPORTING DIALOGUE:

Rating: Needs Improvement **Number of Hours: 50**

Though June has decreased her sick leave usage over the past evaluation period from 72 to 50, she is still above the acceptable threshold of 48 hours. She received a verbal counseling on January 7, 2011. I encourage her to be aware of her total usage at all times and expect that she will bring her usage to 48 hours or below. I will provide her with a copy of her individual sick leave usage report each pay period for this purpose.

NOT MARKING A SPECIFIC BOX

BELOW STANDARD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	ABOVE AVERAGE	OUTSTANDING
-------------------	----------------------	--------------	------------------	-------------

Report Writing Ability: Consider ability to organize information and present it in writing in a clear, concise and understandable form.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoids written communication; reports are rambling and obscure central issue; poor English usage and grammar.	Has difficulty expressing ideas clearly and concisely; must be prodded to write things down; uses too much bureaucratic and technical jargon.	Reports are under-standable and factual; knows when to write things down; uses correct English grammar and spelling; reasonably well organized.		Written work is clear, concise and easy to understand; expresses self well in writing; very organized reports.	Noted for ability to write; summarizes lengthy and complex issues well; perceptive editor and consulted by others.

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: **Bob continues to show progress in this area and will be further developing his skills during the upcoming evaluation period. He has included a performance milestone in the upcoming period to complete a business writing course.**

THIS NARRATIVE SUPPORTS A RATING OF SATISFACTORY

RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE

Bob continues to show progress in this area. His reports are understandable and reasonably well organized. The times I have spent editing his work has greatly decreased. He will be further developing his skills during the upcoming evaluation period. He has included a performance milestone in the upcoming period to complete a business writing course. If Bob continues to progress in this manner I anticipate being able to rate him higher on his next evaluation.

MINIMAL AMOUNT OF NARRATIVE PROVIDED – NO SPECIFICS

BELOW STANDARD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	ABOVE AVERAGE	OUTSTANDING
-------------------	----------------------	--------------	------------------	-------------

Planning and Organizing: Consider ability to plan, schedule, and utilize resources effectively to achieve goals and objectives.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often fails to meet deadlines; does not set goals or priorities.	Plans routine tasks in marginal way; does not anticipate many issues; crisis oriented.	Works in orderly way; usually estimates resources needed; meets most deadlines.	Manages time well; forestalls most problems by planning	Systematically handles any job well; extremely well organized; sets objectives, prioritizes/ achieves goals.

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: **Joan meets most deadlines given to her. She approaches work in an organized manner and has demonstrated solid planning skills**

RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE:

Joan manages her time well, and embraces the need to set time up-front for project planning. By identifying key tasks and building a reasonable schedule for completion, she has been able to manage a wide variety of projects simultaneously... Joan does, however, have a tendency to assume that others involved in the project will be able to meet the milestones she has set without consulting with them first. Joan needs to build time into project schedules for improved communication and coordination with fellow CCWD staff. Her rating in this category reflects a high degree of proficiency in planning and organizing, and by ensuring a higher level of coordination with internal staff, I would anticipate a higher rating for the next evaluation period.

Operation of Heavy Equipment: Consider ability to operate commercial vehicles requiring a class "A" or "B" driver's license.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to operate most field equipment; unsafe and unreliable on equipment alone.	Can operate some vehicles but not all; has difficulty on occasion with specialized equipment.	Able to operate most equipment skillfully; can use for routine jobs when necessary.	Good operator; careful, efficient and skilled; can do many non-standard tasks, has taught others to use equipment.	Very skilled and efficient; can operate virtually all equipment needed.	N/A

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: **Mason has learned how to operate all the equipment this past year. He is careful and operates safely.**

RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE:

Mason is very skilled in operating a variety of heavy equipment. His crew leader and I have observed him operating the following equipment with a high degree of effectiveness: Backhoe, Knuckle Boom, and Dump Truck. He operates in a safe manner and always checks the equipment before operating. He has assisted in helping others on the crew operate by providing constructive feedback on the job, and is starting to be viewed as possible mentor.

INCONSISTENCY

TWO SEPARATE EMPLOYEES, SAME SUPERVISOR: WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS?

EE # 1

BELOW STANDARD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	ABOVE AVERAGE	OUTSTANDING
-------------------	----------------------	--------------	------------------	-------------

Communications Ability: Consider oral communications and, if required, writing ability.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has significant difficulty understanding others; confuses people; is sloppy and inconsistent in written records.	Sometimes makes assumptions without the facts; may be unclear at times; contradicts self.	Able to make self understood; does not interrupt others; reports are generally clear and concise.	A good listener; asks good questions; very effective at conveying ideas; very accurate and timely reports.	Is clear, concise and persuasive; simplifies complex issues; very effective communicator; well prepared presentations.

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: **Keeps me informed of job progress**

EE# 2

BELOW STANDARD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	ABOVE AVERAGE	OUTSTANDING
-------------------	----------------------	--------------	------------------	-------------

Communications Ability: Consider oral communications and, if required, writing ability.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has significant difficulty understanding others; confuses people; is sloppy and inconsistent in written records.	Sometimes makes assumptions without the facts; may be unclear at times; contradicts self.	Able to make self understood; does not interrupt others; reports are generally clear and concise.	A good listener; asks good questions; very effective at conveying ideas; very accurate and timely reports.	Is clear, concise and persuasive; simplifies complex issues; very effective communicator; well prepared presentations.

Comments / Suggestions for Improvement: **Keeps me informed.**

5. What do you do if.....

An employee you are about to sit down with to discuss his/her evaluation tells you: "I want my Union Rep!"

Many employees mistakenly believe that they have the right to Union representation during an evaluation discussion if they believe that the ratings or discussion will be negative. That's simply not the case. An important legal case, NLRB vs. Weingarten, Inc., established that an employee who is the *subject of an investigation* has the right to union representation. This right is only during an investigation interview, in which the employer is seeking to obtain information which could be used as a basis for discipline against the employee, or asks the employee to defend his/her conduct. A discussion involving a formal evaluation process does not in any way trigger the right to representation. This is simply a supervisor providing performance feedback to an employee – an evaluation is not discipline.

In the event that an employee asks for union representation for an evaluation discussion, please advise them that this would not be appropriate, as this is not a disciplinary investigation. If they continue to insist, please contact Human Resources for support. HR will advise the employee directly that union representation will not be provided, and the reasons why.

An employee tells you during your evaluation discussion that he/she completely disagrees with your ratings and comments

Constructive feedback can be difficult for some people to accept. You may come across a situation in which the employee becomes very defensive, even accusatory, as in "you're only rating me low because you don't like me", etc. That's why it's so very important to ensure that you have produced a quality evaluation, in which you provide specific examples of accomplishments or deficiencies related to assignments and work product. It's a lot harder to argue with the facts, clearly stated, than it is with vague generalities. Hopefully the work you've done up-front to develop a detailed and well thought-out evaluation will go a long way in eliminating this type of reaction.

However, if you're faced with this scenario, don't engage emotionally. It is appropriate for you to ask for specifics as to why they disagree with your narrative or rating. Is it possible that you may have your facts wrong? If, after hearing what the employee has to say, you still believe your narrative/rating is appropriate and fairly and accurately reflects your observations of their performance, let the employee know that. Also advise the employee that he/she has the right to submit a rebuttal in writing. When they do so, HR will review the rebuttal with the supervisor to ensure that there are no issues that require additional consideration. Regardless of whether any changes are made to the evaluation based on the employee's rebuttal (again, only in instances where there are factual errors), the rebuttal will be filed in the employee's formal Personnel File maintained by Human Resources, along with the evaluation itself. There are times when the parties simply won't agree; your job as supervisor isn't to convince someone about their need to change their performance. It's your responsibility to accurately and fairly assess their performance and provide feedback as to how they can improve, and ultimately, to hold them accountable to perform to satisfactory standards.

You just completed your evaluation discussion, and the employee tells you: “I refuse to sign!”

If you are confronted with this when you're ready to sign off on the evaluation form itself, read to the employee the wording by the signature that specifically states that signing the document does not mean that the employee agrees with the rating; rather, it is simply confirming that the evaluation was reviewed by the supervisor and the employee. If they still refuse to sign, simply write on the evaluation signature block that “This form was reviewed with the employee on (insert date). Employee states he/she will not sign this document. Nevertheless, this evaluation stands as a formal record of his/her performance.” Then forward to HR per the usual process.