Performance and Feedback Guide

Organization and Human Resource Consulting
1590 North High Street, Suite 300
Columbus, OH 43210
(614) 292-9380

Office of HUMAN RESOURCES

T·H·E OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Table of Contents

Click on a title to go directly to that section

Shifting to a High Performance Culture

The Connection to Performance and Feedback and Your Role in It

Ohio State's productivity today and sustainability for tomorrow depends on having staff that are knowledgeable, results-oriented, and motivated by a sense of opportunity and the desire for personal and university excellence. To create a high performance culture, we will ensure that every regular staff member of our community is offered:

- clear performance objectives,
- ongoing coaching and feedback,
- professional development, and
- recognition for outstanding work that contributes to our overall success.

We will foster an environment for development, and provide tools for performance evaluation that include educational components and flexibility so that our staff can excel individually, and in collaboration, to successfully meet ongoing challenges.

Expectations

- 100% of regular staff must be involved in a performance process **by July 1, 2011**. Classified Civil Service (CCS) staff must be involved in a performance process beginning April 15, 2010.
- Every performance process will be anchored in the University Values.
- Feedback and coaching for success must become the primary elements for developing talent; evaluation and rewards will offer reinforcement and accountability.
- Staff are co-accountable with their supervisors for the performance process.
- Systems for selection, on boarding/orientation, training, performance management and rewards will be integrated and allow for agility.

Operationalization

- Every staff member will be involved in a performance process. Required system components, people expectations, and documentation criteria are stated below. Within these requirements, there is latitude for diversity and creativity within units.
- Colleges/units are expected to integrate the University Values into fully-functioning and fully-used performance processes that already exist.
- Customizable performance tools and resources will be provided to colleges/VP units that need to develop a performance and feedback process. A target implementation date of July 1, 2011 allows time for colleges/VP units to meet the requirement of involving every staff member in a performance process.
- Senior Human Resource Professionals in each college/unit are accountable for providing guidance and leadership; unit leadership is accountable to ensure the process is implemented.

EXCELLENCE ▶ EMINENCE

Foundational Elements of Performance and Feedback Systems

All Ohio State Performance and Feedback Systems Must

- Have strong leadership commitment.
- Allow for flexibility with professional development, while aligning employee objectives with university and unit goals.
- Include measurable performance results in the description of employee objectives.
- Balance performance results (*the what*) with the University Values (*the how*).
- Contribute to a culture in which an employee and her/his supervisor are mutually accountable for performance results, and giving and receiving feedback.
- Incorporate the University's compensation philosophy that ties compensation to performance.

All Ohio State Staff and Their Managers Must

- Define and apply the University Values at the college/VP unit and individual levels.
- Plan to contribute to each individual's engagement and success.
- Establish clear performance objectives.
- Engage in ongoing coaching and feedback.
- Commit to professional development as a shared responsibility.
- Support giving and receiving feedback in multiple directions, at multiple levels.

Documentation and Tracking Must Meet the Following Criteria

- Objectives with measurable performance results are mutually defined by the employee and her/his supervisor and documented as the plan for the employee's performance.
- Annual performance reviews are documented in preparation for the Annual Merit Compensation Process (AMCP), and every staff member and her/his supervisor must engage in a two-way discussion about the review.
- Employees are assessed relative to meeting objectives (*the what)* and living the university values *(the how)*.
- Rating scales must be simple and user-friendly.
- Employee and supervisor comments must be part of the documented review.
- Two performance check-ins each year must be completed and documented.
- Documentation should be easy to manage.

Using and Adapting the University's Personalized Performance Plan

For a copy of the Personalized Performance Plan, see **hr.osu.edu/forms/#performancemanagement**

The Personalized Performance Plan is a customizable tool for colleges/VP units. This tool can be used 'as is' or it can be customized to strengthen its relevance for a specific college/VP unit. The following information relates to the Personalized Performance Plan and is intended to guide supervisors and employees in how to use it. In addition, a job aid that summarizes information contained in this document can be found online at **hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/perfmgt525jobaid.pdf**.

The information below can be used as a guide to design a college/VP unit-specific performance planning and review tools, or to document performance plans and reviews in other ways, in addition to a customizable tool.

Performance Review Periods

Performance planning and review documents should state the performance review period, which has a beginning date and an end date. Actual dates for performance review periods at Ohio State are not mandated. It is mandatory that:

- All employees receive a performance review at least once a year.
- Classified Civil Service staff receive a review prior to the end of their probationary period, whether initial or promotional.

A standard review period is the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1, with a June 30 ending date one year later. Example: July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

Some units use anniversary dates for review periods. If an employee works for a unit that uses anniversary dates, and the employee began work on November 15, than the employee's review period is November 15, 2010 to November 14, 2011.

If the above-mentioned employee is Classified Civil Service, then the probationary review period is November 15, 2010 – May 14, 2011.

Performance and Feedback Process

Performance Planning

Performance planning occurs at the beginning of a review period. It will also ideally occur any time performance expectations change.

Performance planning takes place through a conversation between an employee and her/his supervisor. Three elements should be addressed in the performance planning conversation: performance objectives, values, and professional development.

Performance Objectives (*the what*)

Performance objectives define what is to be accomplished by when, or in what frequency. Performance objectives are at the heart of every position description. Position descriptions describe the job a person has been hired to do. Specific job responsibilities make up performance objectives.

All performance objectives should be aligned with a university strategic goal. Identify and name the university goal associated with each objective. See page 15 for a list of the university strategic goals. For some employees all performance objectives will align with one university goal. For other employees one performance objective may align with the first strategic goal and other performance objectives with other goals. Create the connection between an employee's expected performance and the university's goals; resist force-fitting.

To ensure maximum understanding between an employee and her/his supervisor, write objectives with the following criteria in mind:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Action-Oriented
- Realistic
- Time-Bound

Example:
Performs routine procurement functions (100W, FAS-23, P-Card, Travel, PO/Requisition) in accordance with university and department policies 95% of the time.

Supervisors must have one performance objective directly related to the successful completion of performance and feedback responsibilities with the staff they supervise.

Ratings for Performance Objectives

While performance planning does not include the process of rating performance, it should include a conversation about how performance will be rated at the end of the review period. Understandably, employees want to know how their performance will be rated and what it will take to reach the highest rating.

The Personalized Performance Plan offers a simple rating scale for performance objectives:

- Exceeds
- Meets
- Does Not Meet

In performance planning, supervisors and employees should discuss what daily behaviors and cumulative performance results will produce each of the ratings on the scale. "Meets" is a good rating; "meets" indicates the employee is doing what she/he is expected to do and at a satisfactory level. Some employees have a tendency to equate "meets" with the letter grade "C." While it is easy to think this way out of habit, it is not healthy. Satisfactory or acceptable performance means the employee is contributing at a good level. Outstanding or exemplary performance, indicated by "exceeds," should be used to recognize employee's who exceed the expectations outlined in their performance objectives or who perform far above and beyond those who meet expectations.

University Values *(the how)*

Page 13 lists Ohio State's values. The same values apply to all staff. The behavioral descriptors for each value will be different for different groups of employees and perhaps for individuals. In performance planning conversations, the employee and her/his supervisor should discuss the specific behaviors associated with each value that is relevant to the individual and the role she/he performs.

On pages 13 and 14 there is a list of behaviors that align with the university values. Use this list as a starting point to agree on what "excellence," and "collaborating as 'One University'" and the other values look like when they are "in use."

Example related to "Change and Innovation"

For a Project Manager, the behavioral descriptors might be:
- Maintains curiosity, especially in difficult situations.
- Pursues creative and unique solutions.
- Initiates action despite uncertainty of outcome.

For a Research Associate, the behavioral descriptors might be:
- Seeks new knowledge.
- Pursues creative and unique solutions.
- Focuses on how something can be done instead of why it cannot.

Ratings for University Values

While performance planning does not include the process of rating, it should include a conversation about how the values will be rated. Employees want to know how they will be evaluated and what it takes to reach the highest rating.
The Personalized Performance Plan offers a simple rating scale for the values:

- Guides
- Demonstrates
- Does Not Demonstrate

"Demonstrates" is a good rating. This indicates the employee is living the value; behaving in ways that are consistent with the value. "Guides" implies the employee is a leader in modeling the behaviors aligned with the value.

Professional Development

Learning and development are important aspects of a high performance culture and a satisfying job. Employees and their supervisors are co-accountable for professional development.

Two professional development goals should be set for each employee: one that leverages strength and one that addresses an area for improvement or growth. See below to clarify these different types of goals.

- **A value to leverage** – in what value does the employee already excel? How can the employee leverage strength in a particular value to contribute in even greater ways to the unit and to the university?

  Example: Value – Excellence

    Professional Development Goal – Sue's excellent customer service is something everyone in the department can benefit from. By June 30, 2011, Sue will identify three ways to strengthen the overall customer service in our department.

- **A value to develop** – how might an employee strengthen effectiveness and the ways in which she/he contributes by developing in one or more values?

  Example: Value – Collaborating as One University

    Professional Development Goal – Sue has expressed interest in learning about student service areas in other colleges. By June 30, 2011, Sue will visit three other colleges, and their student service areas, to gain ideas for strengthening service to our students, and to share best practices from our college; Sue will share what we learned with her colleagues in a June 2011 staff meeting.

- **Additional professional development goal** – what job-related competency might the employee learn or strengthen to increase job effectiveness? This goal might also be related to long-term career aspirations. Is there a goal the employee wants to achieve because it advances him/her towards a career move?

    Additional Professional Development Goal – Sue aspires to manage others. By December 30, 2010, Sue will find and enroll in one management development course/seminar.

Professional development goals will not be rated/evaluated. Coaching for success and towards achievement of the goals should be provided at each check-in meeting and progress will be documented at the time of reviewing performance.

Check-in Meetings

At least twice during the performance review period, the employee and her/his supervisor are expected to engage in a conversation about how things are going. This should be a focused conversation dedicated to giving and receiving feedback and coaching. Minimally, the content of the conversation should include:

- Progress on meeting performance objectives;
- Living the values; performing in ways that exemplify the values; and
- Steps taken to achieve professional development goals.

A simple and effective way to provide appreciative feedback and feedback to strengthen effectiveness is sharing these observations:

- "What I appreciate about you is…" and
- "What I feel might help you be even more effective is…"

The above language can be used by an employee to communicate with her/his supervisor and it can be used by a supervisor to communicate with her/his employee.

Check-in meetings should be briefly documented, including:

- Date and time of the meeting,
- Conversation summary, and
- Action steps the employee and/or the supervisor committed to.

Document dates of check-in meetings on the front page of Personalized Performance Plan.

Reviewing Performance

Before the end of the performance period, the employee and her/his supervisor must engage in a conversation to review performance. If the performance planning and check-in conversations occurred, with candid conversation throughout, there should be no surprises in the performance review conversation.

The tasks associated with reviewing performance are:
- Rating and documenting performance objectives (*the what*),
- Rating and documenting the values (*the how*),
- Reviewing and documenting progress towards achieving professional development goals,
- Providing an overall performance rating, and
- Allowing for comments from the employee and supervisor.

While the ratings and the documentation are essential, the conversation about overall performance is most important. Every employee must have the opportunity to meet with her/his supervisor on annual basis to discuss performance.

Overall Performance Rating

The Personalized Performance Plan offers a simple scale for the overall performance rating:
- Exceeds
- Meets
- Does Not Meet

There is not an exact formula or scientific way to determine the most appropriate rating. It should be a combination of how well the employee has met performance objectives and how well the employee has lived the values.

"Meets" is a good rating; "meets" indicates the employee is doing what she/he is expected to do and at a satisfactory level.

An overall or summative rating is required for CCS staff, regardless of the form or format of the performance review. CCS staff receiving an overall performance rating of "does not meet" must be notified in writing that they are at risk of losing their displacement rights. We strongly suggest that you include this sentence in these cases: Classified Civil Service staff forfeit their displacement rights if they receive three consecutive "does not meet" summative performance review ratings.

With CCS Staff, the performance review can also be used as a step in the performance improvement process (PIP). If it is used as a step, all the requirements of the appropriate PIP Level must be included in or attached to the performance review and the employee must be notified that the review is being counted as a step in the process. Specific requirements can be found in the Performance Improvement Process Guide, found at **hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/perfimproveguide.pdf**.

In addition, for all employees, an overall performance rating of "does not meet" should result in the initiation of the performance improvement process. Unit HRPs, SHRPs and OHRC should be consulted when developing a performance improvement process.

Summary Comments

Employees and their supervisors are strongly encouraged to supply summary comments. These comments might include an overview of the performance that has met or exceeded expectations and plans to strengthen effectiveness.

Signatures and Copies

Both the employee and her/his supervisor must sign the Personalized Performance Plan or review document. The employee must receive a copy of the form, and a copy must be retained in the employee's personnel file in the unit's human resources office. An employee's signature indicates that the form has been reviewed and discussed with her or him. It does not imply agreement with the review.

EXCELLENCE ▶ EMINENCE

Targeted Dates for Consideration

If you are in a college/VP unit with little existing structure for a performance and feedback system, the following dates offer guidance to ensure success in meeting the strategic declaration: 100% of regular staff must be involved in a performance process **by July 1, 2011**.

Target Date	Task
September 1, 2010	• Meet with your college/VP unit leader to ask for her/his commitment and to seek alignment on specifics of a performance and feedback system.
October 1, 2010	• Review the performance and feedback tool currently used in your college/VP unit. • Evaluate the current college/VP unit tool against the standard university-wide performance planning and performance review (Personalized Performance Plan) tool. • Determine which tool will be used. • Ensure the documentation criteria stated above are met.
By July 1, 2011	• Communicate with all staff and managers of staff in your college/VP unit. • Ask for their assistance to meet the strategic declaration. • Provide a mechanism/tool for documentation and timeline to meet the requirements stated above.
August 1, 2011	• Finalize objectives with measurable performance results for all employees. • Track the % of college/VP unit employees who have these plans.
December 31, 2011	• Complete first performance check-in between employees and their supervisors. Make adjustments in objectives as appropriate. • Share feedback n both directions. • Track the % of college/VP unit employees who participated in a check-in with their supervisor.
March 31, 2012	• Complete second performance check in between employees and their supervisors. Make adjustments in objectives as appropriate. • Share feedback in both directions. • Track the % of college/VP unit employees who participated in a check-in with their supervisor.
June 30, 2012	• Complete performance review discussion between employees and their supervisors, including documentation of their perspectives. • Track the % of college/VP unit employees who participated in a performance review discussion and received documentation of it.

Available Resources/Tools

- **Our Values** can be found on page 15 and at **osu.edu/eminence/values**
- **To describe and define behaviors** that align with the Values, see page 16 and/or **osu.edu/eminence/assets/files/aligning_behaviors.pdf**.
- **Our Strategic Goals** can be found on page 18

6 Conversations on Performance Management

This packet provides the orientation to performance management at Ohio State. "6 Conversations" will help engage staff in approaching performance management as part of re-shaping our culture. Training sessions on the 6 Conversations will be available to help SHRPs and HRPs guide managers and supervisors align performance management with university values and strategic goals. Contact the Office of Human Resources for more information.

Online Support

An overview of 6 Conversations will soon be available as on demand training in an e-format. Tip sheets, quick reference resources, and pod casts are planned for easy online access.

Gateway 2 Management – Building a Culture of Coaching

Supervisors should be actively encouraged to use this blended learning course that reinforces the culture shaping initiatives and provides current, holistic training on what constitutes a high performing, healthy workplace and how performance management is integrated into daily activities. Contact the Office of Human Resources for more information.

1. Corrective Action and Involuntary Termination Policy 8.15 **hr.osu.edu/policy/policy815.pdf**
2. Corrective Action Website **hr.osu.edu/ohrc/er_correctiveaction**
3. Employee and Labor Relations Consultants **hr.osu.edu/ohrc/er_consultants**
4. Performance Improvement Process Guide **hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/perfimproveguide.pdf**
5. Performance Management Policy 5.25 **hr.osu.edu/policy/policy525.pdf**
6. University Rules for the Classified Civil Service **hr.osu.edu/Policy/CCS**

Personalized Performance Plan Job Aid

The Personalized Performance Plan Job Aid is available online at **hr.osu.edu/policy/resources/perfmgt525jobaid.pdf**.

The Ohio State University Values

Excellence – in the standards we set, the results we produce, the relationships we are in, and the dedicated service we provide.

Collaborating as One University – our aspirations demand we remove internal boundaries --- we must share information, promote teamwork, and think creatively to make this happen.

Acting with Integrity and Personal Accountability – we accept responsibility for our actions, we keep our word, we focus on solutions rather than fault and blame, and we take initiative to make things happen.

Openness and Trust – our communication is direct and honest, we promote authenticity and transparency in our relationships and activities, we're open to feedback and coaching, and we give feedback with candor and respect.

Diversity in People and Ideas – the health of our environment demands that we respect each other, that we are inclusive, and that we profoundly value who each of us is as a whole person and what each of us uniquely contributes.

Change and Innovation – these principles are our heritage and our future – we're curious, we're creative, and we embrace positive, constructive conflict.

Simplicity in our work – in the administration and management of our enterprise we are responsive, ethical, and transparent and we strive to make the functioning of this complex institution simple and efficient.

We promise to be true to our values, accomplish our mission, and be the pioneering and eminent institution that we and those we serve expect from us. This is **The Ohio State University.**

See the University Values available on line at **osu.edu/eminence/values**

Aligning Behaviors

Below are Ohio State's values and behavioral descriptors. Use these examples to help define what actions demonstrate the values within a specific role.

Excellence

- Connects own work with unit and university goals and priorities, and focuses on "blue chip" items. Meets commitments using all available resources.
- Continuously gains knowledge, builds skills, increases engagement and improves productivity.
- Seeks simple solutions to complex problems and considers alternatives before selecting a solution. Overcomes obstacles. Can make tough decisions and live with consequences.
- Focuses on the customer and increasing customer satisfaction.
- Identifies/participates in opportunities to serve the university and community.

Collaborating as One University

- Develops relationships across the university to share information, collaborate, and enhance the quality of work. Overcomes boundaries to enable collaboration and success.
- Involves others from different backgrounds/perspectives in decisions/plans to avoid surprises.
- Thinks creatively about challenges and issues, seeking multiple sources of input.
- Promotes teamwork through positive attitude and encouragement.

- Commits to team objectives and stays involved when confronted with challenges.
- Focuses on the greater good when making decisions.

Acting with Integrity and Personal Accountability

- Attends and effectively engages in work. Sets goals and achieves results. Produces results with limited guidance.
- Acknowledges reality, owns problems, finds solutions and gets on with the work. Takes initiative to share ideas, learn, and offer solutions.
- Conducts business in an ethical manner and adheres to our values, conduct guidelines, and policies and procedures.
- Takes responsibility for decisions, actions and results.
- Practices "be here now" to maximize creativity, productivity and quality.

Openness and Trust

- Communicates accurately and honestly in an open, candid and respectful manner. Listens to understand and build rapport.
- Admits mistakes and seeks to make improvements.
- Organizes and expresses ideas/information clearly. Promotes authenticity and transparency.
- Gives and receives feedback and coaching from multiple sources with candor and respect.
- Assumes positive intentions even in challenging situations. Resolves conflict in a timely, respectful and constructive manner.
- Encourages others to set challenging goals and high standards of performance. Celebrates the success of others and the team.

Diversity in People and Ideas

- Treats everyone with dignity, respect and fairness. Establishes and maintains respectful, trusting, cooperative relationships.
- Applies knowledge of other work styles and personal filters to enhance teamwork.
- Promotes an inclusive work environment. Appreciates and seeks deeper understanding of each person's unique contribution.
- Listens as a participant/supporter/coach rather than as an observer/critic/judge. Inspires others to stretch beyond what they thought they could do.

Change and Innovation

- Anticipates and prepares for change and changing demands. Anticipates internal/external customer needs and understands the customer perspective.
- Maintains curiosity, especially in difficult situations. Pursues creative and unique solutions. Asks questions and seeks information.
- Seeks new knowledge/understanding/skills, and incorporates them into daily work.
- Focuses on how something can be done instead of why it cannot. Takes risks, initiating action despite uncertainty of outcome.

Simplicity in Our Work

- Strives to make work simple and efficient.
- Acts resourcefully to ensure work is completed within specified time and quality parameters.
- Communicates in a clear, concise manner.
- Prepares for and contributes to effective meetings.
- Removes obstacles to move the work forward and/or get efforts back on track. Surfaces problems and issues before projects get derailed.
- Recognizes times when perfection is not necessary and moves on with the work.

The Ohio State University's Strategic Goals

The following six strategic goals, and the strategies and actions needed to attain them, form the university's roadmap. Every employee, whether functioning in a leadership capacity or as an individual contributor, should know how her/his job connects and aligns to the university's goals and the university's success.

One University

We will adopt a 'One University' perspective in all decision making to create a culture where everyone is driven by a shared common vision and supports trans-institutional execution.

Students First

We will place Students First with access to academic excellence to ensure that the needs of students receive the highest priority as we continue to seek excellence in all phases of our operations.

Faculty and Staff Talent and Culture

We will further develop our highly diverse faculty, staff talent and create a high performance culture driven by common principles of excellence in accountability and achievement.

Research Prominence

We will achieve world class research prominence by supporting innovative, cutting edge, within and across discipline research that will be the basis for achieving excellence in all that we do.

Outreach and Collaboration

We will increase outreach and collaboration through the public and private partnerships that will enhance our impact on the quality of life for citizens of the state, country and world.

Operation and Financial Soundness and Simplicity

We will establish operational and financial soundness along with simplicity in processes to ultimately be known for our robust financial position using transparent, simple and flexible systems.