Writing and delivering effective performance appraisals

Managers/Leaders must write and deliver effective performance evaluations. With this critical communication skillset, managers/leaders will aid in ensuring that their staff members are contributing to the attainment of divisional and institutional goals. In addition, they can use the appraisal process as a vehicle for identifying for staff members areas of continued growth, skills, performance gaps and/or areas where new skills may be required for emerging needs.

Leaders who deliver effective performance evaluations demonstrate the following characteristics:

1. **Focus on observations** - communicate *observations instead of conclusions based on observations.*

2. **Provide specific examples to support their statements** – i.e. *The workshops you developed were well attended and met the targeted increase in attendance over the previous year*.

3. **Listen well** – *Guides the conversation and checks to make sure they understand what the staff member said using statements such as, "If I head you correctly, you said…."*

4. **Maintain an atmosphere of open, honest, two-way communication** – *ask for explanations, avoid making assumptions, and discuss problems or challenges.*

When managers/leaders conduct evaluations effectively, employees should understand:

- behaviors and performance in which they are effective, and should continue

- where there are opportunities to become more effective by doing more of what is successful

- which behaviors and performance are not working and should stop

- where there are opportunities for growth and development that support the department/division/university and their individual career goals

Preparing for the performance appraisal meeting
Leaders should:

- Create talking points for both positive and difficult topics to guide the appraisal conversation; incorporate meeting notes and the staff member's self-assessment

- Allocate sufficient time so that the staff member does not feel rushed through the process

- Ensure a private, distraction-free meeting location and environment

- Afford the staff member time to privately review the leader's assessment before the meeting so that they are prepared and have time to address any emotional responses to the assessment

Delivering an effective performance appraisal

At formal appraisal meetings, leaders should engage in a dialog with the staff member, provide written substantive, objective feedback in their assessment of each individual goal and an overall assessment of performance against goals.
Leaders should:

- Ask, *were goals met or not met? If they were not met, they should inquire as to whether there were any, extenuating circumstance.*

- Acknowledge areas of strength with specific examples and encourage its continuation

- Provide specific and objective assessment of areas needing improvement, including recommendations to close performance gaps

- Support narratives with specific examples to help the staff member understand the leader's assessment of the performance results

- Provide an opportunity for two-way communication, where both parties are free to share their thoughts, ideas concerns, and opportunities for growth and development

Managers/leaders can receive coaching support from EAP for performance management related issues by calling 800 252-4555.

In addition to resources already offered in the [performance management toolkit](#), please see below for more learning opportunities from LinkedIn Learning and ESI Training to support leaders in writing and delivering effective performance appraisals.

LinkedIn Learning

- [How to conduct performance appraisals](#)
- [Using feedback to drive performance](#)
- [Conducting performance reviews](#)
- [Your role in managing performance](#)
- [Performance Improvement Plans: A leader's guide to turning things around](#)

ESI/EAP resources and access information:

ESI EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE GROUP — TotalCare EAP, Public Safety EAP, Educators' EAP, Higher Ed EAP, HealthCare EAP, Union AP

Online Leadership Training Recommendations

LEVEL ONE
- New Supervisor Fundamentals – (67 minutes) – SVL_102126
- The Interviewing Process – (46 minutes) – SVL_102258
- Accountability Overview for Managers – (13 minutes) – SVL_1020126
- What To Say When Someone's Not Doing What You Need – (6 minutes) – SVL_017127
- 12 Essential Leadership Skills – (26 minutes) – SVL_087048_NQ
- Coaching Crash Course – (30 minutes) – SVL_1020306
- Eight Keys to a More Respectful Workplace – (55 minutes) – SVL_017194

LEVEL TWO
- Management Styles that Don't Work – (6 minutes) – SVL_102460
- Cutting Edge Communication: Supporting Others – (5 minutes) – SVL_066266_NQ
- Remote Leadership: Building Trust in the Virtual Environment – (7 minutes) – SVL_083861
- Giving Feedback as a Manager – (8 minutes) – SVL_1020395
- Painless Performance Conversations – (45 minutes) – SVL_014285_NQ
- Creating Engagement Among Employees – (45 minutes) – SVL_102316
- Dealing Effectively with Unacceptable Employee Behavior – (180 minutes) – SVL_081238

LEVEL THREE
- Conflict Management Skills: Helping Employees Manage Conflict – (5 minutes) – SVL_083718
- Conflict Management Skills: Helping Groups Resolve Conflict – (5 minutes) – SVL_083722
- Disagreements at Work – (26 minutes) – SVL_102327
- Leadership and Motivation – (20 minutes) – SVL_102459
- Effectance: The Key to Motivation – (50 minutes) – SVL_102314
- 5 Ways to Coach for Better Performance – (12 minutes) – SVL_066380
- Developing B-Players Into Top Performers – (42 minutes) – SVL_102410
- Learning Retention Strategies – (27 minutes) – SVL_102290

LEVEL FOUR
- Leadership and Building an Effective Team – (42 minutes) – SVL_102776
- Developing the Leader Within You: The Heart of Leadership – (30 minutes) – SVL_011022_NQ
- Would I Inspire Me? – (15 minutes) – SVL_086005
- Leading a Diverse Workforce – (10 minutes) – SVL_1020274
- Heighten Your Presence with Emotional Intelligence – (29 minutes) – SVL_015058
- Identifying the Characteristics of Leaders – (14 minutes) – SVL_1059727
- Expert Insights: Workplace Mental Health for Managers – (34 minutes) – SVL_1020593

Accessing the EAP Training Center

Our extensive library of free online personal & professional development trainings!

TotalCare EAP A division of ESI

1. Go to **www.theEAP.com** and click the **Member Login** button.

2. If you have already created a User Name and Password, simply enter that info in the appropriate boxes. **If you have not registered, complete steps (a) & (b).**

    a) Click on **REGISTER**.

    b) Fill out the Registration Form to create your own User Name and Password, then click **Register. You only need to register once.**

3. Click the **"Training Center"** icon. Then click the **"Comprehensive Training Library"** icon.

4. In the **Search Content** bar at the top of the screen, type the course code. *(Find code in the 'Training Assignments' section below)*

5. Click on the course icon.

6. Click the **'Play'** or **'Start'** button to begin the course.

7. After viewing the course and taking the quiz *(you must score at least an 80% to receive a certificate)*, click on the ribbon icon below the right corner of the video. *(See picture to the right)*

Please Note: The certificate will download to your computer.
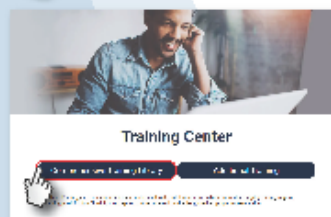
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